

Process Framework on Involuntary Restriction on Access to Resources
Organization for Rehabilitation & Development in Amhara (RDA)
CEPF Grant 65712
Community Based Conservation in Mount Guna Area
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1. Project background

Mount Guna and its environment, in general, endowed with diverse resources that are important to the locality, national and global contexts. It is a habitat of at least 30 different mammal species belonging to 14 families and 8 orders, accounting 11% of the terrestrial mammal species, 35% of the families and 57% the orders found in Ethiopia. In addition it is a habitat of at least 139 species of birds from 41 families and 14 orders, accounting 16% of bird species, 46% of the families and 56% the orders found in Ethiopia. At least 96 species of plants recorded in the Afroalpine and Sub-afroalpine ecosystems out of which 5 species (*Acanthus sennii*, *Echinops ellenbeckii*, *Kniphofia foliosa*, *Lobelia rhynchopetalum* and *Helichrysum hochstetteri*) are endemic. Mount Guna is not only source of biodiversity and livelihoods but also important as water catchments (Hydrology) from which more than 41 rivers and numerous streams emerge and join to the two basins (Abay and Tekeze basins) and Tana sub basin.

Despite its huge biodiversity significance, Mount Guna is currently under human induced threats from agricultural expansion, livestock overstocking, and over exploitation of natural resources due to lack of legalized institution to manage the area, sound management plan, legal protection of Mount Guna and enforcement for policies and proclamations.

The species diversity and its ecosystem services in Mount Guna are diminishing from time to time. The area is highly encroached due to poor farming practice and free grazing. Unless timely measures are taken by the community, private sector, civic society agencies and the government; the fauna and flora of Mount Guna will extinct in few years.

Like most Ethiopian highlands, the inhabitant's livelihood in the Mount Guna surrounding Kebeles is characterized by subsistence agriculture, which includes crop farming and animal husbandry. So, ecosystem elements of the mount are critically important for the local community subsistence; provides fodder, water, construction material, fuel wood, etc. Indeed, the resource use conflict between the local community livelihood demands and the imperatives of the Guna's biodiversity conservations are bound to increase with increasing population density and agricultural activities.

To reverse the worsening biodiversity situation, ORDA in its part had carried out several activities in some of its accomplished projects. To mention few, ORDA had implemented a two year (from 2007-2008) project entitled "Protection and Sustainable Development of the Guna Mountain Ecosystem" funded by GEF/UNDP. The project was intended to protect and develop the endangered flora and fauna of the Guna Mountain ecosystem through improving the livelihood of the communities who live within and adjacent to the Mountain.

ORDA had also implemented a 5 years (2009-2013) biodiversity program jointly funded by the GAA/ EU and the regional government with the objective of restoration of the highland (Guna) fauna and flora species in three districts of central Amhara (Farta, Lay Gayint and Este). The program promotes Participatory Forest Management (PFM) in which communities have been benefiting from the existing forest and non-forest products, that ensures sustainable management of the environment.

Despite the efforts done by ORDA and other actors, the problem is not solved in a sustainable way and needs further measures to be taken. Hence, in order to conserve and use its biodiversity resources and ecosystem representativeness, Mount Guna and its environs must be brought to community Based Biodiversity Conservation system (CBC) in the next few years before the extinction of its biodiversity reserve and its negative consequence for the Lake Tana ecosystem.

The project entitled “Community based biodiversity conservation in mount Guna area” is designed to address the biodiversity problems of the subject area. It will be planned and implemented with the full participation of communities and stakeholders. It has several activities to do in order to meet its objectives. The different project activities include:

- Establish community institution
- Training on participatory ecosystem management(biodiversity conservation) and importance
- Familiarize and update the draft by law
- Experience sharing
- legalize community institution
- engage community institutions in environmentally friendly income generating activities
- Participatory ecosystem management plan preparation training for community and government
- Preparation of management plan
- Organize validation workshop
- gazette mount Guna by regional council
- Update and publish the management plan
- Familiarize the management plan for community and government SH
- Organize sensitization platform for higher officials about mount Guna ecosystem conservation
- Policy familiarization o Environmental protection, land administration , Forest resource and biodiversity conservation , Communal land management and utilization
- Organize sensitization workshop on the approved Guna Mountain community conservation area proclamation for communities and Government Stake holders and
- Mark the boundary with Beckon

2. Social threat analysis

Guna Mountain and the surrounding is a home of many lives. A total of 72,850 -population living in 11 kebeles. Free grazing and agricultural land expansion are the two common problems as identified by the previous projects and the government. So far 215.20ha of land had been cultivated by illegal farmers. However, the government took immediate measures and stopped the agricultural practice. There were 113 houses constructed illegally by farmers where government has started the process to evict those settlers. Free grazing had also been the problem in Guna Mountain and its environs. However, no data is available on the area of grazed land or the number of farmers who have been practicing free grazing. Fuel wood collection is none inside the Guna Mountain where the project is going to be implemented. The community around mount Guna has long standing experience of tree planting around their homestead for fuel wood and construction. On the other hand the community collects water downstream and inside the proposed area for protection. Regarding None Timber Forest Products (NTFPs), the community uses at large scale grass for house construction and animal feed.

3. Plans for participatory implementation

Some target communities may not be interested in demarcating and protecting Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA) in the Guna Mountain. The resistance is mitigated through patient & participatory processes from the start up, assessing the willingness of a given community, and by offering alternatives in livelihoods and through enforcing the land legislation. The project will provide a platform for local communities to voice any complaints they may have about activities undertaken during the project implementation period and thereby enable periodic assessments of whether mitigation measures are necessary and adaptations to project implementation need to be considered.

Local community, government and other stakeholders will be involved at every stage of the project implementation. The project focal person will play facilitation role. Local institutions which are established by the government and mandated for land use and administration will be communicated every time. Workshops, discussion meetings and trainings will be organized so as to create awareness of the community and enhance their genuine participation up on the demarcation and protection of selected segment of mount Guna. Local community and other stakeholders will participate in resource assessment and management plan preparation. The demarcation of KBA will also be in participation with them.

4. Criteria for eligibility of affected persons

The proposed project will affect few of the community living in the proposed area. The local government has already started shifting the settlement area of those illegal settlers. Only few are remaining in this regard. Most of the community who had been settled in the area was rich. Hence, shifting them to their original settlement area is easy. Local government negotiated with them and evicted from the area. Those who have been practicing agricultural activities in the area also will be affected. The impact will be solved through systematic selection of vulnerable group and let them engage in other livelihood activities which are ecologically friendly. The selection of affected groups which need support in livelihood activities will be through applying Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) tool. Collecting water inside the intended project area will not be prohibited.

5. Measures to assist the affected persons

The community will participate at all levels of the project. Discussions, workshops and trainings will make them aware about the objectives of the project. The management plan of the area will be prepared by the participation of the community. Hence, community will have the chance to raise their problems and put the right solution with in the management plan. Moreover, livelihood activities proposed and included in the project document will address the affected community segments. The local government also will be consulted to support additional livelihood assistance to affected groups. Other projects which are working in the same area with different thematic areas will also be approached to deliver their livelihood assistance.

6. Mechanisms to monitor safeguard issues

The project officer will have close relationship with the community. This will help to observe feelings, attitudes and progresses within the community. Monthly meeting will also be organized with the community. The project officer in consultation with the local government and community will facilitate organization of meetings. Problems encountered & solutions sought and major accomplishments of the projects will be discussed during the meetings. Community forum will also be arranged at local level with the presence of local stakeholders. All issues raised during the forum will be noted and minutes

prepared. The project officer will be responsible to prepare the minute. Outstanding concerns of the community will be identified, acted and tracked. The community forums will be held every quarter from the project commencement.

7. Grievance mechanism

Community discussion forums and workshops are opportunities to gather and document actions agreed to implement, success and grievances by the community. The project officer is responsible to prepare the report and send it to ORDA head quarter and partners. Grievances will be identified and agreement will reach through discussion when to solve it. Any grievance raised will be reported to ORDA and project partners. ORDA and partners will respond to the report within one month time.