



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

CENTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT

***ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF REDUCING EMISSION FROM
DEFORESTATION AND FOREST DEGRADATION PROGRAM
IMPLEMENTATION IN ETHIOPIA: THE CASE OF OROMIA
REGIONAL STATE***

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A Thesis Submitted to The College of Development Studies, Addis Ababa University in Partial Fulfillment of The Requirements for The Degree of Master of Arts in Environment and Sustainable Development.

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Declaration

I Samuel Isa Chala, hereby declare that the thesis entitled — Assessing The Effectiveness of Reducing Emission From Deforestation and Forest Degradation Implementation Program In Ethiopia: The Case of Oromia Regional State submitted by me for the grant of Master’s Degree in Center for Environment and Development is my unique work and it has not been displayed for the grant of any other Degree, Recognition, Cooperation or any other comparative titles of any other college or institutions.

Signature _____

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Date: _____

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AFB	=	African Development Bank
CH₄	=	Methane Gas
CO₂	=	Carbon Dioxide
COP	=	Conference of Parties
CRGE	=	Climate Resilient Green Economy
FDRE	=	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
FPIC	=	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GGGE	=	Global Green House Gas Emission
GHG	=	Green House Gas
MRV	=	Measure Report and Verify
N₂O	=	Nitrous Oxide
OFLP	=	Oromia Forested Land Program
RED	=	Reduce Emission from Deforestation
REDD+	=	Reduce Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation
RSC	=	REDD Steering Committee
RTWG	=	REDD Technical Working Group
SESA	=	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
UNEP	=	United Nations Environmental Program
UN-REDD	=	United Nations-Reduce Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

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Abstract

The research was conducted to identify policy and strategy gaps, stakeholders engagement in REDD+ implementation processes, institutional alignment challenges and financial resource utilization gaps related to REDD+ program implementation in Oromia Region. Because there was no research conducted specifically on the above-mentioned issues. In particular, the study deals with the status of REDD+ implementation effectiveness in the Oromia region, REDD+ policy objectives and policy instruments, financial resource management efficiency and transparency of the REDD+ implementation, and lastly state the stakeholder's engagement in REDD+ implementation. The study was conducted using a fully qualitative research design. The units of analysis of the study were from the Oromia REDD+ Implementation project the professionals, wereda officials from both technical and steering committees, and local communities from Nekemte and Chancho coordinating Centers. In doing so, Focused Group Discussion participants and key interview informants were selected through probability and non-probability sampling (multi-stage sampling and purposive sampling respectively). The data were collected through semi-structured interviews, Focused Group Discussion, observation, and document analysis. Finally forwards possible recommendations are presented in the last chapter. The data was presented, interpreted, and analyzed qualitatively by narrative. The finding of the study showed that the status of the implementation is challenged by the absence of a legitimate and coherent strategy. Consequently, REDD+ implementation in Oromia as well as at national level is led by the Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy. There are also federal proclamations that directly contradict the goal of the REDD+ program. Therefore, the absence of legitimate and coherent national/regional strategy made the REDD+ project implementation source of contention. Regarding institutional arrangements, Federal Environment Forest and Climate Commission found it difficult with Commission level Capacity to lead institutions with ministerial portfolios. This institutional arrangement problem is a bit better at regional level as it is led by regional vice president office. Financially, REDD+ project implementation at wereda level ignored to do the external auditing to improve efficiency and transparency of the financial utilization of the project and only internal audit is constantly conducted at woreda level. The finding has showed that REDD+ implementation is not underway in a way that benefits the local communities. The local community are not allowed to use the forest as farmland, grazing land, the forests for construction material, even are not allowed to use the forest for firewood, or not given other means of livelihood even if there is immense demand for the above listed needs. Similarly there are national proclamations that are directly in contradiction with REDD+ implementation. These include the Forest Proclamation 456/2005 and Environmental Impact Assessment proclamation 299/2002. Institutional arrangement such as including Ministry of Foreign Affairs in national steering and technical committee, giving the leadership of the national and regional REDD+ implementation program to Prime Minister Office and President Office are critically important. Now the national Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission is leading the implementation of the program at Federal level so that the commission is expected to coordinate big ministries such as Ministry of Agriculture to implement the REDD+ program. Regionally it seems better as the vice president office is leading the program implementation. Regarding financial resource utilization, only 69% of the 2020 budget year finance were used and this was attributed to instability in Oromia region especially West wollaga and Guji zones. On the other hand, even if external and internal audits are mandatory at federal, regional and Woreda level, there is no external audit conducted at Woreda level. Ethiopian government, till to date, is contributing nothing financially for the better implementation of the REDD+ program. Generally speaking the REDD+ implementation in Oromia region is ineffective due to the above mentioned bottlenecks.

Key Words: *Implementation, Legitimacy, Coherency, Stakeholder, Institution, Local Community, Finance*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Climate change is one of the major threats to humanity and the environment these days. Several factors that can affect the climate can be natural and manmade causes. Natural activities such as natural variations and solar activities are thought to be causes of climate change. Anthropogenic Green House Gases (GHGs) such as Carbon dioxide (CO₂), Methane gas (CH₄), Nitrous oxide (N₂O) and others that are thought to be the prime cause of climate change (USA-EPA GGGE, 2020). Global Green House Gas Emission (GGGE) further classifies GHGs constitution in the atmosphere, among these anthropogenic GHGs, CO₂ emission from the combustion of fossil fuels constitutes 65% and 11% of CO₂ is from forestry. From CO₂ emission from the forestry sector, land use takes lion's share with 76% of GHGs. Methane covers 16%, Nitrous oxide shares 6% and other gases take 2% of the total GHGs in the atmosphere.

Therefore, the issue of greenhouse gas emission that contributes to the severity of climate change needs to be discussed and addressed with their respective sectors. Electricity and heat production 25%, agriculture, forestry and other land use 24%, industry 21%, transportation 14%, other energy 10% and building 6% (IPCC, 2014). This significant share of emissions from agriculture, forestry and other land use indicates the need to focus on the forestry and related sector in the effort to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) is a voluntary initiative established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to create financial incentives for developing countries to reduce forest-related greenhouse gas emissions through promoting conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks (UNEP: 2015). REDD+ was deliberated for the first time in the agenda of the 2005 COP-11 in Montreal, Canada and named Reducing Emissions from Deforestation (RED) in Developing Countries (UNFCCC, 2005). In 2007, UNFCCC adopted the principle of providing financial incentives at the Indonesia, Bali conference to developing countries for reducing greenhouse gas emissions from

Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD) (UNFCCC, 2008). The idea got international acceptance and REDD is upgraded to REDD+ by incorporating Conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Even though, REDD+ is a voluntary initiative established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change it was formally established on the 16th UNFCCC conference held in Cancun, Mexico in 2010 by the decision FCCC/CP/2010/7/Add.1 (UNFCCC, 2011). This decision, in article 70, calls upon developing countries to reduce emissions from deforestation, reducing emissions from forest degradation, conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. This would be done by preparing and implementing a national strategy or action plan, a national forest reference emission level and/or forest reference level and a robust and transparent national forest monitoring system for the monitoring and reporting of the activities.

The Cancun decision stresses results-based actions are fully measured, reported, verified, financial and technological incentives are provided based on achievements. Following this Paris Agreement, in its article 5, stipulates that all parties are encouraged to take an action in implementing and supporting the result based-payment and various frameworks under the convention for both policies and positive incentives for REDD+ activities (Paris Agreement, 2015). The Warsaw Framework further explains that REDD+ finance to support developing countries could be done through three sequential phases, namely, 1) readiness; 2) demonstration activities; and 3) result-based action (Warsaw Framework, 2013).

When we come to Africa the issue of REDD+ is also a serious issue, the continent's rapid deforestation is threatening the flow of key environmental goods and services at the local, national and global levels. Forests cover 674 million hectares accounting for 23% of Africa's land area (FAO, 2010). Humid forests are particularly important in Central Africa, the Congo Basin being the second largest forest in the world. At the same time, dry forests are important in the Sahel, Southeast and North Africa and represent 42% of the tropical forest area in the continent. Forests provide crucial environmental goods such as wood, bush meat and wild fruits, and services such as carbon sequestration, biodiversity conservation, soil conservation and watershed protection. More than half of the continent's population relies directly or indirectly on forests for their livelihoods. However, over recent decades, Africa has been the continent experiencing the highest rate of deforestation, 0.49% per year. This represents some

3.4 million hectares lost annually (FAO, 2010). Small-scale agriculture and fuel wood collections are the main drivers of deforestation and forest degradation (Gizachew, Astrup, et al 2017). This shows that in order to minimize the risk, each African country has a lot to do.

That is an African general insight. The issue of REDD+ in Ethiopia is not far from this reality. In Ethiopia, more than 85% of GHG emissions come these days from forestry and agriculture and under Ethiopian Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy, Ethiopia has planned to reduce 255 mt CO₂ per year while ensuring economic growth (CRGE, 2011). REDD+ will be implemented within Ethiopia's Climate Resilience Green Economy (CRGE) Strategy framework, which is in implementation since 2011, with a goal of estimated emissions reduction or carbon removals of 130 million tCO₂e annually, 50% of GHG emissions between 2010 and 2030 will be removed by implementing REDD+ process (ETHIOPIAN DRAFT NATIONAL REDD+ STRATEGY: 2014).

Ethiopia holds 17 068 000.5 hectares of forests including woodlands and shrublands coverings (FAO, 2020). In Ethiopia, REDD+ is the implementation phase since 2012 in its regions such as in Oromia, Amhara, Southern Nations and Nationalities, Tigray, Benishanul-Gumuz and the Gambella Regional States Oromia Regional State, the biggest state in terms of skilled human resource, land size, population and are among subnational REDD+ implementing administrative bodies in Ethiopia. The Oromia region constitutes roughly 50% of Ethiopian forest coverage (The State of Oromia Jurisdictional Sustainability: 2018).

To implement REDD+ successfully in Oromia, legitimacy, the coherency of policies and strategies with ease of implementation, inclusive stakeholders' engagement and transparent utilization of financial resources are critically important. Therefore, in order to adopt smart policies that can help to realize the development dream of the nation, there should be a strong green economy policy. Therefore, this research assessed the implementation of the REDD+ program in terms of the above points and identified the major challenges, strengths and provided recommendations for better implementation of the program in Oromia Regional State as well as in Ethiopia.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

REDD+ stands for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation, through conservation, sustainable management of forests, and enhancement of forest carbon stocks. Essentially, REDD+ is one of several approaches accepted by the United Nations to mitigate the effects of climate change by offering financial incentives to governments to protect their forests instead of tearing them down (Westholm, 2010). According to Cfor (2013), there are several obstacles faced in the implementation of REDD+ such as policy ineffectiveness, lack of coordination among stakeholders and limited involvement of stakeholders. In the process of effective REDD+ implementation, policies on REDD+ implementation should be legitimate and coherent by developing the policy through the participation of all relevant stakeholders which helps to limit the negative influence of government officials in the process of REDD+ implementation.

As of Africa despite a weak role in significantly influencing the course of the UNFCCC negotiations and the challenges they face in implementing REDD+, 26 African countries have shown interest so far with national REDD+ readiness plans and policy documents to implement REDD+ program (UN-REDD, 2014). Some have also established REDD+ pilot projects. Most are partnering with UN-REDD, have signed bilateral agreements with developed countries, or have sought multilateral arrangements with international financing or technical institutions. For instance, in Africa, the most concern is given in Kenya to the system of managing REDD+ finance, with both REDD+ revenues and expenditure management. This UN-REDD research says the clear policy is not developed so far in Kenya on how this will be approached by the government, but the current lack of transparency and meager accountability in the forestry sector at the national, county, and community level increases the risk that REDD+ revenues could be vulnerable to embezzlement and mismanagement (IBID). So that, policy effectiveness, inclusive stakeholders' engagement and efficient and transparent financial resource utilization in the process of REDD+ implementation is critically important.

In the history of the Ethiopia, there was hard times caused by harsh droughts, which contributed to devastating famines with the mid-1980s one being cause for more than 1 million people to have starved. But, now government of Ethiopia appears to be more committed than ever before to addressing the challenges of climate change and dealing with the problems of deforestation and forest degradation. The country has prioritized combating

deforestation and reducing carbon emissions as one of its strategies to build a climate-resilient green economy. One of the mechanisms the government has planned to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation is adopting and institutionalizing REDD+ as a potentially attractive and stable form of financing sustainable forest management. To this effect, the government has adopted various institutional and program initiatives and there seems to be encouraging political commitment to realize the objectives of REDD+. New green shoots of optimism have emerged with the coming of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali and launched an ambitious program and succeed by planting 4 billion seedlings a record-breaking 350 million trees in just one day. With this motivation Ethiopia aspires to build a carbon-neutral, middle-income economy, climate-resilient society by 2030 (Bekele, Tesfaye, et al,2015).

Having this fact at the national level, the national program cascaded into Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, Sothern Nations and Nationalities, Gambella and Benishangul Gumuz Regions. The first and 50% of the REDD+ implementation carried out in the Oromia region. Ethiopia has 17 068 000.5 hectares of forests including woodlands and shrub lands coverings (FAO, 2020). Oromia Regional State is the largest Ethiopian region in area, forest cover, and population possessing ~50% of Ethiopia's forests, including over 1.2 million hectares of protected areas, wildlife reserves, and community-managed forests (The State of Oromia Jurisdictional Sustainability: 2018). Effective implementation of REDD+ program in Oromia would have significant impact on Ethiopia's effort to implement the program at national level. In Oromia the REDD+ program is implemented through two giant projects called Oromia Forested land program and REDD+ Investment Program (OFLAP and RIP). Oromia Forested Landscape Program (OFLP) and Oromia REDD+ Investment Program (RIP) are two internationally supported programs by ISFL in Ethiopia (BioCF), Signed in March 2017. Its implementation period is five years (2017- 2022).

Although many positive measures are being adopted by the government, the effective application of REDD+ activities still needs more policy and institutional initiatives. The issue of climate change is a widely studied area, however, study particularly focusing on REDD+ is hard to find. In fact, some studies indirectly raise the issue. For instance, Sisay (2015) had conducted research under the title *Non-carbon benefits for effective implementation of REDD+: The case of Bale Mountains Eco-Region, Southeastern Ethiopia* assessed species richness and similarity, diversity, evenness, and stand structure of the woody species, the amount of carbon stock stored in the above-ground biomass of woody species, the

relationship between the Shannon diversity indices and carbon stock, identified the most important forest non-carbon benefits obtained by the local communities from the forests and determined the contribution of forest resources to the local economy when compared with other incomes generated from agriculture, including livestock.

Another study also carried out by Duker *et al* (2019) determined the implications of ignoring smallholder agriculture in climate-financed forestry projects with a case study of REDD+ implementation in Bale Mountain Eco-region REDD+ Project. Similarly, Sisy (2018) assessed the impact of the landscape approach, non-carbon benefits, and institutional arrangement for Effective REDD+ Implementation in Ethiopia with specific study area on Bale Mountains Eco-region REDD+ implementation project.

The focus of these studies is limited in scope and bounded by specific time coverage. Furthermore, the studies are one-sided, focused on the technical point of view, and concentrated on a specific area which is around Bale. Similarly, there are knowledge and information gaps on the issue related to policy effectiveness (Legitimacy, coherency, and ease of implementation of policies), inclusive stakeholders' engagement, efficient and transparent financial utilization in the process of REDD+ implementation in the region.

Thus, as long as no one has previously come up with pragmatic work that precisely fits with what the researcher raised, the need to emphasize institutional effectiveness for effective implementation of REDD+ in the whole Oromia region is not questionable.

Accordingly, the study assessed and identified major challenges and strengths of REDD+ in Oromia Regional State to contribute to the effort of installing effective implementation of REDD+ in the region as well as national level. This thesis has focused on evaluating the effectiveness of the implementation of REDD+ program in Oromia Regional state, especially by evaluating the impact of approved policy and strategy in the implementation of REDD+ program, evaluate the situation of stakeholders engagements in the process of REDD+ implementation and evaluate the situation of financial resource utilization.

1.3 Research Questions

1. What are the situation of REDD+ policy, policy objectives, policy instruments and their legitimacy and coherency?
2. What is the situation and gaps of stakeholders' engagement and institutional arrangements?
3. What are the gaps of financial resource management in REDD+ implementation?

1.4 Objectives of the Research

1.4.1 General Objective

The overall aim of this study is to assess the effectiveness of REDD+ implementation in Oromia Regional State

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

1. To evaluate the situation of REDD+ policy, policy objectives, policy instruments, their legitimacy and coherency.
2. To investigate the situation and gaps of stakeholders engagement and institutional arrangements.
3. To evaluate the gaps of financial resource management in REDD+ implementation.

1.5 The Scope of the Study

Thematically, the study was concentrated on REDD+ implementation investigating the status of REDD+ implementation effectiveness in the Oromia region, identifying policy objectives and policy instruments, financial resource management efficiency, and transparency of the REDD+ implementation, and focused on disclosing the stakeholder's engagement of REDD+ implementation in Oromia region. Generally, the study was limited on major shortcomings, challenges faced and good experiences gained in the process of REDD+ implementation in the region. Particularly focused on evaluating the legitimacy, coherence, and ease of policy implementation policy and strategy, examines how stakeholder engagement is inclusive and efficiency and transparency of financial resource utilization in the process or REDD+ implementation in the Oromia region.

Geographical, this research work was limited to the country's biggest region Oromia, whereby the researcher got easy access to the region and the region takes the lion share (50%) of Ethiopia's REDD+ implementing area,

1.6 Significance of the Study

In spite, of the limitations referred below this study have several areas in which the result of the study can contribute to the existing knowledge and understandings. Even though, fundamentally the study is conducted for academic purpose, the study can open the door to create the stage to be a discussion area for different stakeholders those who have the interest on the environmental issue. It would identify important gaps and suggest relevant solutions that can be used to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of REDD+ in Oromia

Regional State. The paper is expected to shed light on the possibilities for the consolidation of REDD+ implementation to improve the nation's green economy. Furthermore, the result of the study is going to alert stakeholders able to understand the drawbacks, successes of the implementation and helps to excel up to the other regions. Finally, the finding of the study can serve as a springboard for other researchers who are interested in further research in the area of REDD+ implementation.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study despite useful insights concerning REDD+ implementation, however, there are some possible limitations. The first limitation is that the study does not attempt to cover the measurement of the reduction of carbon dioxide from the effective implementation of REDD+ implementation in the Oromia region. And also, the study did not evaluate the regularity and frequency of steering and technical committee at Woreda and regional level.

Similarly, even if the study was aimed to assess the effectiveness of REDD+ implementation in the entire Oromia region, due to time and financial limitations, it was focused only on representative Nekemte and Chancho Woreda coordination centers. This two centers represent the hotspot and non-hotspot zones of REDD+ implementation centers consecutively.

In the same vein, collecting relevant documents was not an easy job. It was very challenging to get updated documents due to poor culture of registering and documenting relevant information at least what is practically done. Finally, the study has the limitations of generalization of the result of the two coordinating centers to the whole Oromia. Accordingly, the study shares the limitations that emanate from using a single research method and a mix of sampling techniques. The study also do not exactly measure the improvement made in the region relating to forest coverage since the start of the REDD+ program implementation in the region.

1.8 Organization of the Research

The thesis is organized into five chapters.

Chapter One- Introduction: Deals with the introductory sections of a research study. It consists of the Background of the study, Statement of the Problem, Objectives of the Research, Significance of the Study, Scope of the Study, and Limitations of the Study.

Chapter Two- Review of Literature: This chapter presents empirical studies and theoretical discourse related to REDD+ implementation emphasizing investigating financial efficiency, stakeholder engagement, policy objects, etc.

Chapter Three- Research Methodology: This chapter presents the overall components of research design: research approach, data type, sources, and data analysis strategy.

Chapter Four- Presentation, Analysis, and Discussion of the Findings: It presents the findings as to the REDD+ implementation in the region. It covers the data presentation, analysis, and interpretation segment where the major findings of the study based on the data collected from questionnaires are summarized, analyzed, and interpreted.

Chapter Five- Summary of Findings, Conclusions, and Recommendations: Finally, this part makes a summary of the findings. It concludes and makes respective reflections and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the theoretical and conceptual discussion of the study. It mainly demonstrates empirical studies in REDD+ implementation. It also embraces a review of the research gap; theories of policy change, the conceptual framework that driven from the review to guide the research, and lastly, definitions of certain concepts sketched out.

2.2 Empirical Studies and Theoretical Discourse

2.2.1 Policy Effectiveness

Policy effectiveness critically plays a central role in the implementation, steering, and governance of policies with non-state actor's participation being a factor influencing policy delivery (Hill and Hupe 2002). The European Union Commission on European Governance explains the criterion of policy effectiveness as legitimacy, participation, accountability, coherence, and its easiness of implementation (European Commission 2001). These can be summarized into policy legitimacy, policy coherence, and ease of policy implementation.

2.2.2 Policy Legitimacy and cherence

Policy legitimacy is a complex and multifaceted concept that ensures citizens are willing to accept a policy (Beetham & Lord 1998). A policy can be defined as legitimate when three principles are respected. Firstly, legitimacy depends on the principle of legality in which Policy has to abide by certain norms and rules such as for insistence, policy choices should be established by those officially mandated to formulate the policy. Secondly, the policy has to be formulated democratically. Stakeholders have to have the possibility to influence the policy. And thirdly, policy needs to be effective and efficient. This third principle includes elements such as acceptability and ease of implementation (Rosenthal et al. 1996).

Policy legitimacy is the acceptance and recognition of policy by all relevant stakeholders. For a policy to be effective, it has to be owned by all stakeholders that take part in its implementation and by who is affected by its implementation. Policy legitimacy is not only organizing consultation for the minimum legal requirements to be met but also introducing different mechanisms in the policy-making process to cover different elements of policy

legitimacy, such as performance, democracy, and legality (Joris, Van Damme, & Brans 2010).

Improved participation of all relevant stakeholders in the process of policy formulation helps to bring about better legitimacy by giving stakeholders fair, balanced, and equal access to political processes, helping to elevate transparency of state actors, by making state actors accountable to the citizens and other actors concerned and making non-state actors' voices heard and taken into account in political decision-making (Karl *et al.* 2012).

Inclusive stakeholder participation brings in local and sectoral knowledge in the process of policy formulation enhances the legitimacy of policy-making by making decisions that are more efficient and owned by stakeholders (Papadopoulos and Warin 2007). The participation of stakeholders has to be fair and has to equally represent all interests across the board. The standard of representation of interests needs to ask whether the stakeholders in the process are also authorized representatives (high-ranking officials assuming they are democratically elected) with a mandate. Transparency and fairness are important conditions for legitimacy because they determine the quality and accessibility of collecting information or provide equal opportunities to participate in decision-making. Fairness refers to fair participation and a communication process in which all the participants are involved on an equal basis concerning their interest at stake (Beisheim and Dingwerth 2008).

2.2.3 Ease of Policy Implementation

A state's capacity to implement policy is central in policy formulation and implementation. A widely known definition describes state capacity as "the ability of states to implement official policies over the opposition of powerful social segments and in the face of difficult economic conditions" (Skocpol, 1990). State capacity in policy implementation is the ability to formulate policy with clear policy objectives and the ability to formulate policy instruments that play a critical role in policy implementation to produce the desired result. Policy instruments are tools that can be economical (taxes, spending, incentives) and regulatory (voluntary and legal) used by governments to pursue the desired outcome from policy implementation (Paul Cairney, 2015).

Formulating a crystal clear objective is also another important factor in implementing policies. Sabatier and Mazmanian (1979) identified formulating a clear objective as a condition for effective implementation of policies (Sabatier and Mazmanian 1979).

Conflicting intergovernmental, cross-sectoral, and cross-cutting policies make REDD+ difficult to implement effectively exacerbated by poor design and implementation of the laws and regulations which is strongly linked to weak coordination between sectors (Korhonen et al., 2014). Korhonen et al. (2014), further note that REDD+ implementation requires coordination between policies related to climate change, forests, and other policies. In addition, national and local institutions also determine the success of the REDD+ programs. Law enforcement, funding streams, and reinforcing motivation need to align ineffective policy triangles (Bemelmans-Videc et al. 1998).

2.2.4 Effective Stakeholders Engagement

In an implementation of any program, policies and socioeconomic settings are interlinked with multiple stakeholders and national sectors linked to forests in one way or another. Ensuring inclusive multi-stakeholder engagements in a way that creates coherence across the interests of various forest stakeholders is critical for the implementation of projects such as REDD+ (Ribot, 2009). Developing countries are known for their weak institutions so effective stakeholders' engagement which include all relevant stakeholders from policy formulation to decision making to implementation process is poor with reports of many instances of poor stakeholder engagements in national REDD+ processes (Ghazoul et al. 2010)

2.2.5 Mechanisms of better stakeholders' engagement

1. Benefit Sharing

REDD+ implementation involves several stakeholders in all phases at different levels and there is a benefit attached to the process. This benefit needs to be distributed appropriately to all the stakeholders. Nationally, appropriate benefit-sharing would provide a platform for affected stakeholders and rights holders to get involved in and take part in decision-making processes (Daviet, *et al*, 2011). Stakeholder participation reduces risks of corruption and conflicts (Aquino and Guay, 2013), but also helps in designing of proper benefit sharing mechanism (Alemag, *et al*, 2014) and is important to ensure procedural equity of REDD+ benefit sharing systems (Luttrell *et al*, 2013).

2. Incentives

If a community gets incentives to protect, conserve, and reasonably use forest resources in its surroundings, there is a better chance that effective REDD+ implementation would be successful. Incentives can be as simple as food aid in areas of food insecure woredas for community-based area enclosures (Mengistu *et al.*, 2005), tax holidays on revenues to the protection of rights (Leite *et al.*, 2014; Doss and Meinzen-Dick, 2015). It is supposed that when an individual does not own or benefit from a resource, he/she has no lasting interest in protecting the resource over a long period. Thus, cannot be expected to act constructively to maintain and sustain the resource (Ostrom and Cox, 2010). In this regard, providing an incentive to the surrounding community for protecting and preserving a forest resource can be helpful in the effective implementation of the REDD+ program in Ethiopia.

2.2.6 Ethiopian REDD+ Strategy

In Ethiopia, REDD+ is under implementation within the framework of the country's Climate Resilience Green Economy (CRGE) Strategy framework that sets out by 2025, Ethiopia will become a middle-income country, resilient to climate change impacts and with a zero-net increase in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and keep emission below the 2010 levels (150 Mt CO₂e) which would reach 400Mt CO₂e without the strategy. The document also indicates effective implementation of REDD+ requires the presence and efficient implementation of relevant policies and legal frameworks governing the forestry sector and cross-sectoral issues such as land tenure, energy, land-use policies, agriculture development programs (CRGE, 2011).

Ethiopian ministry of environment, forest and climate change in cooperation with national REDD+ secretariat prepared draft national REDD+ strategy intending to address policy, legal and institutional issues related to land use and forest governance to enable forest conservation, the establishment of strong institutional mechanisms for effective cross-sectoral coordination, developing a robust and transparent approach and methodologies for the implementation of REDD+, mobilizing resources, establishing and operationalizing a transparent REDD+ financial management mechanism and a fair benefit sharing and establishing mechanisms for active participation and engagement of a wide range of stakeholders including communities (Ethiopian REDD+ strategy, 2018).

The draft strategy further stresses alignment of the national REDD+ strategy with objectives of national policies and strategies namely with CRGE and growth and transformation plan two. The REDD+ strategy is linked with CRGE at the junction of the two strategic objectives which says forestry sector, with REDD+ as its major mitigation lever, will contribute 50% of the total emission reduction. Similarly, the REDD+ strategy objective is linked to growth and transformation plan objectives at Sustainable financing through REDD+ will support investment in forest management, forest conservation, and forest restoration with the forest sector contribution to national gross domestic product up to 11.2% (Ethiopian national REDD+ Strategy, 2018).

2.2.7 Financial Resource management efficiency and transparency in REDD+ Implementation

The UNFCCC has made two important decisions regarding international financing of all phases of REDD+ programs. The first one is the 2/cp.17 decision made in 2012 in the city of Durban, South Africa at its seventeenth conference, which read on its paragraph 65 as *“Agrees that results-based finance provided to developing country Parties that is new, additional and predictable may come from a wide variety of sources, public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative Sources”* (UNFCCC 2/cp.17 decision, 2011).

The second decision is the 9/cp.19 decision, paragraph 5, which provides further guidance reading as *”Encourages entities financing the activities referred to in decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 70, through the wide variety of sources referred to in decision 2/CP.17, paragraph 65, including the Green Climate Fund in a key role, to collectively channel adequate and predictable results-based finance in a fair and balanced manner, taking into account different policy approaches, while working with a view to increasing the number of countries that are in a position to obtain and receive payments for results-based actions”* (UNFCCC 9/cp.19 decision, 2013).

Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, as well as promoting the Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests and Enhancement of Forest Carbon Stocks (REDD+) is a voluntary initiative established under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to create financial incentives for developing countries to reduce forest-related greenhouse gas emissions (UNEP, 2015). The financial incentive is the engine that drives the realization of successful REDD+ implementation to hit

its target. Therefore, this scarce financial resource, which comes from implementing country and international dinners, has to be managed transparently.

Because REDD+ is implemented widely in developing countries and due to the incapability of institutions in these countries, the possibility of lack of efficiency and transparency, and corruption would be relatively high in the implementation phase of the project.

Transparency International listed the root cause of corruption in the REDD+ implementation process in its 2012 publication titled '*KEEPING REDD+ CLEAN: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO PREVENTING CORRUPTION*' (Transparency International, 2012) says as large influxes of funding from the international development community, frequently coupled with short timeframes for delivery of results, forest carbon remains an intangible commodity to be traded, remoteness of many forest carbon and REDD+ pilot project areas, technical complexity of terminology used, forest carbon emission reduction calculations, monitoring and management, unhealthy carbon credit dealers or 'Carbon cowboys' and international finance and uncertainties over future finance and access to the market.

UN-REDD Program listed key points that can be used to assess transparency and integrity of the REDD+ program in its publication (UN-REDD, 2014) as participation of relevant stakeholders, transparency and access to information, citizen demand for accountability and complaints, and justice delivery in all or existing REDD+ phases.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

There are several obstacles faced in the implementation of REDD+, among others: lack of coordination, limited involvement of vulnerable groups, potential conflict, policy ineffectiveness, strong influence of private sector interests, and weak policy implementation (Cifor, 2013). This indicates that the effective implementation of REDD+ requires efficient collaboration among all the above parties.

Joint management approaches among the community, government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and international donors need a common commitment and can be used as a strategy to foster sustainable forest management, potentially encouraging community-level participation in the REDD+ program (Sample *et al.*, 2006).

Having this in mind, effective implementation of REDD+ can be seen from three-point of view. The first one is policy effectiveness which ranges from having legitimate, coherent, and ease of policy implementation with clear objectives supported by relevant policy instruments.

The legitimate policy is a policy formulated by a mandated government agency with inclusive participation of all relevant stakeholders and this plays a critical role in having a coherent policy with relevant stakeholder's policies in which the policy instruments of different sectors do not contradict each another. Once we have a legitimate and coherent policy supported with clear objectives and relevant policy instruments, its implementation would be easy.

Effective engagement of all stakeholders from international donors to the local community in an inclusive manner is critically important to formulate legitimate and coherent policy and strategies and has also a significant impact on the transparent and efficient utilization of REDD+ financial resource as there is a better chance for check and balance among the stakeholders. Similarly having a legitimate policy or strategy with a clear objective and necessary policy instrument is important to be efficient in financial resource utilization because a legitimate policy is formulated by the mandated government agency with accountability and responsibility and when a policy is coherent, it reduces duplication of effort increasing efficiency. Stakeholders can be seen at the policy formulation level which includes UN agencies such as the World Bank and stakeholders in the implementation of the REDD+ program which more engages local communities.

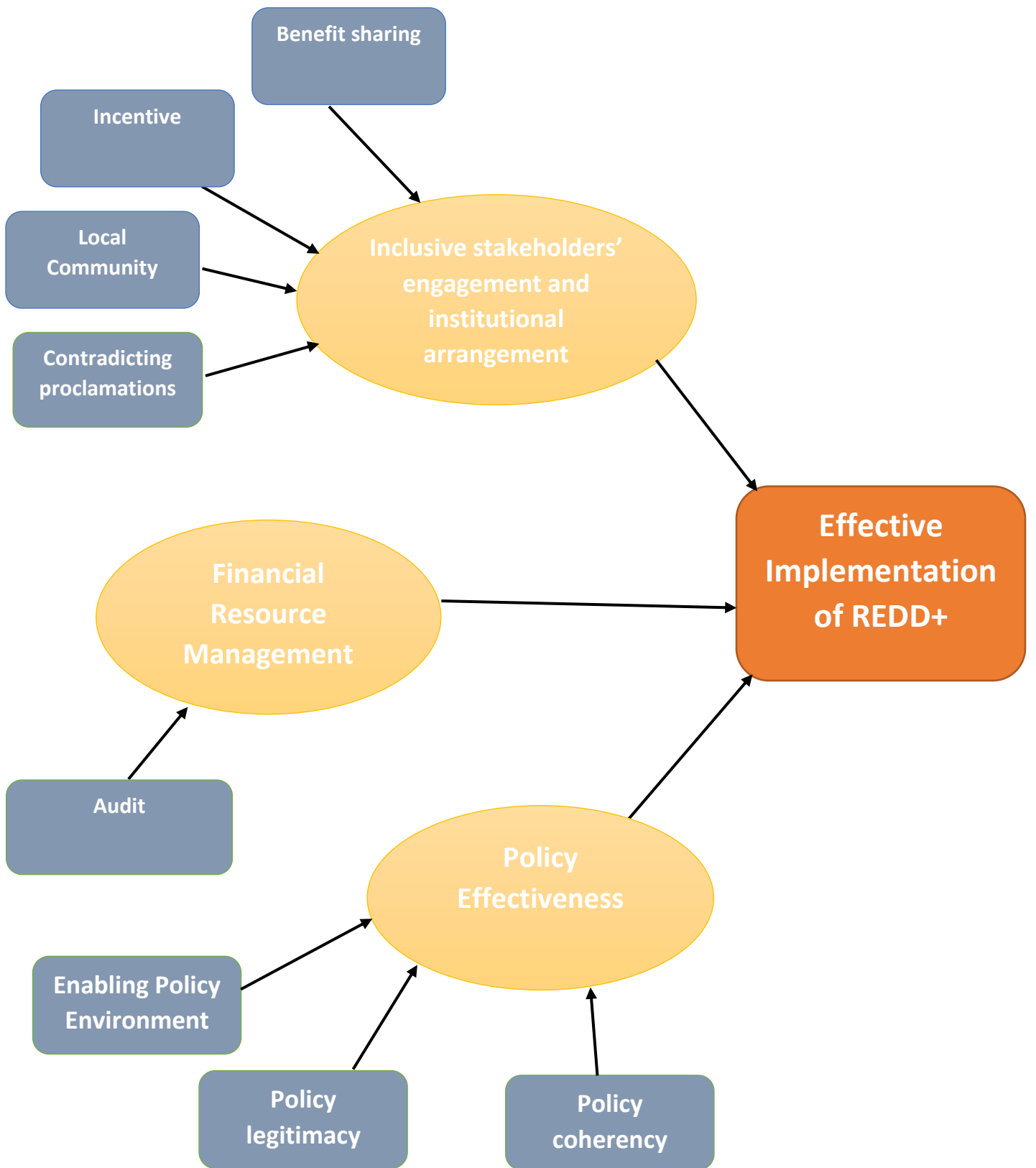


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

2.4 Review of Empirical Studies on REDD+ implementation

The literature that exists concerning the effective implementation of REDD+ program that are directly or indirectly related to the variables or objectives of this study were reviewed.

Research has revealed that reducing emissions from effective implementation of deforestation and forest degradation program (REDD+) is a possibly effective way to reduce net emissions through increased carbon sequestration. For instance, Gullison et al. (2007) predict that total emissions reductions from reducing deforestation rates by 50 percent by the year 2050, and keeping those rates for next 50 years, would save the comparable of worldwide fossil fuel emission for the past 6 (six) years. Economic valuations also have shown Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) to be a potentially cost-effective way of reducing emissions (IPCC 2007; Jakeman and Fisher 2006; Eliasch 2008; Kindermann et al., 2008). Emissions reductions from forest management activities could amount to an estimated savings in abatement costs of almost US\$ 2 trillion worldwide for meeting a global 550 parts per million CO₂ concentration limitation relative to relying only on reducing gross emissions of GHGs (Tavoni et al. 2007).

But all the above discussed point to happen, effective implementation of REDD+ program is essentially important. In the same fashion effective implementation of REDD+ needs effective implementation of all relevant stakeholders. Policymakers, including in particular UNFCCC negotiators, understand the needs, priorities and views of private sector investors, lenders and insurers in relation to the specific characteristics of forest-based mitigation opportunities, so as to facilitate their involvement. Without such involvement, it seems likely, for reasons outlined in this report, that the effective implementation of forest-based climate change mitigation at the needed scale seriously risks remaining an idea rather than becoming a reality (UNEP, 2011).

Effective financial resource utilization and political stability is also another milestone in the process of effective implementation of REDD+ program. Similarly legal frameworks, policy objectives and instruments, corruptions are very critical to effectively implement REDD+ program. For instance, a study conducted on *designing an effective regime for financing forest-based climate change mitigation* under the title Reddy Set Grow by UNEP in 2011 says that to mitigate the most significant investment risk category in the developing world are political stability and regulatory risks. These risk categories are few of the main

weaknesses to improve effective implementation of REDD+ in developing world generally. It results from track records of political instability and corruption as well as regulatory and legal uncertainty in the countries concerned. This risk is already detrimental to implement the REDD+ program, but it would be considerably intensified, in a REDD+ context specifically, if all future REDD+ revenue streams, be they from carbon markets or from an international fund, were administered and distributed exclusively by public bodies and through government channels (UNEP, 2011).

The study explains the policy legitimacy and coherency gaps, stakeholders engagement situations, gaps related to financial resource utilization that are bottlenecks to the effective implementation of reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) program.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter deals with study design, data types and sources of data, methods of data collection, population, sampling unit and sampling frame, data analysis, and finally it also explains about ethical considerations of the study.

3.1 Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in Oromia Regional State. Oromia region is situated between 3°24'20"10°023'26" N latitudes and 34°007'37"-42°058'51" E longitudes. Oromia is Ethiopia's largest regional state in terms of land area with around 28.5 million hectares, roughly the size of Italy, and the most populous region with over 30 million inhabitants and has a forest cover of approximately 9 million ha in total (OFLP-SESA Report, 2017). The forest coverage of the Oromia region accounts for about 50% of Ethiopian total forest coverage (FAO, 2010).

The report explains that, according to the national forest definition, 284 of Oromia regional state rural and semi-rural woredas do include some form of forest. The report further stresses that most of the region's high forest (moist montane forests) is found in the Bale forested landscape in the southeast part of the region and the Jimma, Wellega and Ilu-Ababora forested landscape in the western part of the region.

Based on the national population data published in 2014, there are 31,153,434 people living in the region in total, where less than 16% of the region's population live in the urban areas and close to 84% live in the rural areas. 51% of the total region's population is represented by men and the remaining 48% is represented by women. The Oromia Region is the most populous in the country and accommodates around 39% of the entire nation. With 353,690 square kilometres of land area (32% of the country) Oromia represents the largest regional State (AFB, 2018).

The Oromia Regional State's Forest cover benefits not only the region but also the neighboring regions and even neighboring countries. For example, Bale Forest serves as the water tower for Ethiopia's eastern drylands in Oromia and the Somali regions as well as the Republic of Somalia, drought-vulnerable arid areas where mobile pastoralism is the predominant livelihood system (OFLP-SESA Report, 2017). The report also stresses that Oromia is home to globally important biodiversity including endangered endemic species

such as the Abyssinian wolf and the mountain Nyla. Oromia's western forests are home to endemic coffee (*Coffea arabica* L.) that has high potential as a value-added export and harbor wild varieties of the species.

REDD+ is implemented in Oromia regional state through two programs called Oromia Forested Landscape Program (OFLP) and REDD+ Investment Program (RIP). OFLP is implemented in all 287 Oromia current rural and semi-rural woredas while RIP is implemented in 41 Woredas of the region. RIP invest in activities such as plant nurseries that support the better implementation of OFLP in the region. World Bank has granted the Oromia Forested Landscape Program 18 million US dollars (effective from 28 April 2017 to April 27, 2022), and will grant an additional 50 million US Dollars for results-based payment against verified emission reduction which will be implemented for ten years period of time. These two funds are from the World Bank Group.

Under the framework of the bilateral REDD+ Partnership Agreement, the Royal Norwegian government funds a REDD+ Investment Program (RIP) with 100 million US dollar, of which, 80 million US Dollar is apportioned for the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change for its implementation in five regional states including Oromia regional state (Ethiopia Readiness Progress and Multi-stakeholder Self-Assessment Report of Ethiopia, 2017).

According to the draft Oromia forested landscape Program implementation manual, REDD+ is under implementation in 287 rural and semi-rural woredas of which 49 woredas of Western East Wollega, Wollega, Kellem Wollega, Ilu Aba Bora, Guji, Western Guji, Borena, Buno Badelle zones are classified as hotspot forest degradation areas with a relatively high degree of deforestation while the rest 238 woredas are categorized as non-hotspot woredas (OFLAP implementation Manual, 2017).

Table 1: The three coordinating centers of Oromia REDD+ with their respective Zones

REDD+ implementation project classifies Oromia Region into 3 coordinating centers		
Nekemte CC has 7 zones (Nekemte Woreda is Coordinating Units with 7 weredas)	Adama CC has 7 zones (Chanco is Coordinating with 16 weredas)	Shashemene CC has 6 zones
1. Kellem Wollega,	1. West Shoa,	1. Guji,
2. West Wollega,	2. South West Shoa,	2. West Guji,
3. East Wollega,	3. Finfine Special Zone,	3. Borena,
4. Horro Guduru Wollega,	4. North Shoa,	4. West Arsi,
5. Ilu Aba Bora,	5. East Shoa,	5. Arsi, and
6. Buno Bedelle and	6. West Harage and	6. Bale zones
7. Jimma zones	7. East Haeage zones	

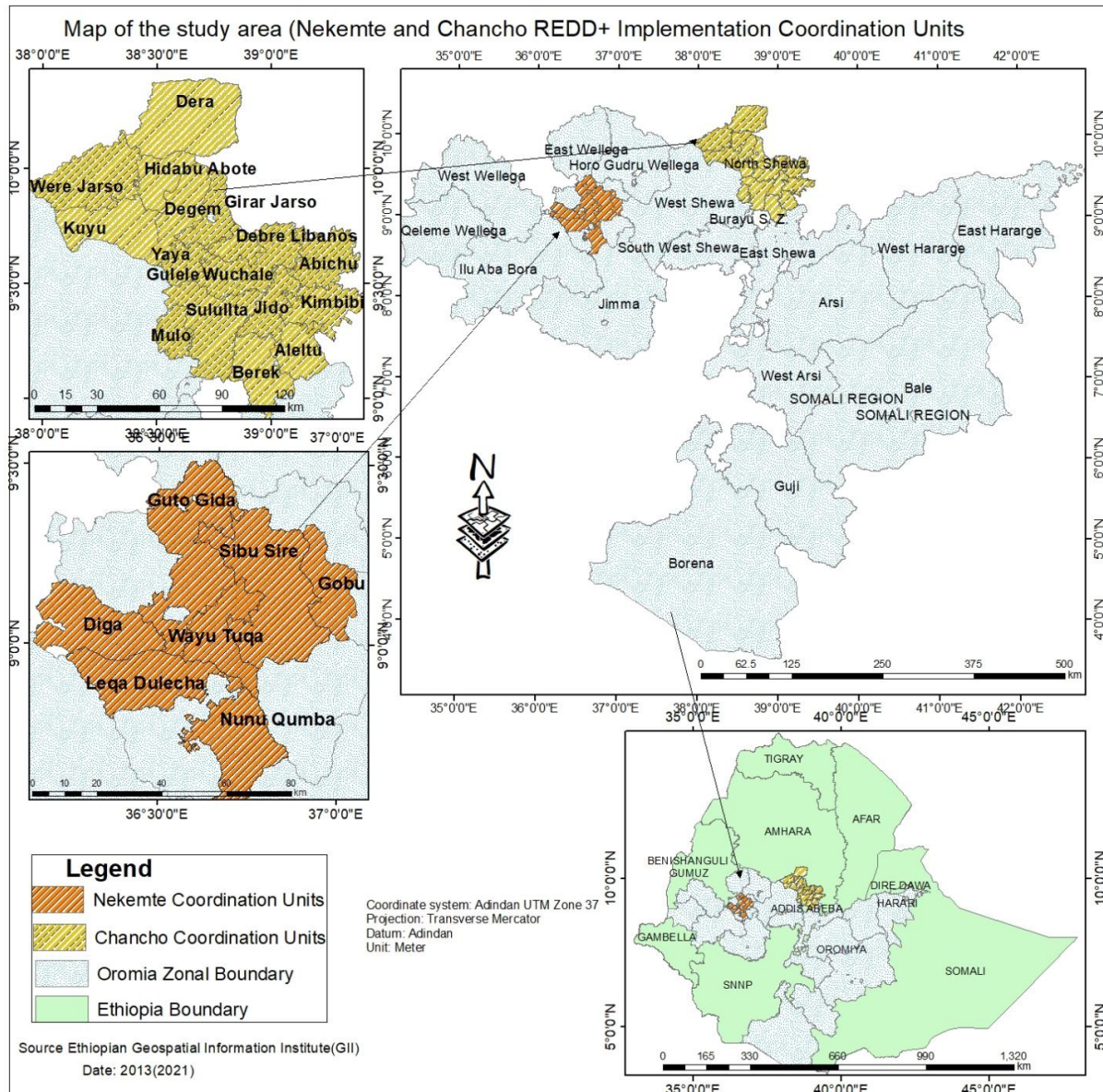
(Own Source, 2021)

The project implementation manual further classifies all the twenty zones of Oromia to be coordinated into three centers. Nekemte is a center to coordinate western Oromia which include Kellem Wollega, West Wollega, East Wollega, Horro Guduru Wollega, Ilu Aba Bora, Buno Bedelle, and Jimma zones. Adama is a center to coordinate West Shoa, South West Shoa, Finfine Special Zone, North Shoa, East Shoa, west Harage and East Haeage zones and Shashemene is a center to facilitate activities in Guji, West Guji, Borena, West Arsi, Arsi, and Bale zones. All the three coordinating centers have identified some weredas as coordinating units with Chora Woreda of Buno Bedelle zone from Nekemte center with only three Woredas under its unit and Chanco Woreda from Adama center is the largest coordinating unit with sixteen weredas under its unit.

All the woreda REDD+ implementing units have a steering committee and technical committee with a steering committee made of six woreda official and six professionals for the technical committee from the same office of the professionals (PID, 2017)

In Oromia regional state,

Figure 2: Map of the study area (Chancho and Nekemte REDD+ Coordination Units)



To have a better representation of the region, two woreda coordinators (one from hotspot and one from non-hotspot) with a bigger number of woredas. These woreda coordinators are, in consultation with the head of Woreda environment, forest, and climate change, are responsible for facilitating overall planning, implementation, and monitoring of the OFLP at the woreda level to ensure harmonization and integration of activities of REDD+ implementation (PID, 2017). Woreda coordinating units for hotspots woredas do planning and implement plant nursery development, organize reports of woreda under them, and report

to the region through their respective zones in addition to solving problems woredas under their face. While non-hotspot coordinating woredas coordinate reports of their woreda and report to the region and solve the problem their woredas face in coordination with the region and other stakeholders. Coordinating units with relatively many woredas would help in getting a better representation of the region in the research.

3.2 Research Approach

The main aim of the study was, to assess the effectiveness of REDD+ implementation in Oromia Regional State and to achieve this objective, the researcher used a mixed research design. According to Creswell (2007), qualitative research is advantageous to get deep information about the meaning, experience, and role of the issue.

This study employed a qualitative research approach. Qualitative (a non-numerical data collection) research is a method of inquiry appropriated in many different academic disciplines, traditionally in the social science, but also in market research and further contexts (Mittal and Saxena, 2012). Qualitative research not only involves completely different techniques from those used in quantitative research but also requires a radically different cast of mind and basic philosophy. Moreover, there is a paradigm shift, from positivist to interpretive (Corbetta, 2003). Qualitative research is often used for policy and program studies since it can answer certain important questions more efficiently and effectively than the quantitative approach (Mittal and Saxena, 2012:55). This is particularly the case for exploring and explaining why and how certain policy change effects took place in the political system of a given nation-state. The main interest of the researcher was to gather in-depth information about the implementation of REDD+ project in Oromia Regional State so that it would be easy to assess the effective implementation of the project in the region. To this effect, smaller but focused samples are needed, rather than a large sample. The researcher was well aware of the fact that many qualitative methods require researchers' careful coding of data and discern and documenting them consistently and reliably. Moreover, the researcher did not speak much about the techniques or stages since qualitative research cannot be reduced to particular techniques nor the set of stages, but rather that dynamic process involves linking together problems, theories, and methods (Bryman and Burgess, 1994).

3.3 Research Design

This study has particularly used a combination of descriptive and explanatory inquiries. Descriptive design sets out to describe and interpret in detail "what" is the status. Descriptive answer questions of what and where. It looks individuals, groups, institutions, methods, and materials to describe, compares contrast, classify, analyze and interprets the entities various field of inquiry (Zerihun 2018). So that, to enable describing and explaining the status of REDD+ implementation effectiveness in the Oromia region, identifying policy objectives and policy instruments, and focused on disclosing the stakeholder's engagement of REDD+ implementation in the Oromia region qualitatively the research employed descriptive inquiry. On the other hand, as an explanatory inquiry, the research also tried to explain the financial resource management efficiency and transparency of the REDD+ implementation.

3.4 Source of Data and Data Collection Instruments

3.4.1 Source of Data

In this study, primary and secondary data were used. Primary data employed through the interview and observation, focus group discussion for the purpose to capture respondents' insight and opinion. Secondary Data Source: in addition to the aforementioned data source secondary data source is also installed to support through extensive document reviews. The assumption of the researcher towards using these sources of data was to cover all the processes since the implementation of REDD+ in Ethiopia. Document review includes the review of National REDD+ draft strategy, OFLAP document, RIP document, yearly financial audit reports, plan execution reports, and minutes.

3.4.2 Data Collection Instruments

Qualitative research may use different approaches in collecting data but this research typically relies on the following methods of data collection: participant observation, non-participant observation, structure interview, semi-structured interview, unstructured interview, and document review. However, the researcher has only interested to use four methods of data collection for this purpose. To obtain firsthand information, interviews (Multi-stage semi-structured), observation, document review, and focused group discussion were appropriately applied. Hereunder the details: -

- **Semi-Structured Interview:** to obtain firsthand qualitative information, an interview was applied appropriately. "Interviews provide in-depth information about participants' experiences and viewpoints of a particular topic" (Turner, 2010). Moreover, the interviewer overcomes the resistance of the respondents, samples were controlled more effectively and non-response generally remains very low and interviews are a frequent and important part of empirical research. This method helps the interviewer to gather more information in greater depth and provides greater flexibility in restructuring questions whenever necessary (Kothari, 2004). Accordingly selected relevant informants from National REDD+ Coordination Unit, Oromia REDD+ coordinating unit, relevant regional level stakeholders, two woreda level coordinating units are interviewed.
- **Observation:** as Turner (2010) stated usually, interviews are coupled with other forms of data collection to provide the researcher with a well-rounded collection of information for analyses. Thus, to get well-rounded data, an observation was carryout as one source of data collection. Therefore, the researcher observed and gathered data on what was the reality on the ground related to the REDD+ implementation process.
- **Document review:** The researcher to triangulate the validity and reliability of primary data employed document analysis as a secondary source of data collection instrument along with the primary data collection instrument. This technique facilitated cross-checking of the accuracy of the firsthand information. The researcher attempted to trace various published and unpublished documents used. Such as Federal REDD+ coordinating unit report to the UNFCCC, regional REDD+ reports, woreda reports, manuals, minutes, financial audit reports, and audio-visual files from regional and woreda level systematically reviewed and analyzed to have the full picture, in combination with primary data, on the effectiveness of REDD+ implementation in the region.
- **Focus Group Discussion:** The FGD is one of the qualitative data collection instruments used to gain depth information on the concepts, ideas, and views (Mohammed, 2018). It is also important to extract the view of different participants about the issue and to get rich data from the group of the same status. Morgan (2009) explains that "The ideal number for FGD is between five and eight". Before conducting the FGD, participants from the local communities from REDD+ implementation site were selected and the discussion took place. Two FGDS were conducted, one in Chancho Woreda, agamsa kebele while the second was in Nekemte district

Meti kebele. Two youth representatives (female and male), two adult representatives (female and male) and one old (above 55) man representative were part of the discussion to balance age and gender representatives in the group.

3.5 Sampling Techniques

The study applied different techniques and procedures. However as long as the research approach is qualitative, the sample's representativeness is not an issue but the concern was to find units that would help the researcher learn about the issues at hand (Tadele, 2017). For this reason, non-probability sampling designs specifically multi-stage sampling and purposive sampling types were applied. In multi-stage sampling, the sample is selected in multiple steps or stages. Moreover, if the unit of analysis is not selected in the first step, then the sampling procedure is multi-stage sampling (Corbet 2003 and Korb 2012). The application of multi-stage sampling, in this case, ensured that the sample group represents certain characteristics of the population chosen by the researcher. Whereas the process of drawing individuals subjects for interview from the sample was purposely dependent on certain qualities and characteristics.

In addition to this, respondents for focused group discussion were selected from the population-based on convenience sampling which involved choosing the actors at the convenience of the researcher, easy access (geographical proximity), availability at a given time and the willingness to participate was the point of reference. This method was employed for it reduces the time and cost of collecting information.

3.6 Population, Sampling Unit, and Sampling Frame

3.6.1 Sample Population

According to Kothari (2004), the population is the set of objects technically called the universe to be studied. Even though the populations differ in size, the total population is the collection of cases that meet a planned set of criteria and data (Wisniewisk, 1994). In this research, the total population is all Oromia Regional State REDD+ implementing woredas, and regional level REDD+ implementing office are considered to be the sampling population.

3.6.2 Sampling Unit

Sampling units for a study can be institutions, school, housing, construction site, village, urban center, or it may be an individual from which sample drawn (John, 2007). However, the sampling unit of this study was individuals who are enrolled in different steering and

technical committees from national to regional way to each subdivided hotspot and non-hotspot forest degradation REDD+ implementation weredas (Nekemte Woreda and Chancho Woreda).

3.6.3 Sampling Size

According to the Oromia Region Environment, Forest, and Climate Change authority REDD+ project implementation manual (2017-2022) there is a steering committee (woreda officials) and technical committee at the wereda level made from six offices. These offices are forest and wildlife enterprise, environment, forest and climate change office, OFLAP coordinator, woreda administration, land use planning team, and development agents (PID, 2017). Each office contributes one official and one professional for the activities of the committees. all members of the two committees were part of the interview. This gave us twelve participants from each woreda coordinating unit and the total is twenty-four. There are also two more key interview informants from the head of Oromia REDD+ implementation Center and one if from a world bank representative. The following table summarizes all the sample data except focus group discussion:

Table 2: Sampling size

Sample Size			
Sample Coordinating Centers (Zone)	Sample Coordinating Centers (Woreda)	Sample Committee	No Sample Individuals
1. Nekemte Coordinating Units	1.Nekemte Woreda Coordinating Units	Steering Committee	6 woreda officials
		Technical Committee	6 experts
2. Adama Coordinating Centers	2.Chancho/Sulults Coordinating Units	Steering Committee &	6 woreda officials
		Technical Committee	6 experts
3. Oromia regional	3. Oromia Region REDD+ Cord. Unit, Agricu. bureau and Oromia EFCC Authority	Member of steering and technical committee	2 participants from each (6 in total)
	head of national REDD+ implementation CC		1
	World Bank –Ethiopia representative		1
	Total Sample Interview Informants		32

(Own Source, 2021)

On the other hand, two focused group discussions were also conducted to gather data from the local community regarding the positive and negative impact of REDD+ implementation in their locality. The participants of the focused group discussion are from proximity to the site of the REDD+ implementation site. As it referred through different kinds of literature the participants of focused group discussion were five. Five participants were selected from each Wereda Coordinating Units where the REDD+ projects are being implemented.

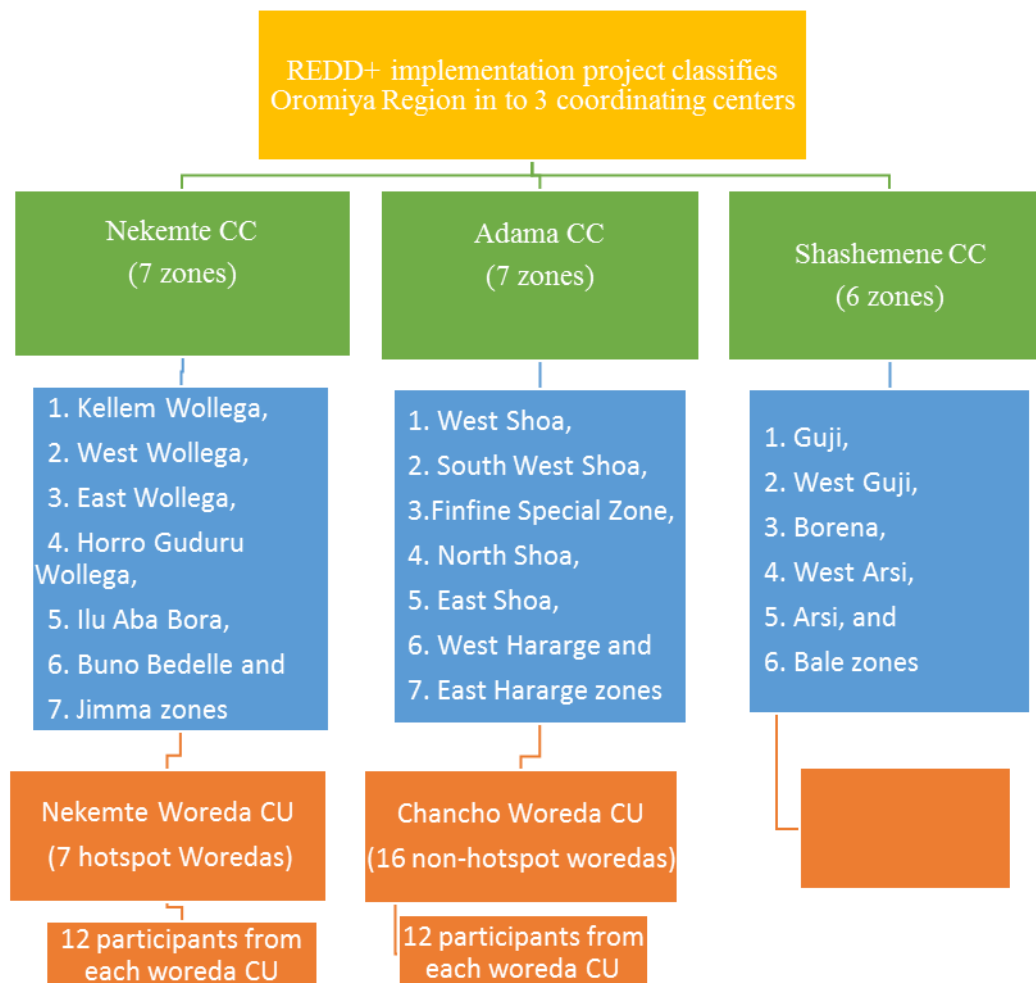
3.6.4 Sample Frame

Using different sampling techniques, the study framed its sample first took the Oromia REDD+ implementation project. This project is subdivided into three major REDD+ implementation zones with their centers Nemkemte, Adama and Shashamanne. The implementation of REDD+ is also classified into hotspot and non-hotspot woreda coordinating units. Out of these coordinating centers, the researcher purposively or judgmentally selected two Woredas coordinating centers. One was Nekemte CC (east Wollega zone) since it was the largest CC facilitating seven zones identified as hotspot

woredas REDD+ implementation. And the other was Adama CC the cardinal reason for selecting this CC was it holds the largest CC facilitating seven zones with the largest non-hotspot woredas. Out of these two Zonal Coordinating Centers again at the second step tow, Wereda Coordinating Unites/CU (Nekemte and Chanco woredas CU from Nekemte, and Adama CC respectively) are selected. Nekemte has seven hotspot woredas under it while Chanco as 16 non-hotspot woredas uner it.

Finally, interview informants are drowned from national REDD+ implementation coordination uint, Regiona REDD+ mplementation unit, from Oromia EFCC Athority and from Oromia agriculture Bureau, and the two woreda level coordinating unit committees (steering and technical committees) who are from wereda officials and technical experts. The following table display the hierarchical structure of the Oromia REDD+ implementation Project and how it framed.

Table 3: Hotspot and Non-Hotspot selected woredas



(Own Source, 2021)

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Analyzing data take into consideration and uses analytic techniques, explores explanations, and portray data apart from interpretations (Yin, 2003). In this, research the qualitative data were extracted through an open-ended questionnaire, interview, FGD, document review and observation techniques were arranged, interpreted, translated, and categorized with sub-topics or themes to fit with the research objectives or research question. During the data collection, the interview and FGD questions were prepared in English language to the respondents then the data were transcribed from voice to words; then data has arranged based on a similar character which fit the research objectives. Finally, presented, analyzed, and discussed using a narrative technique.

3.8 Definitions of Key Terms

Policy Coherence: is the systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policies across government departments to create synergies towards achieving agreed objectives and to avoid or minimize negative spillovers in other policy areas which deal directly with the compatibility of policy from their objectives to its impact on the ground.

Policy Legitimacy: is acceptance and recognition of policy by all relevant stakeholders and for a policy to stand to such expectation; it has to be formulated by a mandated body through the participation of all stakeholders in a democratic way.

Climate Resilient Green Economy: is strategy its vision aims to build a climate-resilient green economy and to make the country carbon neutral by 2025. The Strategy identifies eight key sectors that play key roles in sustainable development: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), soils, livestock, energy, buildings and cities, industry, transport, and health.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

According to Zerihun (2018), Ethics is an integral part of research from beginning to end and ethical compliance is pivotal to achieve real research excellence. Ethical principles were applied by respecting the privacy of respondents and confidentiality of information revealed by the respondents during data interpretation and reporting. The respondents' name is not mentioned rather replaced by codes letters and numbers. Individual data are NOT shared with anyone. Information was not used for any other purpose other than input for this study. Since

ethics were the main concern of the researcher from the beginning up to the end. Initially, the researcher got it important to disclose what the researcher is with enough explanation about the purpose and objective of inquiry of the study were explained for all contacts in the research process. During data collection as much as possible the informants' consent and comfort were highly respected. Finally, after the data was collected the researcher analyzed the data and reported the finding for the intended target with great care and responsibility.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4. Respondents Profile

This chapter focuses on results and discussions of research findings based on data obtained from both primary and secondary sources of information. Therefore, data that was collected through questionnaires, interviews, observation, and document review was presented, interpreted, and analyzed to answer the research questions. With regards to investigating the status of REDD+ implementation effectiveness in the Oromia region, the raw data obtained regarding REDD+ policy objectives and policy instruments, financial resource management efficiency and transparency of the REDD+ implementation, and the stakeholder's engagement in REDD+ implementation were analyzed in detail and interpreted using relevant research design. It focuses on value data concerning the four research questions against the corresponding research objectives which are indicated in the first chapter of this study.

Semi-structured Interview

The respondents of this thesis are purposefully selected from the federal Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) implementation Coordination Unit head (One respondent), World Bank Ethiopia (one respondent), Oromia REDD+ Coordination Unit (one official and one expert), Oromia Agriculture bureau (one official and one expert), Oromia Environment, Forest and Climate change commission (one official and one expert). In the similar fashion an official and expert from woreda administration, land use planning team, and development agents (one official and one expert from each) are selected. This selection include one member of steering committee who are responsible to lead the regional and woreda REDD+ program, and experts from regional and woreda level who are member of technical committee responsible to advise and support technical the steering committee to implement the REDD+ program effectively in their respective mandate and responsibility.

The total number of respondents from the Nekemete and Chancho coordination units are twenty-four because there are three participants from the abovementioned woreda offices to take part in steering committee and technical committee. This gives six member of steering committee and six members of technical committee from each coordinating units of Nekemete

and Chanco. Similarly, from the three Oromia regional state level offices, namely, from Oromia REDD+ coordination unit, from Oromia Agricultural Bureau and Oromia Environment, Forest and climate Change Commission each contributed one participant from its steering committee and one from its technical committee. When added up, twenty four participants from the two woreda REDD+ coordination units, six participants from Oromia regional state level and two participants from the federal level, namely, one from Federal REDD+ implementation coordination unit and participant from the world Bank.

Respondent from the Federal REDD+ coordination unit, the head of the federal REDD+ program implementation coordinating unit, is purposefully included to give insights on the issue related to policy and strategy development, why specific policy and strategy for the implementation of REDD+ program is not finalized so far, challenges the implementation of REDD+ program is facing at the national steering committee and national technical committee, issues related to national proclamations that contradicts and supplements the implementation of REDD+ program at national level.

Representative of the world Banks is also included to give insight on policy and strategy development related issues, gaps and challenges on financial resource utilization as a donor to implement the program in Ethiopia and Oromia region, issues related to stakeholders engagement and the situation of overall implementation of the REDD+ program.

The Oromia Regional State level participants of the interview were purposefully included to their experience in the design and development of policies and strategies related to the implementation of REDD+ program, the issue of stakeholders engagement in the development of policy and strategy and the participation of local communities in the implementation process of REDD+ program in their locality.

Similarly the inclusion of woreda level participants are to get detail and actual information in the process of REDD+ implementation on the ground. Explanation of theories, procedures, policy and strategy issue if so high at regional and Federal level. So these have to be checked on the ground by engaging woreda level REDD+ implementation bodies. The woreda level participants of the interviews gave practical, detail, facts that can be checked practically data which is very critical to assess the effectiveness of REDD+ implementations. These information are related to local community involvement in the process of REDD+ implementation, financial resource utilizations and other relevant stakeholders engagement in the implementation process of REDD+ program.

Focused Group discussion

The focused group discussion took place in Meti kebele of Diga woreda under Nekemte REDD+ implementation coordination center and Adadi Mulo kebele of Sululta Woreda under Chanco REDD+ implementation coordination center. The Nekemte REDD+ implementation coordination center is found under Nekemte zone REDD+ implementation center that coordinates West Wollega zone, Kellem Wollega zone, East Wollega zone, Horo Guduru Wollega zone, Buno Bedele zone, Ilu ababora zone and Jimma zone while the Chanco REDD+ implementation coordination center which is found under Adama Coordination zone that coordinates East Harerghe zone, west Harerghe zone, east soa zone, North Shoa zone, South-west Shoa zone, West Shoa zone and Finfine special zone administrative zones of Oromia. The interview participants are also purposefully selected in similar arrangement of political administration zones and REDD+ program implementation coordination units.

The focused group discussion participants were selected carefully in a way to be gender and age balance. Therefore, for each focused group discussion, two adult men (35-45 years old), two adult women (35-50 years old) and a young girl for Meti focused group discussion and a young boy for Adadi Mulo focused group discussion.

Document Review

The document review was made to give supplementary information to the data collected through semi-structured interview, focused group discussion, and field observation. The documents reviewed are financial reports, annual plan and execution report, minutes of meetings, Oromia Forested Land program implementation Manual, REDD+ investment program implementation manual and Oromia National Regional State Forested Landscape Program document.

Field Observation

Field observation was conducted by the researcher at Meti kebele of Diga woreda under Nekemte REDD+ implementation coordination center and Adadi Mulo kebele of Sululta REDD+ implementation coordination center. The observation was conducted on the forests which were included in the implementation of REDD+ program. The observation helped the researcher to get the actuality on the ground related to the implementation of REDD+

program implementation. Also helped the researcher to get firsthand information from local communities and local administration regarding REDD+ program implementation.

The discussion and analysis of this thesis is undertaken by classifying in to:-

1. Legality of policy,
2. harmony of policy,
3. institutional compatibility,
4. Easy of REDD+ implementation,
5. Stakeholders engagement in policy and stakeholders development,
6. stakeholders engagement in the implementation of REDD+ and
7. External and internal audit

4.1 Policy legitimacy and policy coherence

Theme 1: Legality of policy

REDD+ implementation requires designing effective policy and strategy to effectively implement the program. The European Union Commission on European Governance defines policy effectiveness as legitimate and coherent policy (European Commission 2001). Legitimate policy is a policy developed by legally mandated entity while coherent policy is a policy developed to be implemented in harmony with other relevant policies, strategies, proclamations, and other relevant policy instruments (IBID).

In this regard Ethiopia, at national and regional level has never developed policy and strategy by legally mandated body and approved to guide effectively the implementation of REDD+ program. Therefore, the REDD+ program is in implementation using Climate resilient Green Economy strategy (CRGES). The Climate Resilient Green Economy Strategy (CRGE) is a strategy designed to achieve a broader goal of realizing economic growth which depends on energy generated from renewable sources such as hydroelectric power plants, solar energy, wind energy and geothermal energy.

Ethiopia has developed a Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy envisioned building a climate-resilient green economy and making the country carbon neutral by 2025. The Strategy identified eight key sectors that play key roles in sustainable development: Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+), soils, livestock, energy, buildings and cities, industry, transport, and health. To achieve the CRGE related goals on agriculture, forestry, and other land-use change (AFOLU), *the National*

Environment, Forest and Climate change Commission has prepared a National REDD+ Readiness Program which was accepted by World Bank and other partners and followed by its implementation in Oromia, Amhara, Tigray, SPNN, Gabella and Beni-shangul regions.

Having this fact, the researcher has fundamentally interested to disclose the situation of policy legitimacy and institutional arrangement of REDD+ implementation in the Oromia region. Most of the key informants started to mention their success story, and how much the project is productive. However, there is one interesting issue despite the degree of expression they all stressed the lack of legitimate policy prepared by mandated body with participation of all relevant stakeholders of the REDD+ implementation. Thus, the question that as long as the government shows interest to realize Climate Resilient Green Economy and its subsector the REDD+ implementation, it should have prepared policy and strategy for REDD+ implementation with its relevant policy instruments.

Thus, there was no chance for the Ethiopian citizens to express their will on the implementation of the REDD+ program in their locality and did not express their concern that directly impacts their interest in the implementation process of the REDD+ program. The same is true for the implementation of the REDD+ program implementation in the Oromia region.

The head of national REDD+ implementation coordination unit explains the lack national policy and strategy designed by mandated body to implement the program in harmony with other relevant policy and strategies is critically hindered the implementation of the program in effective and coherent manner. He explained further the challenge by mentioning the contradictory mission of national Forestry proclamation (proclamation 456/2005) that categorize all forests as a farm land and pave the way to use forest land as a farm land.

On the other hand respondents from regional level further explains the challenges that emanates from not having policy and strategy more seriously mentioning the contradicting nature of Forest proclamation 456/2005. This proclamation creates serious problem when the region tries to give land for investment for investors those are planning to engage in farming activities. The problem is the proclamation identifies all lands be it farm or forested land, as a farm land. The woreda steering and technical committee respondents also explain the challenge in similar way with the regional level respondents.

The researches has learned that draft strategy of REDD+ programi under development which is now on the second draft level. In this development of REDD+ strategy, relevant regional

stakeholders such as bureau of agriculture, Environment, forest and climate change authority other sectors did not take part so far in the development of the draft strategy. The Woreda level steering and technical committees as well as the local community have no information about the REDD+ draft strategy under development.

The respondents from national, regional and woreda level have expressed their concerns about the REDD+ strategy which is under development and did not take their views and concerns into consideration. Better participation of all relevant stakeholders in the process of policy development is critical to realize better legitimacy by giving stakeholders fair, balanced, and equal access to political processes, helping to elevate transparency of state actors, by making state actors accountable to the citizens and other actors concerned and making non-state actors' voices heard and taken into consideration in political decision-making (Karl *et al.* 2012).

Data from focus group discussions also agree on the need to have its own policy/strategy. What makes this discussion different was some of the participants have no complaints about the delay. They believe that urgency to have the document may not bring matured policy or strategy. So they suggest to have a policy prepared by mandated and engagement of all relevant stakeholders.

As stipulated in many works of literature any country interested and initiated to engaged in REDD+ implementation, are expected to have fundamentally undertake REDD+ readiness that includes to assess major drivers of deforestation and forest degradation and identify appropriate policies and measures for tackling deforestation drivers = REDD+ strategy; develop a system to measure performance in REDD+ implementation = National forest monitoring system (NFMS/MRV; Set baseline for emissions from main drivers of deforestation = Forest reference level (FREL) and Assess environmental and social risks associated with REDD+ implementation and develop safeguards systems to ensure that there are no perverse impacts on communities and the environment = REDD+ safeguards.

In Ethiopia even though readiness phase was prepared to the standard of international acceptance and now in implementation phase, there is no national or regional policy or strategy on REDD+ implementation which is final and approved by the relevant authority. That is why the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy is serving as a strategy to implement REDD+ in Oromia and Ethiopia at large.

Document review also confirmed that the government working on it with the vision to see that the successful implementation of REDD+ guarantees the forest sector achieves its mitigation potential and significantly contributes to the overall national goal of attaining a middle-income economy by 2025 as stated in CRGE strategy. The researcher confirmed that the REDD+ strategy is under preparation in its second draft stage for the efficient and effective implementation of REDD+.

To sum up, the lack of legitimate policy prepared by mandated institution with participation of relevant governmental and non-governmental organization and with participation of relevant segment of the community is important bottleneck in the implementation of REDD+ project in Oromia regional state.

Theme 2: Harmonious policy

Policy effectiveness plays important role in the implementation of REDD+ program at national and regional level while steering, and governance of policies with non-state actor's participation being a factor influencing policy delivery (Hill and Hupe 2002). The European Union Commission on European Governance defines the criterion of policy effectiveness as legitimacy, participation, accountability, coherence, and its easiness of implementation (European Commission 2001). Therefore policy harmony is one of critical criteria to effectively implement a program.

Policy Coherence is the systematic promotion of mutually reinforcing policies across government departments to create synergies towards achieving agreed objectives and to avoid or minimize negative spillovers in other policy areas which deal directly with the compatibility of policy from their objectives to its impact on the ground (Nilsson *et al.*, 2012). Effective implementation of REDD+ needs policy coherence among different government departments and policies to maximize trade-offs.

The implementation of REDD+ requires policy coherence among different sectors such as the energy sector, agriculture sector, and others. The use of wood as a source of energy and the management of forested ecosystems are critically in trade-offs (Obersteiner *et al.*, 2010). The article further explains the importance of integrating activities of reducing deforestation and forest degradation, managing vulnerable carbon stocks under climate change, and other sector activities for effective climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Successful coordination of all stakeholders from a relevant segment of the community to government actors to non-government actors leads to less redundant and more coherent policies reducing policy gaps and become close to understandable and consistent policy strategy (Peters 1998). But as discussed at the very beginning of this chapter REDD+ program implementation in Oromia and in Ethiopia. This lack of policy has significantly harmed and leave no space to discuss about policy harmony highly reduce the ability to make coherency in the implementation of REDD+ project with other relevant policies to reinforce each another.

The policy enabling environment for the implementation of the REDD+ is the set of laws, policies, practices and attitudes that govern the society within. From this point of the rural land administration and land use proclamation and the environmental impact assessment proclamations are proclamations that hinders the implementation of REDD+ program. Similarly the capacity of the federal and regional government to effectively implement the REDD+ program is very limited, the participants stress.

Institutional Arrangements

Theme 3: Institutional compatibility

According to Kumssa and Mbeche (2004, p. 841) government is one of the critical institutions in society as it is important to set out formal rules and norms of behavior that regulate codes of conduct in society. Even if these formal rules and informal norms and traditions, institutions regulate what is tolerable and what is not tolerable.

According to De Coning, Cloete and Wissink (2012, p. 261) institutional arrangements for policy and program implementation include the involvement of huge diversity of actors, their roles and responsibilities in the policy development process. In the spirit of cooperative governance, the institutional arrangements for program implementation in South Africa concern the executive of government, including government subdivisions at national and sub-national level and state-owned enterprises. Similarly public-private-partnerships are also followed to guarantee that there is a collective responsibility in terms of implementation between government, the private sector and civil society.

Since there is no approved national policy and strategy, it is not easy to discuss about institutional arrangements, said the head of national RED+ implementation coordination unit. He added Institutional arrangement problem is one of the main problems in the

implementation of the REDD+ program. The national Environment Forest and Climate Commission/EFCC is a chair in coordinating the implementation of the REDD+ program in steering and technical committee nationally. The national steering committee is the highest entity that leads the implementation of REDD+ politically and the members are the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (now Commission and Chair), Ministry of agriculture, Ministry of women, Ministry of Water, Irrigation, and Energy, Oromia, Amhara, Sothern Nations and Nationalities and Tigray Regions bureau of agriculture and wildlife, Wando-Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources and Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority. Professionals are also assigned to lead the national technical committee from the same institutions.

The head of national REDD+ implementation coordination unit explains with regret that nation the steering and technical committee is by the Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission. According to the respondent, it is difficult with Commission level Capacity to lead institutions with ministerial portfolios such as ministry of agricultures and others. When we consider the experience of other countries, for instance in Brazil and Indonesia, the national steering committee is led by the Presidents for effective implementation of the program.

So, it would be better and effective if Prime Minister Office leads by chairing the coordination of the national steering and technical committee. In Ethiopia, it is very clear that offices respect another office which is at higher level portfolio wise. The national head of REDD+ implementation coordination center was telling incidents in which members of the national steering committee and technical committee fail to respect the call of the federal Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission to conduct meeting. Lack of such respect was so frequent that highly affect the regularity of the committee meeting.

The respondents also added that REDD+ program is implemented in Ethiopia and Oromia by the support of financial fund from World Bank group. In the process this financial fund, there are a lot many round negotiations. In such international negotiations, skills of negotiations are critically important. Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Federal Democratic republic of Ethiopia has a lot seasoned diplomats who can take part in such negotiations and help Ethiopia to get better financial and technical support from the World Bank group.

The informants explained and the document review revealed that there proclamations that supplement the implementation of REDD+ program. These are the Federal Democratic

Republic of Ethiopia Forestry Proclamation (Proc. No.94/1994), the 2005 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action plan prepared by the National Institute of Biodiversity Conservation, the Environmental Impact Assessment proclamation 299/2002, in principle, and the ten years current national development plan are supportive to the achievement of national and regional REDD+ program goals are institutions that support the implementation of the program directly or indirectly.

Surprisingly, some proclamations are directly in contradiction with the goal of the REDD+ program. They state that the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia Rural land Administration and Land Use Proclamation No. 456/2005 can be considered as one of the contradicting proclamations. The proclamation on its article twelve and thirteen states forest as farmland can be used for other purposes such as farm in the future. Based on the above land use proclamation, the Ministry of Agriculture says it has seventy million hectares of farmland which in fact a significant portion of the land is considered as forest by the national REDD+ coordinating unit and national Forest, Environment and Climate Change Commission as forest. They explain that legally speaking there is no clear demarcation between the definition of farmland and forest in Ethiopia. That is why most of the lands registered as farmland in land banks are forest coverage and this is leading the Ministry of Agriculture to give the lands to farm sector investors.

Similarly, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Environmental Impact Assessment proclamation no. 299/2002 gives the authority to assess the negative impact of any investment plan on the environment by each sector. There is a fact that every sector which promotes investment strives to attract as many investors as it can and tries to retain the investors it attracted. So based on this fact, it would be difficult for the different sectors to undertake genuine Environmental Impact Assessment for every investment. This is not to mention the power of bribery in environmental impact Assessment activities in distorting the outcome of the impact assessments. The above arguments are also so valid at a regional level. Therefore, in addition to lack of policy and strategy, even the existing relevant policies and proclamations are contradicting to each another. The respondents also complain that as the REDD+ program finance is coming from international donors, Ministry of Foreign affairs has to be included in the national steering and technical committees to facilitate effective negotiation with the international donors.

At Oromia Regional level, members of Steering committees are regional vice president office (Chair), Bureau of Agriculture, Bureau of Water, Mineral and Energy, Bureau of Women and children, Adama University, Wondo-Genet College of Forestry and natural resources, Oromia Public Enterprises Supervising Authority, Chilimo Gaji Forest Management Union, Farachu Forest Management Union, Bureau of Youth and Sport and Bureau of Forest and Wild Life Enterprise. Similarly, professionals from the above insinuations make the regional technical committee. Here it can be said it better than the national one because the vice regional president's office chairs the regional steering and technical committee. But still, it has to be upgraded to the president's office for the effective implementation of REDD+ in the region.

The vice president office, the head of regional steering committee and technical committee, leads the implantation of the REDD+ program which is better than the federal one. But still there are gaps still as the vice president office is not respected as the president office, the respondents assert. So the call on the Oromia regional state to take for the lead to effectively implement the REDD+ program on the regional state.

4.3 REDD+ Policy Objectives and Policy Instruments

Theme 4: Easy of REDD+ implementation

As discussed in the policy legitimacy part of chapter four nationally there is no REDD+ policy or strategy and likewise at a regional level. Both nationally and regionally, the CRGE strategy is used as a REDD+ strategy. National REDD+ coordinating unit and Oromia regional REDD+ coordinating officials have confirmed that at Oromia regional level REDD+ is implemented as a program and plan called Oromia Forested Land Program and REDD+ Investment plan using CRGE as basic strategy.

Though, the REDD+ implementation had no single document official policy or strategy, by default all government documents rules, regulations programs projects, etc. that hold government directives are considered as government policy. However, the commonly conceptualized policy is written a single document that states a single issue at hand. Not that, according to policy professionals any government activity including the speech of regional and federal officials are considered as regional and national policy respectively.

On the contrary of this perspective, this study raised a second major question to find out how people conceptualized REDD+ policy objectives and policy instruments. The main intention

of this question was not to measure the effectiveness of the implementation in the region guided by its own policy rather it is to check conditions that enable the project effectively.

Accordingly, professionals and officials (respondents) who are engaged in each activity of the pilot project are requested to explain what they grasped from the objectives and from all the necessary instruments of what they are enrolling in. Considering this can be taken as one input/factor for the effectiveness or failure of the implementation. Given this point of view, the data revealed that almost all perceived there is no approved and active national policy and strategy nor regional one with clear objectives to achieve the goal of REDD+ in Oromia. Consequently, there are no relevant policy or strategy instruments to effectively implement the REDD+ program in Oromia.

Nevertheless, the absence of a single and clear policy document did not hamper them to understand why is REDD+ project is under implementation. However, most of the respondents' concern was not about what the policy or strategy would mention, rather they go further. Their demand attaches to the Policy legitimacy and Coherence of the project.

According to their concern primarily to get acceptance and recognition of what REDD+ implementation by all relevant stakeholders they believe need to adopt legitimate and coherent policy and strategy. Therefore, they stressed REDD+ implementation project should be supported with relevant policy documents which are formulated by the mandated body through the participation of all stakeholders in a democratic way. Once there is a national policy the regional policy will follow the federal one and the Oromia region can have and support the ongoing implementation with an explicit and digested policy that can ensure the responsibility of the regional government and other stakeholders.

Participants in the focus group discussion also confirmed that at a national level there is a draft policy which waits for its approval by concerned government body and the ongoing activities in Oromia, other regions as well as at national level at large implementing based on Ethiopian Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy/ CRGE. As they discussed CRGE is a strategy of development by addressing climate change adaption and mitigation objectives based on carbon-neutral growth. The goals of the REDD+ program and CRGE strategy would overlap in increasing carbon stock in the forest but one should not miss that CRGE strategy cannot be used as a REDD+ strategy as it is designed for other purposes.

They mention that as there is the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Forestry Proclamation (Proc. No.94/1994), the 2005 National Biodiversity Strategy and Action plan

prepared by the National Institute of Biodiversity Conservation, the Environmental Impact Assessment proclamation 299/2002 itself, in principle, and the ten years current national development plan are supportive to the achievement of national and regional REDD+ program goals.

Paradoxically, some proclamations are directly in contradiction with the goal of the REDD+ program. They state that the federal democratic republic of Ethiopia Rural land Administration and Land Use Proclamation No. 456/2005 can be considered as one of the contradicting proclamations. The proclamation on its article twelve and thirteen states forest as land can be used for other purposes such as farm in the future. Based on the above land use proclamation, the Ministry of Agriculture says it has seventy million hectares of farmland which in fact a significant portion of the land is considered as forest by the national REDD+ coordinating unit and national Forest, Environment and Climate Change Commission as forest. They explain that legally speaking there is no clear demarcation between the definition of farmland and forest in Ethiopia. That is why most of the lands registered as farmland in land banks are forest coverage and this is leading the Ministry of Agriculture to give the lands to farm sector investors.

Similarly, the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia Environmental Impact Assessment proclamation no. 299/2002 gives the authority to assess the negative impact of any investment plan on the environment by each sector. There is a fact that every sector which promotes investment strives to attract as many investors as it can and tries to retain the investors it attracted. So based on this fact, it would be difficult for the different sectors to undertake genuine Environmental Impact Assessment for every investment. This is not to mention the power of bribery in environmental impact Assessment activities in distorting the outcome of the impact assessments. The above arguments are also so valid at a regional level.

One of the informants from the national REDD+ coordination unit suggested that there is a problem with institutional arrangements. For instance, the national Environment Forest and Climate Commission coordinate the implementation of the REDD+ program at the steering and technical committee level nationally. The national steering committee is the highest entity that leads the implementation of REDD+ politically and the members are the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (now Commission and Chair), Ministry of agriculture, Ministry of women, Ministry of Water, Irrigation, and Energy, Oromia, Amhara, Sothern Nations and Nationalities and Tigray Regions bureau of agriculture and wildlife,

Wondo-Genet College of Forestry and Natural Resources and Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Authority. Professionals are also assigned to lead the national technical committee from the same institutions.

But it seems that not effective because it is difficult for an institution with Commission level Capacity to lead institutions with ministerial portfolios such ministry of agriculture and others. Other country's experience, for instance in Brazil and Indonesia, show that the national steering committee is led by the Presidents for effective implementation of the program.

At Oromia Regional level, a review of OFL AP and RIP documents revealed that, members of Steering committees are the Regional vice president office (Chair), Bureau of Agriculture, Bureau of Water, Mineral and Energy, Bureau of Women and children, Adama University, Wondo-Genet College of Forestry and natural resources, Oromia Public Enterprises Supervising Authority, Chilimo Gaji Forest Management Union, Farachu Forest Management Union, Bureau of Youth and Sport and Bureau of Forest and Wild Life Enterprise. Similarly, professionals from the above intuitions form the regional technical committee. It seems better at regional level as the vice president office is leading the two committees even though they need to upgrade it to president office level.

One exceptional view reflected in the discussion was that one of FGD participant raised a critic that since REDD+ is an international program implemented with UNFCCC, World Bank, and other foreign entities, the Ministry of foreign affairs should have been included in the national steering and technical committees which would contribute immensely to effective international negotiations with donors in this regard.

Concluding remarks, all the data show that there is a good understanding of the overall implementation and the aim. However, the absence of legitimate and coherent national nor regional policy/strategy to achieve the goal of REDD+ in Oromia is a source of contention in the minds of most respondents. Furthermore, the existence of other conflicting policies at the federal level put the existing strategy Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy in question.

4.4 Stakeholder's Engagement in REDD+ Implementation

Theme 5: Stakeholder's Engagement in policy and strategy development

Stakeholders are persons and establishments 'who are actively involved in a project or projects or whose interests may be positively or negatively affected due to project execution

or successful project completion' (Yang, Shen, Bourne, Ho, & Xue, 2011, p.146). That means, any individual, group or organization, who has an interest in or who is impacted by a program or policy is considered a stakeholder. In this thesis, we classify stakeholders into two. The first group of stakeholders are those stakeholders who are expected to take part in the design and development of policies, while the other stakeholders are those who take part in the implementation process of REDD+ program from federal level to regional level.

Obviously, any project without proper consultation and participation of all the concerned stakeholders that can be affected either directly or indirectly particularly the community where the project is under implementation has to be consulted and give their views on the implementation of the program. If not the program cannot successful to the needed degree and as long as an environmental issue is not an individual or a single body concern, any activity to enhance and preserve the environment requires the involvement of all.

Certainly, it is widely understood that better stakeholders' engagement can contribute to better policy and strategy development which would contribute immensely to the better implementation of REDD+. Stakeholder involvement augments transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of public actions (Fung, 2006). It strengthens stakeholders' sense of ownership of policies and projects (Pretty, 1995), supports stakeholders' capacity building, and improves the quality of decision making by reflecting the values and interests of stakeholders (Foti, *et al*, 2008), by integrating local and non-local socio-cultural knowledge and technologies (Reed, 2008).

Inclusive stakeholders' involvement is important not only for the effective implementation of REDD+ but also to ensure transparency in the process. Most of the time, governments and private sector actors demonstrate commitments through national and subnational jurisdictional structure, but increased transparency is needed to hold actors accountable to their promises (Boyd *et al*. 2018).

One of the major challenges in the effective implementation of REDD+ is balancing the role of various stakeholders in decision-making and implementation of decisions. At the UNFCCC conference in 2007, the importance of stakeholder engagement in all REDD+ phases is given due attention at UNFCCC negotiations (UNFCCC Report, 2008). Similarly, the report of the conference recognized the need to engage local and indigenous communities in REDD+ implementation to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries.

These assert the engagement of multi-stakeholders for effective implementation of REDD+ is critically important at all levels of administrative bodies and in all phases. UNEP defines stakeholders in its Implementation Manual of REDD+ for national legal practitioners broadly as those groups that have a stake/interest/right in the forest and those that will be affected either negatively or positively by REDD+ activities (UNEP, 2015). The document further lists stakeholders as follows.

- Indigenous Peoples,
- Forest-dependent Communities, and Local Communities (ensuring gender equality)
- Government Institutions
- Environmental law enforcement agencies (national and international)
- Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and Civil Society
- Private Sector
- Academia
- International Organizations

According to the key informants, there is no national and regional policy and strategy in the implementation of the REDD+ program that guides stakeholder engagement in the Oromia region and it would be difficult to discuss the engagement of relevant stakeholders in this regard. As explained in the above paragraph, local communities, forest dependent communities, environmental law enforcement agencies, locally active non-governmental organizations, private sectors, Academia and relevant International organization should have took part in the implementation process of REDD+ program in Chanco and Nekemte coordination units. But the focus grup discussion and the result of the interview showed that these government and non-government bodies were not taking part effectively in the implementation process of the REDD+ program.

Regarding stakeholders engagement in the development of policy and strategy, there is at least draft national draft strategy which is in its second phase draft. This draft strategy design and development should have included all governmental and neon-governmental stakeholders. For instance all the participants in the semi-structured interview from Oromiua regional bureau of REDD+ implementation coordination unit, bureau of agriculture and Environment, Forest and Climate Change Authority testified that none of them or their colleague from their respective office has took part in the development of the draft REDD+

implementation strategy. Surprisingly, the woreda level respondents even do not know whether the draft strategy is under development or not.

Theme 6: Stakeholders engagement in the implementation process of REDD+ program

Similarly, stakeholder's engagement in the implementation process of REDD+ program is also poor. In the effort to implement the REDD+ program focused group discussion participants that have involved the local community in and around Nekemte and Chancho Wereda Coordinating Unite brought that, the local communities are not consulted either at the beginning of the project and even in the implementation.

The local community is complaining that the project preserved (all the member of the community are told not to touch the forest) many of the communities' land for afforestation and to prevent the forest degradation. As the result the local community neither allowed to use the forest as grazing land, cutting the trees in the forest to construct a house, to use the forest for firewood, to use the forest as farmland and as grazing land nor not given other means of livelihood in this regard.

The local community must have given other means of livelihood because in rural areas, the society depend on forest around them as source of energy, for building, materials, as farm land and others. The focused group discussion revealed that there is no practical benefits that they are getting from the implementation of REDD+ program in their locality. Similarly the document reviewed showed that because of the implementation of REDD+ in vicinity of the local community, there was no incentive provided practically which would replace the benefit the local community would get from the forest.

Interview with the head of coordinating units at all levels asserted that all complains coming from the local people emanates fundamentally from the absence of comprehensive policy/strategy that can entertain the full engagement of the local community. Failure in crosschecking the project how to interlink with agricultural activities and the interest of the local communities leads to causes such criticism in the community this put the legitimacy and coherency of the project with the current need of the community in question.

The communities explain that the only benefit they think they got from the program is per diem for few farmers on some of the training related to forest conservation and benefit of forest which is more theoretical trainings are all given through the Kebele administration. Otherwise, nothing is planned for the mass of the local community to have an alternative

source of income. As a result, the community doubtfully refrained themselves not to present their complaint to the government, because they thought they will not be able to get a solution.

To effectively mobilize stakeholders, incentive and benefit sharing is critically important in the implementation process of REDD+. A community gets incentives to to conserve forests in its surrounding would highly increase the chance that effective REDD+ implementation would be successful. Incentives can be as simple as food aid in areas of food insecure woredas for community-based area enclosures (Mengistu *et al.*, 2005), tax holidays on revenues to the protection of rights (Leite *et al.*, 2014; Doss and Meinzen-Dick, 2015). It is expected that when an individual does not own or benefit from a resource, he/she has no lasting interest in protecting the resource over a long period. Thus, cannot be expected to act constructively to maintain and sustain the resource (Ostrom and Cox, 2010). Therefore, providing an incentive to the surrounding community for protecting and preserving a forest resource can be helpful in the effective implementation of the REDD+ program in Ethiopia. But any of the interviewee or member of the Focused group discussion confirmed receiving benefits from the REDD+ program in implementation in their vicinity.

Benefit sharing is another critical issue as important as incentive in the process of REDD+ implementation. The process of REDD+ implementation involves many stakeholders at different levels and at all phases of the program implementation. There is a benefit attached to the process and this benefit should be distributed appropriately to all the stakeholders. Nationally, appropriate benefit-sharing would provide a platform for affected stakeholders and rights holders to get involved in and take part in decision-making processes (Daviet, *et al*, 2011). Stakeholder participation reduces risks of corruption and conflicts (Aquino and Guay, 2013), but also helps in designing of proper benefit sharing mechanism (Alemag, *et al*, 2014) and is important to ensure procedural equity of REDD+ benefit sharing systems (Luttrell *et al*, 2013). But in this case of Oromia REDD+ implementation, respondents stress that there is no such plat form that allows the government and other relevant stakeholders to use to share benefits to the legitimate stakeholders.

4.5 Financial Resource Management Efficiency and Transparency in REDD+ Implementation

Theme 7: External and internal audit

Effective implementation of REDD+ program fundamentally requires efficient and transparent utilization of financial resource. Transparency International in its book titled *'KEEPING REDD+ CLEAN: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO PREVENTING CORRUPTION'* (Transparency International, 2012) explains as large inflows of funding from the international development community, frequently coupled with short timeframes for delivery of results, forest carbon remains an intangible commodity to be traded, remoteness of many forest carbon and REDD+ pilot project areas, technical complexity of terminology used, forest carbon emission reduction calculations, monitoring and management, unhealthy carbon credit dealers or 'Carbon cowboys' and international finance and uncertainties over future finance and access to the market. Cry

Oromia REDD+ program got 18 million United States Dollar to implement OROMIA Forested Land Program and 50 million United Dollar were provided to OFLAP and RIP to be implemented from February 2017- February

2022 which is so short period of time.

UN-REDD Program listed key points that can be used to assess transparency and integrity of the REDD+ program in its publication (UN-REDD, 2014) as participation of relevant stakeholders, transparency and access to information, citizen demand for accountability and complaints, and justice delivery in all or existing REDD+ phases. Regarding financial resource utilization documents review revealed that the Oromia REDD+ implementation project is one of the first and biggest implementation projects in Ethiopia. It is a five-year project and the implementation period stretches from February 2017- February 2022.

Now the implementation is accounted for four years remaining with less than a year time ahead. REDD+ program initially supported by a key partners; Norway signed in July 2017 a support of 80 million USD capital. Moreover, the Oromia Forested Landscape Program was funded in March 2017 with 18 million USD and a promise of 50 million USD after 2022 based on 2017-2022 program achievement.

In implementation of any program, effectiveness and efficiency of financial resource utilization is important and decided to take it as one of the research objectives. Following this

respondents were interviewed and they reflected what they observed about the financial efficiency of the project and to relate the financial usage in comparison with implementation level. Accordingly, the data revealed that there is a gap with financial resource management. Implementation of the REDD+ program is now four years and document review showed that the efficiency of financial utilization in this time is 69% on average. Some respondents justified that this low efficiency is due to instability in some zones of the Oromia regional state. But most of the informants are attached the issue with audit and mismanagement of the project finance.

They further clarified that national and regional level there is yearly external and internal audit which should take place from Woreda level to federal level. Interviews and document review showed that at Woreda level, there is only yearly internal audit and no yearly external audit. Woreda level is where the project is actually implemented and expected to manage the financial resource effectively through internal and external audit. Unfortunately that is not the case.

Reviewing the Oromia REDD+ project document has explicitly specified in every stage of the project be it regional, zonal, or even in wereda level to take internal and external audit. But disregarding this financial monitoring system of the project in any wereda external audit is ignored. However, the research did not go further to check if there any financial abuse. Other than ensuring they are doing out of the system of the project financial monitoring system. As the respondent discussed since in the history of the project, there is no record of external audit at Woreda level and said they have no chance to know any financial finding or mismanagement at the woreda level.

Finally, they expressed their disappointment and suspicion in internal audit and they advise strongly the financial resource utilization neatness to be checked by external audit as per the project financial monitoring system prescribe at Woreda level.

A point that surprise the researcher was also reflected from the respondent from the national REDD+ coordination unit and regional REDD+ coordinating unit that the REDD+ program is implemented in Ethiopia by the finance of international donors only while the Ethiopian government does not contribute anything financially. So, they suggest that the Ethiopian government needs to contribute some percentage of the finance needed to implement the REDD+ program in Ethiopia to show its solidarity and commitment in the implementation of the Program in Ethiopia.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.1 Introduction

Thus, the overall aim of this study was to assess the effectiveness of REDD+ implementation in Oromia Regional State as a general objective. In particular, the study describes the status of REDD+ implementation effectiveness in the Oromia region, REDD+ policy objectives and policy instruments, financial resource management efficiency and transparency of the REDD+ implementation, and lastly state the stakeholder's engagement in REDD+ implementation. Hence, this last chapter of the thesis deals with the summary and conclusion that is derived from the findings. Then finally forwards possible recommendations are presented in this last chapter.

5.2 Summary

This section contains the main findings of the study and is summarized contextually, then finally comes up to the last section. So, this section has briefly summarized accordingly to address each research question developed at the very beginning of this thesis.

Regarding the first research question to evaluate the situation of REDD+ policy, policy objectives, policy instruments, their legitimacy and coherency REDD+ Implementation in the Oromia Region, there is no Oromia REDD+ Implementation policy/strategy nor the federal one. REDD+ implementation in Oromia as well as the at the national level led by the Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy that envisioned to build a climate-resilient green economy and to make the country carbon neutral by 2025. The REDD+ implementation strategy is under preparation and now reached the second draft.

In this regard, the data has revealed that there is a high demand to have its REDD+ implementation policy and strategy both at regional and national level. So far, the absence of a specifically REDD+ Implementation policy and strategy have brought two dimensions in the minds of respondents.

The first dimension states the need to have the policy and strategy and attached all the negative consequences caused in the implementation of the program with the absences of legitimate policy and strategy. Particularly the existing REDD+ implementation with the help

of Climate Resilient Green Economy (CRGE) strategy questioned the legitimacy and coherency of the REDD+ Implementation in the region because the CRGE is designed for some broader goal of building resilient and green economy of the nation.

The second dimension also agrees with the need to have its own policy/strategy, but what makes it different from the first dimension is that the first accuse the absence and attached every problem with the absence of the policy and strategy. Whereas the second dimension did not complain about the delay, rather they focus on producing a document of policy and strategy with participation of all relevant stakeholders such as local community, NGOs, relevant government institutions and by mandated government institutions as we have many policies and proclamations that contradict each another.

In this regard, as it answered in the first research question there are no relevant policy or strategy consequently there is no instruments to effectively implement the REDD+ program in Oromia. Nevertheless, the absence of a single and clear policy document did not hamper the researcher to understanding the REDD+ project under implementation.

Also, the data revealed Oromia, other regions as well as at national level at large implementing the REDD+ program based on Ethiopian Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy/CRGE would not be effective. The goal of the REDD+ program and CRGE strategy may overlap to some degree, but not exactly the same and one.

Generally, all the data show that there is a well understanding of the overall implementation and the aim. However, the absence of legitimate and coherent neither national nor regional policy/strategy to achieve the goal of REDD+ in Oromia is a source of contention in the minds of most respondents.

When it comes to the investigation of the situation and gaps of stakeholders' engagement and institutional arrangements, as there is no policy and strategy for REDD+ implementation, the researcher cannot discuss about its stakeholders engagement. Regarding local community engagement in the implementation process of REDD+, the data has proofed that the local communities are not consulted either at the beginning of the project and even in the implementation. As a result, the local community is complaining that the project preserved/protected many of the communities' land for afforestation and to prevent the forest degradation. As the result the local communities are neither able to use the forest as grazing land, cutting the trees for construction purpose, to use the forest for firewood, to use the forest as farmland and as grazing land nor given other means of livelihood even if there is a

shortage of farmland and grazing lands in their locality. The only benefit they think they got from the program is per diem from some trainings for few farmers otherwise, nothing is planned for the mass of the local community to have an alternative source of income. The data revealed that all complaints coming from the local people emanates fundamentally from the absence of comprehensive policy/strategy that can entertain the full engagement of the local community and at least not consulting the community in the implementation of the REDD+ program. The respondents also complain that as the REDD+ program finance is coming from international donors, Ministry of Foreign affairs has to be included in the national steering and technical committees to facilitate effective negotiation with the international donors.

Regarding institutional issues, the national steering and technical committees are the highest entity that leads the implementation of REDD+ nationally. It is composed of different federal ministries and regional bureaus. And these committees are coordinated by Environment Forest and Climate Commission, which is difficult with Commission level Capacity to lead institutions with ministerial portfolios. At Oromia regional level the program is led by vice president office which is better than the national one. Nationally, an institution with commission level capacity cannot be effective in leading big ministries such as ministry of agriculture. Other countries experiences show that the REDD+ program is led by the national president office and this should be scaled up in Ethiopia by leading the program by Prime Minister Office.

Paradoxically, some proclamations are directly contradicting with the goal of the REDD+ program. Such as FDRE Rural land Administration and Land Use Proclamation No. 456/2005 on its article twelve and thirteen states forest as farmland can be used for other purposes such as farm in the future. Ministry of Agriculture says it has seventy million hectares of farmland which a significant portion of the land is considered as forest by the national REDD+ coordinating unit and the National Forest, Environment and Climate Change Commission as forest. No clear demarcation between the definition of farmland and forest in Ethiopia. The Environmental Impact assessment proclamation itself, which authorize all sectors to undertake the Environmental impact assessment by themselves, poses its own challenges. Therefore, the existence of other conflicting policies and proclamations at the federal level put the existing strategy Climate Resilient Green Economy strategy in question.

The last research question was about Financial Resource Management Efficiency and Transparency in REDD+ Implementation. The data clarified that at national and regional level there is a yearly external and internal audit, when it comes to the wereda level, there is only a yearly internal audit and no external audit at all. Whereas REDD+ project document has explicitly specified in every stage of the project be it in regional, zonal or even in wereda level to take internal and external audit. But disregarding this financial monitoring system of the project in any wereda external audit is ignored. However, there is no research finding of financial abuse. Therefore, the data show that there is disappointing feeling and suspicion in internal audit and there is a high demand for external audit as per the project financial monitoring system prescribe. Some respondents, especially from federal and regional level has criticized the government for not contributing even a penny at least to show its solidarity and commitment to the international donors for the implementation of the program.

The field observation revealed that there is no significant change seen in the in the improvement of forest cover in Nekemte and Sululta Woredas since the implementation of the REDD+ program.

5.3 Conclusion

The study indicated that there is no significant improvement in reducing deforestation and forest degradation realized due to the implementation of REDD+ program. However, since there is no specific REDD+ implementation policy and strategy in Oromia as well as at national level REDD+ implementation is led by the CRGE. Even if the goal of CRGE and REDD+ program may overlap, it is not the one and the same. CRGE is designed for broader goal of building green and resilient economy while REDD+ only focus on reducing deforestation and forest degradation. Therefore REDD+ deserves its own legitimate and coherent national and regional policies and strategies with its own policy instruments. So far, the absence of relevant policy and strategy had put in question the legitimacy and coherency of the program implementation in the region.

Regarding stakeholders' engagement and institutional arrangements, there are challenges. When we look at stakeholders' engagement, as there is no policy and strategy, it is not possible to discuss stakeholder's engagement in the formulation of legitimate and coherent policy and strategy. When it comes to the implementation of the program in local communities on the ground, local communities are not consulted either at the design of the project and even in the implementation phase. As a result, the project preserved many of the

communities' land for afforestation and to reduce forest degradation. As the result the local communities are neither allowed using the forest as farmland, grazing land for construct houses, to use the forest for firewood, nor not given other means of livelihood even if there is a shortage of farmland and grazing lands. While waiting for legitimate and coherent policy and strategy formulation for REDD+ program implementation, at least the local communities have to be consulted, and their concern has to be seriously taken in to account.

Regarding institutional arrangement, the first challenge is that national steering committee is the highest entity that leads the implementation of REDD+. It is composed of different federal ministries and regional bureaus. The highest body that leads the implementation of REDD+ nationally is led by Environment Forest and Climate Commission, which is difficult for it with Commission level Capacity to lead institutions with ministerial portfolios. Similarly the regional level highest REDD+ implementation committees are led by the vice president office which is better than the national one.

The need to include Ministry of foreign Affairs in the national steering and technical committee is also critical as the program implementation has negotiation with international donors which would be done better with this institution. Therefore nationally, the prime Minister office should take the lead because different ministries and other offices respect, listen to and obey such top offices. This is also what experience of Indonesia and Brazil revealed. Regionally the president should take the lead that would give huge momentum in the implementation of the program.

Secondly, even if there are some proclamations that supplement the implementation of REDD+, there are federal proclamations that directly contradict the goal of the REDD+ program. Therefore, the absence of legitimate and coherent national/regional strategy exposed the REDD+ project to the source of contention. Also this proclamations with contradicting position with the goals of REDD+ implementation has to be corrected and harmonized.

Financially REDD+ project documents have explicitly specified to take internal and external audits in every stage of the project (regional, zonal & wereda level). But disregarding this financial monitoring system of the project in any wereda external audit is ignored. Therefore, having suspicions in internal audit the demand raised to be checked by external audit as per the project financial monitoring system. Therefore, external audit at all Woredas has to be conducted starting as soon as possible.

5.4 Recommendations

Given the findings, the researcher at this end takes the position to recommend certain actions to be in place for the future betterment of the REDD+ Implementation.

To National Environment Forest and Climate change Commission

1. As a primary institution in coordinating the implementation of the REDD+ program nationally, priority should be given to adopt legitimate and coherent REDD+ implementation policy/strategy with clear objectives, with necessary policy instruments, and a policy which is harmonious with other policies.
2. The Federal government better consider authorizing the Prime Minister office to coordinate the national steering and technical committees as it is uphill fight for the EFCC commission to coordinate institutions with ministerial portfolios.
3. The Federal government should better evaluate and correct federal proclamations that directly contradict with the goal of the REDD+ program.
4. The Federal Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission Should request the Federal government to include Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be included in national steering and technical committees.
5. The Federal Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission Should Monitor and ensure the implementation of internal and external audit at all levels.
6. The Federal Environment, Forest and Climate Change Commission Should Monitor and ensure the engagement of the local communities at the sites where the REDD+ program is implemented on the basis of benefit sharing and provision of incentives.

To Oromia REDD+ Project Coordinating Units

1. The Oromia REED+ Project coordinating Unit Should push for the development of national and regional policy and strategy development for better implementation of REDD+ program.
2. The Oromia REED+ Project coordinating Unit Should push that the regional president office has to coordinate the regional steering and technical committee so that the REDD+ program gets better momentum in its implementation.

3. The Oromia REED+ Project coordinating Unit should prepare a stakeholder engagement plan based on consultations and mutual understanding with benefit sharing and incentives scheme that enhances the participation of the local community, and the local community has to be convinced that program benefit it.
4. The Oromia REED+ Project coordinating Unit should make sure that the implementation of internal and external audits in every stage of the project at the regional, zonal and wereda level as the REDD+ project as the UNFCCC document has explicitly specified.

Recommendation for Further Research

Expand the research by increasing the sample size and scope of the thematic area to other REDD+ implementing regions that could show in a better way the situation of REDD+ implementation in Ethiopia.

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Annex I

Interview Questions for Woreda Unit Coordinator Professionals

1. Did a professional/professionals or relevant official/officials from the woredas you coordinate (including your woreda) take part in the formulation of any policy or strategy or any policy instrument of the REDD+ program?
2. If your answer is yes for question number 1, in what stage/stages of the formulation?
3. If your answer is yes for question number 1, do you remember if concerns of participants like you were incorporated into document produced from the discussions?
4. Is/are there any directives or regulations from any sector that negatively affect or reinforce the implementation of the REDD+ program? If yes would you list the sector/sectors and the directives/directives or regulation/regulations with their negative influence/influences?
5. Is/are there any directive/directives or regulation/regulations to facilitate the implementation of the REDD+ program? If yes, are you clear with their objective?
6. Was/were there any representatives/representatives of the relevant community participate in the formulation of the REDD+ policy or strategy or policy instrument? If yes, please list it/them and explain the stage/stages of their participation in the policy or strategy formulation?
7. Was/were there any representatives/representatives of the relevant community consulted in the positive or negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of the community? If yes, would you explain it/them?
8. What is your effective role in the REDD+ implementation process?
9. Had the community or member of the community had complained problem/problems related to REDD+ implementation and presented them to the relevant government office? Or do you remember such an issue? If yes, what was/were the response?
10. Is there a regular (according to relevant regulation) financial audit?
11. If there was financial misuse, did the relevant authority take corrective measures? If yes, would you explain, please?
12. Any issue to raise regarding REDD+ implementation in this coordinating unit?

Annex II

Focused Group Discussion for Local Community Representatives

1. Have the community or representative/representatives ever participated in REDD+ policy or strategy formulation? If yes, please explain.
2. Have the community or representative/representatives ever consulted on the implementation of the REDD+ program in this locality?
3. If your question is yes to the question above, on what agenda? Have the concerns of the community, if there was any, taken into account?
4. What benefits the community gain from the implementation of the REDD+ program in its locality?
5. Did the community sustain any damage or negative impact from the implementation of the REDD+ program in its locality?
6. If your answer is yes to question number 5, did the community apply to relevant government authority? If yes, did the government solve the problem?
7. What is the effective role of the community in the REDD+ implementation process?
8. Had the community or member of the community had complained problem/problems related to REDD+ implementation and presented them to the relevant government office? Or do you remember such an issue? If yes, what was/were the response?
9. Any issue to raise?

Annex III

Focuses of Document Review

- ✓ Review relevant documents to evaluate the mechanism of policy or strategy development, especially that of the REDD+ program.
- ✓ Review and check the existence of a relevant policy or strategy documents for REDD+ implementation.
- ✓ Review and check if there are incoherent policies, strategy or any other policy instrument.
- ✓ Review relevant documents such as minutes, reports, or any electronic file to evaluate the degree of relevant stakeholders' engagement.
- ✓ Review and check the regularity of financial audits at the wereda and regional levels according to relevant regulations.
- ✓ Review and check what percentage of the yearly financial budget is utilized at the wereda and regional level?
- ✓ Review document related to measures taken on financial misuse, if there is any, at wereda and regional level.
- ✓ Compare yearly plan and execution reports to determine their efficiency at regional and wereda levels.
- ✓ Review relevant documents if data from the interview, focused group discussion, and field observation leads the researcher to do so.

Annex IV

Focus of Field Observation

- Observe benefits or damages that the community sustains (if raised in focused group discussion).
- Observe reality on the ground based on answers to interview questions from professionals of coordinating unit wordas.
- Observe anything deemed important to the researcher

Annex V

Interview questions for Oromia region REDD+ coordinating unit official and professional (two participants)

1. Does the Oromia region have a policy or strategy development platform do you know the national policy or strategy development platform regarding the REDD+ program or related sector?
2. Did professionals or relevant officials from REDD+ implementing woredas take part in the formulation of any policy or strategy or any policy instrument of the REDD+ implementation program?
3. If your answer is yes for question number two, would you list them? In what stage or stages of the formulation?
4. If your answer is yes for question number two, do you remember if concerns of such participants were incorporated into the document produced from the discussions?
5. Is/are there any policy/policies, strategy/strategies, directive/directives, or regulation/regulations from any sector that negatively affect the implementation of the REDD+ program? If yes, would you list it/them with its/their sector/sectors?
6. Is/are there any policy/policies, strategy/strategies, directive/directives, or regulation/regulations to facilitate the implementation of the REDD+ program? If yes, are you clear with their objective?
7. Was/were there any representatives/representatives of the relevant local community who participated in the formulation of the REDD+ policy or strategy or policy instrument? If yes, please list them and explain the stage/stages of their participation in the policy or strategy or policy instrument formulation?
8. If your answer is yes to question number 7, has/have the concern/concerns of the local community taken into account?
9. Do steering committee and technical committee meet? What about its regularity?
10. Has your office ever received a report of the positive or negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of local communities? If yes, how did you address the concern/concerns?
11. If your office has received a report on the negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of the local community, what were measure/measures taken to address the problem?

12. Is there a regular (according to relevant regulation) financial audit?
13. If there was/were financial misuse/misuses, did the relevant authority take corrective measure/measures? If yes, would you explain, please?
14. Any concern to raise regarding REDD+ implementation in Oromia regional state?

Annex VI

Interview questions for World Bank Group representative (one participant)

1. Have you or a representative of your office ever participated in the REDD+ policy or strategy or policy instrument formulation of Oromia or Ethiopia?
2. If your answer is yes to question number 1, would you list them? In what stage or stages of the formulation?
3. If your answer is yes for question number 1, do you remember if concerns/concerns of your office were incorporated into the document produced from the discussion/discussions?
4. Do you know any of Ethiopian or Oromia policy or strategy or policy instrument that hinders or negatively affect the effective implementation of REDD+ program in Ethiopia or Oromia?
5. Has your office ever received a report of the negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of local communities? If yes, what was/were the problem/problems and what was/were the response/responses?
6. What is your opinion on the efficiency and transparency of financial resource utilization in the Oromia region REDD+ implementation process?
7. Have you or your office ever received reports/reports of financial misuse/misuse? If yes, did your office take corrective measure/measures? If yes, would you explain, please?
8. Any concern or issue to raise regarding REDD+ implementation in Oromia regional state?

Annex VII

Interview questions for Oromia region agriculture bureau and environment, forest and climate change authority official and professional

(Two participants from each bureau)

1. Does the Oromia region have a policy or strategy development platform regarding the REDD+ program?
2. Did you or professional/professionals or relevant officials/officials from your office take part in the formulation of any policy or strategy or any policy instrument of the REDD+ implementation program?
3. If your answer is yes for question number 2, would you list them? In what stage or stages of the formulation?
4. If your answer is yes for question number 2, do you remember if concerns/concerns of your office were incorporated into the document produced from the discussions?
5. Is/are there any policy/policies, strategy/strategies, directive/directives, or regulation/regulations from your sector that contradicts the implementation of the REDD+ program? If yes, was/were there any corrective measures taken?
6. Is/are there any policy/policies, strategy/strategies, directive/directives, or regulation/regulations to facilitate the implementation of the REDD+ program from your office? If yes, are you clear with their objectives?
7. Do steering committee and technical committee meet? What about its regularity?
8. Has your office ever received a report of the positive or negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of local communities? If yes, would you explain them?
9. If your office has received a report on the negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of the local community, what were measure/measures taken to address the related concern?
10. If there was/were financial misuse/misuses, did the relevant authority take corrective measure/measures? If yes, would you explain, please?
11. Any issue to raise?

Annex VIII

Interview questions for FDRE EFCCC representative (one participant)

1. Does Ethiopia have a policy or strategy development platform regarding the REDD+ program?
2. Does Ethiopia have a REDD+ implementation REDD+ policy or strategy? Do regions have their REDD+ implementation policy or strategy?
3. Is/are there any policy/policies, strategy/strategies, directive/directives, or regulation/regulations from your sector that contradicts the implementation of the REDD+ program? If yes, was/were there any corrective measures taken?
4. Is/are there any policy/policies, strategy/strategies, directive/directives, or regulation/regulations to facilitate the implementation of the REDD+ program from your office? If yes, are you clear with their objectives?
5. Does your office visit the state of REDD+ implementation at the local community level?
6. Has your office ever received a report of the positive or negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of local communities? If yes, would you explain them?
7. If your office has received a report on the negative impact of REDD+ implementation on the livelihood of the local community, what was were/measures taken to address the related concern?
8. If there was/were financial misuse/misuses? did relevant authority take corrective measure/measures? If yes, would you explain, please?
9. Any issue to raise?

Annex IX

Interview questions for Woreda steering and technical committees

1. Do you evaluate the plan of the woreda REDD+ implementation unit?
2. Do you receive reports from Woreda REDD+ implementation coordinating units as a committee and evaluate them?
3. How many times do you meet in a year to steer the activities of Woreda REDD+ implementation?
4. Do you think your meetings are regular?
5. Do the feedback you give are implemented accordingly?
6. Do you make follow-ups on the implementation of your feedback?
7. Any issue to raise?