



# DREAM Learning Events

Strengthening Woreda level planning  
and management for the lowlands

DREAM II – Learning Event 3  
16-June-2021

Proceedings



*Source: Somali Regional State, Regional Planning Budgeting and M&E Directorate*



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### Abstract

The third DREAM II Learning Event successfully took place on June 16th 2021. A group of over 70 participants gathered in the online setting and at venues in Semera and Jigjiga. As part of the program there was a welcome speech by the Professor Degefa, presentations from Somali and Afar region and two presentations from specific projects of GIZ and US-AID/Mercy Corps.

There is a consensus that for lowland development to succeed coordination at the woreda administrative level is highly necessary. This in principle can align the different development efforts with local/ community priorities, create coordination and added value between the program in different sectors and can help build up a longer-term perspective and vision on the development of the woreda. There are however also weaknesses to be addressed (capacity, staff turn-over, local ownership, transparency) and threats that need to be overcome (budget control, lack of connect in regional/ federal programs, changing strategies). During the event, organizations shared their experiences around this theme and there was ample opportunity for group discussions.

### Introduction – Frank van Steenbergen (MetaMeta)

Frank van Steenbergen, moderator of this learning event, welcomes all participants and introduces both the topic and set-up of the third learning event. The program contains presentation from Afar and Somali, which follow the opening speech. After presentations from specific projects by representatives from GIZ, US-AID and Mercy Corps, break-out rooms will open for discussion. This is followed by a final plenary session in which the outcome of the break-out rooms can be discussed.

### Opening remarks – Professor Degafa Tolossa Degaga (Ministry of Peace (MoP))

Good morning everyone, a thanks to the organisers for inviting me to this Learning Event. I am attending this meeting for the first time. My name is Degafa, I work as Director General for Federalism and Special Support for Pastoral Areas at the Ministry of Peace (MoP) and I am also a professor of geography and development studies at Addis Ababa University.

It is a pleasure and honour to provide the opening remarks to this DREAM Pre-Event. The DREAM events, as you know, are instruments to come to closer cooperation, coordination, and capacitation in the development and transformations of Ethiopia's pastoral society in the arid and semi-arid lowland areas. These Pre-Events of which there were seven so far in the last 7-8 months offer good opportunities to develop coalitions along the topic of strengthening drought resilience and provided a platform for bringing together different stakeholders such as federal and regional government partners, national and international NGOs, research institutions and international development partners active in the lowlands of Ethiopia. There has been enormous interest to share experiences and approaches on topics of common interest as well to strengthen more formal cooperation through the development of the Task Force, for which discussion is going on. In the last couple of months there has been intensive discussion and brainstorming between the team working on strengthening coordination for lowland development in the context of the US-AID Backbone program in close alignment with the DREAM Initiative and with key stakeholders. We are happy to see the development of such a strong joint effort.

When discussing coordinated lowland development in Ethiopia, we have all come to realize that Woredas will play a crucial role in the development of the biophysical resources and socio-economic



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conditions of the pastoralists in the lowlands. They are close to the grassroots level where activities need to be aligned and to contribute to one another and not compete and overlap. They are, at the same time, close to the communities – and provide a mechanism to bundle the aspirations of the communities, acknowledging the indigenous knowledge, into an integrated development plan for the area. They can bring together the different sectors engaged in development – such as agriculture, water, rangeland, roads, disaster risk reduction, management, education - and make sure activities from one sector reinforce and synergise the performance of other sectors. They are also the place where own visions on the future of the Woreda should be developed and realised.

Yet there are also many challenges, known to all of us – the lack of integration of federal and regional programs, weak integration between activities undertaken by the government organisations, the lack of capacity at Woreda level, the lack of own budget or the inability to reach out to communities, to name a few.

This DREAM Pre-Event will more in particular discuss the planning and development coordination at Woreda level. There is a consensus that for lowland development to succeed coordination at the Woreda administrative level is highly necessary. This in principle can align the different development efforts with local/ community priorities, create coordination and added value between the program in different sectors and can help build up a longer-term perspective and vision on the development of the Woreda. There are however also weaknesses to be addressed, such as low capacity, frequent staff turn-over, weak local ownership, transparency and threats that need to be overcome; think of budget control, lack of linkages in regional/ federal programs, changing strategies or lack of a plan or vision.

The pre-event will take stock of the different developments at Woreda level and the immediate and medium-term opportunities to strengthen planning and coordination at Woreda level and the facilitation to the woreda offices in this regard. The event will identify current bottlenecks in effective coordination and planning at Woreda level, looking at local programming, financing, interlinkage with lower-level government and communities and supervision capacity. Most importantly, we want to take stock of what we can do to strengthen the role of the woredas and to make decentralization work for lowland development.

I wish you intense and interesting brainstorming, exchange of ideas and fruitful deliberations.

## Presentations

### Somali Regional State Finance and Economic Development Bureau (BoFED) – Ahmed A. Ibrahim

In this presentation, an overview of the planning and M&E system and practices in place in Somali regional state are provided. First, BoFED is introduced. BoFED was established in 1994 and resulted from the merger of the former planning and economic development bureaus. The bureau therefore has currently two sections; 1) the planning and economic development section and 2) the finance section. This is also made clear from the organisational structure presented. The two sections, both have three sub-sections.

Regarding its formal mandate, the Somali Regional State Finance & Economic Development has the powers and duties to:

1. Supervise the implementation of Financial Policy and Physical Performance of the Region.



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2. Negotiate, sign, and administer the agreements of loans, donations and other projects supported to the Regional State.
3. Prepare long, medium- and short-term plans of the Region and supervise as well as evaluate their execution.
4. Provide Districts (Woredas) support on budget, planning and expenditure management.
5. Initiate policies for building the general economic output and annual inputs and production of the Region, and follow up their implementation
6. Cause in conducting study and research on the economic and social development of the Region.
7. Supervise and coordinate the undertakings of non-governmental organizations related to economic and social development activities carried out in the Region.
8. Cause the undertaking of the study on the potential infrastructure development of the Region.
9. Study and prepare fair and balanced formula for budget distribution, which determines all considerable conditions and submit to the concerned bodies for approval.
10. Ensures as well to check within the prepared development plans and projects that the importance of women in the Region is stated.
11. Examines, budget, the allocation of annual recurrent and capital project budgets and prepare break-down for Regional Bureaus of the annual consolidated budget and as well as administer and release them (the budgets), and prepare the request of the supplementary budget wherever found necessary.
12. Enforce provisions of budget reform and inspection of expenditure management system.
13. Deposit and administer shares, negotiable instruments, money, and other regional government assets.
14. Establish an advance budget management and accounting system in the Region and supervise its implementation.
15. Prepare general report in relation to the financial performance, percentage on the utilization and modes of utilization.
16. Undertake finance and property inspection and control in public institutions.
17. Supervise and inspect by ensuring that the budget utilization and property administration of the Regional Institutions effected pursuant to the Federal and Regional Finance and Property Administration Policy, Rules and Regulations.
18. Prepare and issue directives governing procedures for public procurement and administration of property.
19. Perform other powers and duties as may be provided under other laws.

At the end of the implementation of every regional strategic development plan, the following actions or measures are undertaken by BoFED:

- Performance evaluation of the preceding strategic plan/Regional Development Plan, sectoral development plans serving as a basis for the next long-term plan.
- Trainings on planning, monitoring & evaluation and RBM are provided to the planning staff of Regional Sector Bureaus/Institutions.
- Consultation workshops are held with representatives from districts including elders, businesspeople, traders, pastoralists, agro-pastoralists, stakeholders, and development partners.

Following the above, trainings on strategic planning are provided to regional sector bureaus planning teams, and strategic priorities (strategic goals, objectives, indicators, baselines, and targets) are set,



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and sectoral strategic plans are prepared. Also, sectoral strategic plans/ are aligned with Federal Counterpart Plan for instance, aligning the Regional Health Sector Plan with that FMOH.

Regarding action plans and budgets, the regional planning and M&E team and the regional budget team appraise the plans and budgets submitted by the bureaus. Based upon the regional strategic plan, the preparation and implementation of annual plans with annual targets are derived from sectoral development plans. BoFED has a role in submitting the plans and budgets to the Regional Cabinet and then to the Regional Council for approval.

Regarding monitoring and evaluation processes and practices, the BoFED undertakes M&E at least twice within each fiscal year, based upon the annual action plans of the bureaus and specific projects and activities that are scheduled. M&E teams make reports with recommendations for improvement. Also, feedback sessions are held with M&E team and Zone Administration & District/City Administration. Furthermore, regional sector bureaus send quarterly performance reports to BoFED and Office of the President. These bureaus, thus also evaluate and monitor, but BoFED is responsible for overall M&E.

Key constraints regarding capacity development are;

- Resource limiting the rolling-out of trainings on planning, monitoring & evaluation.
- Poor commitment and follow-up whether trainings taken are cascaded or not.
- Shortage or lack of computers (desktops and laptops) mainly at districts level.
- Poor devolution of power at districts/city administrations level.
- Poor data quality because of technical capacity and shortage or lack of data management systems in place.
  - Having an information management system is key for developing and implementing results-based/results-oriented development plans and programmes.
  - Regarding M&E Database systems, some of the Regional Sector Bureaus have databases, these include;
    - BoFED, Somalinfo. The IBEX
    - Regional Health Bureau, HMIS
    - Regional Education Bureau, EMIS

As a final part of this presentation, several recommendations are provided to develop planning, monitoring & evaluation, and reporting.

- Sustaining trainings on planning, monitoring & evaluation and reporting while making follow-up on their cascading at lower administrative levels, giving trainings to colleagues
- Integrating capacity development endeavors on planning, monitoring & evaluation and reporting
- Strengthening development information sharing and documentation
- Developing the planning and monitoring & evaluation of both at regional and district/city administration levels
- Establishing horizontal and vertical cooperation among the counterparts (i.e. regional and district counterpart bureaus and offices of the same sector etc.)
- Encouraging and developing information management (M & E) database systems

During the presentation, several questions about the coordination between the region and woredas, and about the interlinkages between programs and sectors, have been put in the chat box, which are answered after presentation. Also, asked is to the planning approach for the 10-year plan and whether



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cascaded plans for Woredas and Kebeles also exist. Another question is about the PSNP planning, and whether is integrated in the annual plan of Woredas or follows a separate track. Another question is on how interventions are prioritized for Woredas, when and if plans are developed at regional level and cascaded to Woredas.

A question is asked whether the plans developed at regional level cascade down to the Woredas. The presenter answers that all regions have long term development plans, but there is a gap in some regions. Not in all regions the Woreda's are invited to contribute to the planning. This interaction should be intensified, to contribute to development, similar for the integration of resources from different bureaus.

Another question is asked, regarding how different priorities across different Woredas are considered in planning and budgets. The presenters mentions that different priorities are considered in planning and budgets, but that more differentiation can and should take place.

### Reflections from Afar

Following the previous presentations from Somali region, participants from Semara (Afar) share reflections on what are the main constraints, main opportunities in strengthening the planning at Woreda level.

Mohammed Ahmed Mohammed, planning director from city administration of Dubti Woreda in Afar, shares his reflections on Woreda planning preparation. He mentions that planning starts, based on the regional finance bureau. They discuss this with woreda community and planning team, and they prioritize according to the needs mentioned by the community. Based on that, according to the regional budget and other budgets, specifically also from World Bank, they plan, based on the needs of the community. The planned activities are clearly informed to the community. Mentioned is that the regional government checks, approves, monitors, and evaluates the plans and activities. Finally, they communicate, in different ways, with the community whether the planned activities are approved are not. There is also an annual audit procedure, the outcome of which is also clearly communicated with the community, like the procurement progress and issues.

The main challenges are that all communities need planned activities in their own localities and that the planned activities and the budget are not properly matched. In general, there is a shortage of budget as compared to the community needs.

Following this reflection, asked is whether the approach regarding transparency used in the Woredas is also used in the regions. Other related questions are about the interaction with the community members and how they deal with criticism, and it is also asked if the approach used for the annual plans is also used for longer-term planning.

Mohammed Ahmed Mohammed answers these questions, and mention that he does not know whether the approach of the regional bureau also follows this approach. Regarding the criticism, he answers that communities that receive criticism will discuss and observe the received information. The Woreda cabinet will be informed if necessary and will then take measures. Regarding the final questions, he mentions that there are 3, 5 and 10-year plans. More questions were asked, but due to time limitations these will be discussed in the break-out groups later.



Strengthening participatory planning – GIZ-SDR Experiences – Paul Roden (GIZ-SDR)

Paul Roden is an advisor on landscape and participatory planning, and presents on strengthening participatory planning, and specifically on the GIZ-SDR experiences, mainly focusing on the rehabilitation of dry valleys and their productive use.

Paul sets the scene by saying that both Afar and Somali are emerging regions, with under-staffed and under-capacitated government organization. Participatory planning approaches are relatively new and not yet (fully) integrated in both regions. One of the unique aspects of the regions, is that most people live of the land, in a communal basis, meaning that there are communal land use systems.

Regarding the environmental conditions, he mentioned that both regions are dryland environment and that rehabilitation, following interventions, therefore takes longer. Both regions experience increasing land degradation, both due to human and climatic conditions. Because landscapes are large and people rely on the environment and not just on small areas, a watershed approach is used, covering a large and varied landscape.

Capacitation, coordination, and cooperation are all needed to make the best changes possible. GIZ tries to support the government to institutionalizing the participatory planning approach, which is defined as “a process to integrate planning activities and values into organizational culture for sustainable natural resource management”.

This will lead to a greater efficiency in resource use and integrating multiple actors in decision making leads to enhanced sustainability of interventions. A multi-stakeholder and multi-level approach are needed, including local social norms and values.

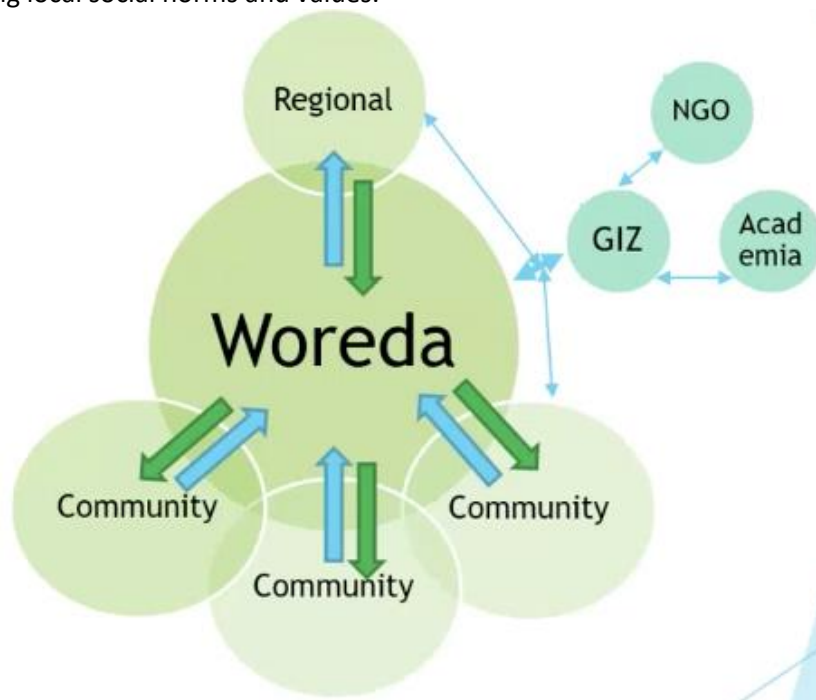


Figure 1 The GIZ-SDR planning approach





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As can be seen in the schematic representation (figure 1), the Woreda level is the entry point for planning and budgeting of activities. Mentioned is that there is scope to bridge the planning gap between all involved stakeholders.

Next to technical advice to regional and staff in Woreda to mainstream participatory planning results into the Woreda annual and five-year plans, in which Capacitation and cooperation are integrated, guidebooks have been made.

The PCAP (Participatory Community Activity Planning for pastoralists lowlands of Ethiopia) has been developed to support informed and inclusive decision-making and budget allocation and is a form of capacitation. It includes a multi-step process led by a woreda core planning team which includes site selection, awareness raising, early securing of stakeholder commitment, to .... community planning of activities and a process to include these activities in woreda plans and budgets. It also contains infotechs, which are a basket of approaches and technological options and choices for land rehabilitation and productive land use

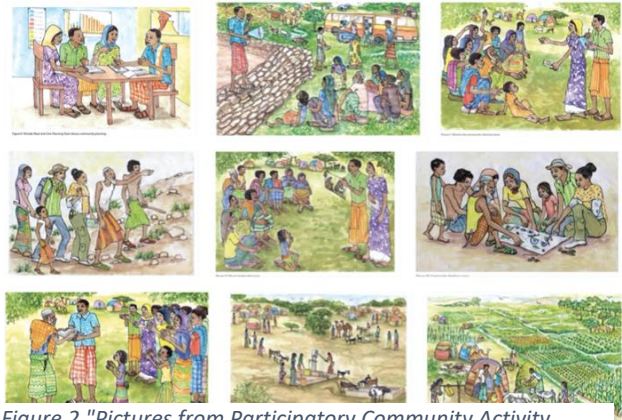


Figure 2 "Pictures from Participatory Community Activity Planning for pastoralists of lowlands of Ethiopia" guide book, showing the many steps ([download](#)) (Source: GIZ)

Furthermore, staff at Woreda level are trained, both theoretically and practically, on participatory planning. However, building capacity should not only take place at Woreda level, also at community level GIZ is active in building capacity. Aimed is that community members are included in the management of projects, via e.g. community based organizations. The establishment of bylaws for the management of activities, is also supported by GIZ at community and woreda level.

GIZ uses remotes sensing and GIS data to identify dry valleys suitable for land rehabilitation and trains partners to do so themselves.

GIZ Contributes to stakeholder coordination in the context of participatory planning, which is specifically addressed in the DREAM Conference 2019 – Participatory Planning Working Group. Furthermore, aimed is to develop a decision-support tool at the regional level for the coordination on land rehabilitation interventions, also being a digital database of DVRPU activities.

### Lowland Resilience Project (LRP) - Backbone Support Activity - Concept to support coordination and partnership building for resilience - Dubale Admasu (US-AID)

Dubale Admasu starts his presentation by mentioning that, despite all the efforts taken to increase resilience in agro-pastoralists areas, at different levels, there is a gap in collaboration between offices. US-AID is supporting the Ministry of Peace and is working together with GIZ and other developmental partners to work on this gap. In his presentation, he briefly discusses why coordination and partnership building are important for thematic and cross-thematic areas and what is being done and will be done to work on this gap.



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He agrees that there is a resource limitation, but also recognizes a lot of investments have been made. From 2015/2016- 2017/2018 US\$2.7 - 2.8 billion budget was allocated to Somali Region, 43% of which was domestic support and 57% external development and humanitarian assistance. For 2018/2019 the estimated figure for Somali region is US\$1.2 billion, of which 59% was domestic support and 41% international assistance. (Source: Somali Region and UNDP resource mapping report, 15 March 2019).

Despite all these resources, there are still many people under humanitarian assistance, in Somali 1,673,009 and in Afar 562,082 individuals are beneficiaries under the PSNP (Productive Safety Net Programme). He mentions that the level of coordination lags the level of investment because of the wide geographic and sectoral range of resilience investments and the large number of projects and funding streams involved. Coordination between livelihoods and humanitarian programs is, at times, 'strained' as a result of different perspectives on priorities. Even though efforts have been made to increase coordination, they were insufficient or unsuccessful.

In other projects, US-AID learnt that comprehensive resilience programming improved resilience capacities and reduced humanitarian needs during crisis, also stressing the need for coordination. For example, in the PRIME (Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion) project, by US-AID, it has been noted that coordinated activities with complementary interventions increase resilience of households. Coordination is needed to reach complementarity.

Increased investment opportunities realized the need for coordination and are encouraged also by the reform agenda of the current government of Ethiopia. The World Bank and IFAD financed the \$430 Million Lowlands Resilience Project (LLRP), while there many other projects that have recently started or soon starting, such as USAID- RiPAs, EU-RESET, GCC, GiZ-DRSLP, PSNP5 and others. Mistakes of the past should not be repeated, so coordination and partnerships are necessary, particularly at Woreda level.

Currently, there is a relatively new unique enabling policy environment to reach better coordination, led by the commitment showing Ministry of Peace, which is the national Pastoral Development Policy aimed at improving coordination for development and humanitarian assistance. The Ministry of Peace also requested for TA (Technical Assistance) from USAID to exercise its mandate improve coordination with LLRP they are managing and other resilience activities in the lowlands. Also the new charity and civil society (CSA) initiatives have emerging interest in public private partnerships and are contributing to the resilience activities in these areas and these are an enabling factor.

As mentioned, and shown in figure 3, coordination needs to take place at different levels. Different purposes are fulfilled under different engagement levels, via different interventions. Dubale Admasu mentions several examples of possible interventions, such as cross-sectoral discussion fora at Woreda level, which are also shown in figure 3.



**Suggested approach and purpose for LRP Backbone Support Activity**

Engagement Level	Major purpose	Interventions e.g.	Expected results e.g.	Lead/TA
<b>USAID</b>	<i>Inter-office</i> LRP partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitate selected TWGs</li> <li>LRP CLA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased resilience capacities, Reduced HA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>LRP lead, R2 Office</li> </ul>
<b>National Lowland Resilience Coordination/ Partnership</b>	<i>Cross Sectoral Strategic</i> partnership building for lowland areas resilience building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen/establish national resilience coordination platform</li> <li>Support operationalization of the National Pastoral Development Policy</li> <li>Support CLA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Harmonized approach/ guidelines: e.g. NRM, Livelihoods diversification, CMDRR, policy revision &amp; scaling up good practices</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>MoP/Academic institutions &amp; Contractors</li> </ul>
<b>Regional-Lowland Resilience Coordination/ Partnership</b>	<i>Cross sectoral Programming</i> partnership for Resilience capacities building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen coordination &amp; partnership building: PSNP, LLRP, RiPA, EU Reset, ...</li> <li>Joint monitoring and learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Joint initiatives</li> <li>Improved food security/ reduced HA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional GoE/Academic institution/USAID regional Coord.</li> </ul>
<b>Woreda-Lowland Resilience Coordination/ Partnership (12 pilots )</b>	Improved Resilience Capacities of HHS and Community Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Agree on common vision based on NPDP</li> <li>Partnership building for layering, sequencing, and integration where feasible</li> <li>Joint workplan development for comprehensive programming,</li> <li>Support implementation of joint plan &amp; learning</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maintained food security during shocks/crisis</li> <li>Reduced HA</li> <li>Improved income and nutrition outcomes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Woreda GoE/Academic institution/DPs</li> </ul>
<b>Cluster coordination/ partnership- NE, SE and SO</b>	Cross regional coordination and partnership for social cohesion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish and facilitate inclusive cluster level cross regional coordination platforms for selected thematic areas. E.g. NRM, Livestock marketing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Equitable access to natural resources and market routs for conflicting communities</li> <li>Improved food security</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Regional GoE/ Academic institution/ USAID regional Coord</li> </ul>

Figure 3 Suggested approach and purpose for LRP Backbone Support Activity

**Resilience In Pastoralist Areas (RIPA) - Mahlet Seifu (Mercy Corps)**

In her presentation, Mahlet Seifu discusses a specific example on Woreda level planning as well as integrated programming, for the “Resilience in pastoralist areas” program, which is a follow-up of PRIME (Pastoralist Areas Resilience Improvement through Market Expansion). Four resilience analysis-guiding questions are prominently present in this project; resilience of what, for whom, to what and through what. The main objective is to improve the resilience capacities of households, markets and governance institution collectively contributing to food security and inclusive economic growth.

The context in which is operated is characterized by underlying challenges to food security and economic prosperity in the lowlands of Ethiopia. Systemic constraints and shocks and stresses are threatening resilience.

**Systemic constraints**

- Low livestock productivity
- Limited input availability
- Constrained access to capital
- Restrictive social norms
- Lack of youth workforce readiness
- Information access constraints
- Evolving policy environment

**Shocks and stresses**

- Ecological
  - Drought, Erratic rainfall, floods, pest/disease outbreak
- Conflict
  - Violence, displacement, destruction of assets, market closures, trauma



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Mahlet Seifu also shares the learning from PRIME that Dubale Admasu shared in his presentation, which is schematically demonstrated in figure 4.

Within the thematic components of the program, several other important aspects (peace building, social cohesion, gender, inclusiveness, collaboration, learning and adaptation) are integrated.

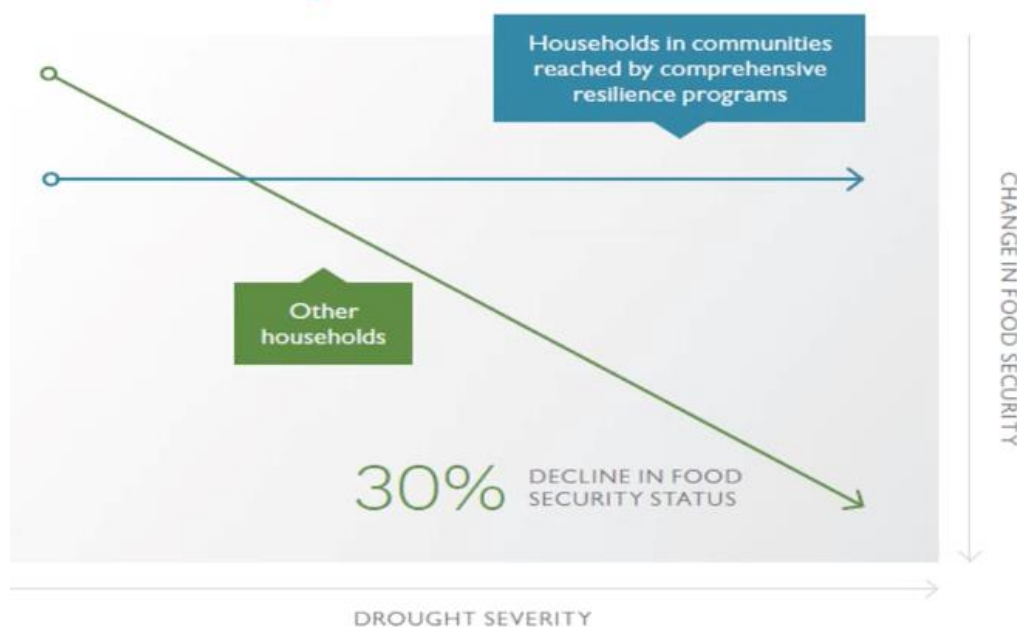


Figure 4 The effect of coordination of programs and comprehensive resilience programs

## Discussion groups

In the discussion groups, in Jijiga, Semara and online, several questions and topics are discussed. In these proceedings, the outcomes of these discussion are structured thematically.

Questions that are discussed in the groups are:

1. What are immediate current challenges in Woreda level planning?
2. What is the situation with respect to;
  - a. Coordination between different federal and regional programs
  - b. Development of local plans
  - c. Engagement of communities
  - d. Control over budget and monitoring and supervision
3. How can the different support activities be integrated more by the bureaus at Woreda level?

After Frank van Steenberghe introduced these topics and he questions, he mentions that the main points to discuss is what the way forward is and what the priorities are to strengthen Woreda level planning. Every group is asked to take stock quickly and then focus on these main points.

Mentioned challenges in Woreda level planning are:

- Skills and knowledge are missing to some extent at Woreda level bureaus, limiting capacity building. Capacity building is needed for the Woreda staff and admin.
- Capacity is not so much missing in skills and knowledge of planning, but rather in implementation of the plan.



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- Lack of communication and coordination about plans between different levels (Woreda, regional and federal) and sectors. Aimed should be for proper integration of the line bureaus and office, both governmental and NGOs. There should be cooperation to avoid overlaps
- Resources and capacities do not always match with plans
- Staff turnover problems
- Participatory situation for the community needs to be created. Awareness should be raised for the importance of the planning at community level. Priorities should come from bottom up.
- Strengthening participation of the staff and community on planning. Currently, too often, only cabinet prepares the planning.
- Different actors need to take part in the implementation plan in a binding and more resource effective manner.
- Woreda should identify their own priorities. There is challenge in creating complementarity between regional and Woreda plans.
- Need to make a consolidated and harmonized plan based on inputs from different (siloed) sectors.
- There is a need for clarity on mandates on M&E, to be executed preferably jointly.
- A historical database is important to prevent starting new again.
- There is challenging in aligning activities between Woredas.
- Risk over asking for once own are – need more integration.
- High turnover of staff – effects documentation and institutional memory.
- The ownership of natural resources.

It is furthermore mentioned that:

- There is some coordination, but it needs to be improved.
- During annual planning at Woreda level, all stakeholders, including NGOs should be invited to consultation meeting to see the available resource and plan the gap.
- There should be a general steering committee leading all resources, from different sources, to be integrated.
- Planning must start from bottom to top, Woreda to federal, instead of the other way around.

As a way forward, several suggestions have come up:

- Overcome constraints at regional level to support Woredas, this might be different for Afar and Somali.
- Review current M&E systems, coordination, and partnership. Assessing strengths and weaknesses, at Woreda and regional level, can both be done as a self-assessment or a study by experts.
- It needs to be prioritized who does what, including clarity on government and private sectors. Furthermore, incentives should be aligned.
- Make sure community voices (Kebele) are integrated in Woreda planning.
- Working better together and jointly, will lead to improvement.
- (Training) materials and resources should be shared and used by all.
- For natural resource planning in pastoral areas, we do need to look beyond single woredas, and study how functional zonal level is in planning. When we think about strengthening Woreda level planning, we should not forget about the region, because all levels of planning are related.



### Closure

Frank van Steenberg summarizes the outcomes of the meeting and thanks all participants for their active participation and once again emphasizes the importance of coordination and cooperation. Referred is to a quote that coordination and integrated planning is one of the most difficult things to do, but also one of the most important at the same time. This event had participants amid coordination and planning daily, and also people acknowledging this and supporting.

Martin Maurer (GIZ) also thanks participants and mentions the context in which this Learning Event was organized. What has been said and learnt today, should be translated into activities and action plans. Thought should be about the role of the Task Force regarding coordination, cooperation, and capacitation. This meeting, on strengthening woreda level planning and management for the lowlands, is also an important input for the DREAM Conference in Jijiga in September 2021.

All presentation of the event are available on [www.sdr-africa.com](http://www.sdr-africa.com) and in the table below.

Prof. Degefa		<a href="#">Opening Speech</a>
Ato Ahmed	Somali Region	<a href="#">Presentation</a>
	Afar Region	Reflection
Paul Roden	GIZ-SDR	<a href="#">Presentation</a>
Dubale Admasu	US-AID	<a href="#">Presentation</a>
Mahlet Seifu	Mercy Corps	<a href="#">Presentation</a>