

COVID-19, Locust and War crises on Natural Resources in Tigray- Situation Analysis Based on a Recent Rapid Assessment

By

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Presentation Outline

1. Main players/actors
2. Why situation analysis?
3. Scope of situation analysis
4. Activities and successes
5. Key issues and challenges
6. What is required (by whom)
7. Next steps/recommendations

Main players / Actors

COVID-19 crisis on natural resources

Tigray Bureau of Health

Universities in Tigray

Locust invasion on natural resources

Tigray Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development (TBoARD),

Tigray Agricultural Research Institute (TARI), Universities in Tigray (Agriculture colleges)

Food and Agricultural Organization of the United States (FAO) and World Bank,

Global Society of Tigrean Scholars (GSTS)

WeForest and the local community

War crisis on natural resources

Internal (the local community) and external actors involved in the war

Why situation analysis?

- To document and disseminate the situation of the ongoing challenges in Tigray.
- Moreover, the effects of such studies on natural resources received less attention.
- Therefore, the current situation analysis is designed assess the interlinked crises on natural resources in Tigray.
- These are COVID-19, locust invasion and War crisis on natural resources in Tigray.

Scope of the situation analysis

The scope of the study is limited to the effects of the crises on natural resources

This presentation **does not include** situation analysis of the crises on the following:

- Loss of crops and livestock,
- Displacement of individuals/community,
- Destruction of infrastructures,
- Damage and death of civilians and others
- Therefore, this presentation should be considered as **one component** that mainly focus on the **situation analysis of the selected crises on natural resources.**

Activities

Rapid assessment on the situation analysis of locust invasion on natural resources

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) on impacts of COVID-19 on land restoration

Farmers (21), Development agents (20), face-to-face and through mobile phone

Summary of stakeholder meeting held on Enderta Woreda Office of Agriculture and Rural Development

- 120 participants from Tabias
- 26 participants from the Woreda

Table 1. Participants of the stakeholder meeting held at Enderta Woreda on March 24, 2021

	Representatives	Number of participants
	Woreda level participants	
1	Administrator	1
2	Head of Security	1
3	Head of Judicial Court	1
4	Head of Justice	1
5	Head of Agriculture and Rural Development	1
6	Experts of Natural Resource Management	21
	Tabia level participants	
7	Tabia Administrators	24/one from each Tabia
8	Heads of Agriculture & Rural Development	24/one from each Tabia
9	Development Agents on Natural Resource Management	24/one from each Tabia
10	Guards for Area Exclosures	24/one from each Tabia
11	Elders	24/one from each Tabia

Activities

Main agendas of the stakeholder meeting

1. Natural resources degradation from Afar side
2. Conversion of forests or exclosures to farmland through cutting and burning
3. Fuelwood collection and charcoal production
4. Availability of adequate number of development agents who can give technical support on NRM
5. Absence of functional Judicial Court offices
6. Using communal areas for housing construction illegally

Activities and successes

- In Enderta woreda there are about 1.2 million seedlings that can be planted in the coming rainy season
- One Tabia (Menbere kidusan) introduced social suction against illegal harvest from exclosures to be administered by their own priests
- Didba Tabia developed their own by-law, 200/cattle for free grazing and 1000 Ethiopian birr per individual involved in illegal fuelwood collection
- Fathers of forests have discussed within their Tabias and with the Afar counterparts

Activities and successes

- May Anbesa (45) and Didba (15) farmers were listed and announced to the local community for involving in illegal practices in the exclosures
- Other two tabias has established checkpoints collected fuelwood and sell it for 15, 000 and donated it to the church
- Some guards are still guarding exclosures though their salary is not yet paid

Key issues and challenges

COVID-19 on natural resources

- Nursery site activities during the year 2020/21 is affected during seedling production, monitoring and plantation
- Planned seedling production in Tigray was 100 million & achievement is about 5 million
- Movement of development agents on natural resources to the field is restricted
- Free labour community mobilization for soil and water conservation is not practiced
- As a result, 1.4 million free labor per day was not used and because of this we are not able to rehabilitate 100 thousand hectares in Tigray

Key issues and challenges

Locust invasion on natural resources

- Locust swarms are forced to move to natural resources (forests and exclosures)
- Crop saved at the expense of damage on natural resources is not considered with care
- COVID-19 also complicated the locust crisis, because there were:
- Mobility problems due to quarantine measures and imposing restrictions on equipment

Key issues and challenges

War crisis on natural resources

The forests and area enclosures became the war sites and many are shelled

The internal rules/by-laws of enclosures and conserved forests are violated,

- Left without guards (1100 hired by the TBoARD budget and 7000 Woreda budget)
- Wildlife migrated, Free grazing and intensive fuelwood collection widely practiced
- Damage made on natural resource conserved by the local community over the last 30 years was estimated as 18.5 billion Ethiopian Birr
- Grakahsu Higumbirda and Waldiba forests; and Kafta-sheraro National Park became out of reach by the BoARD
- About 70% of the nursery sites are damaged and others became camps

Key issues and challenges

War crisis on natural resources

- The Tabia and Woreda level Judicial Court offices did not start work or not functional
- Mobility of Experts constrained because of security problem in most of the Tabias
- Exclosure guards are not paid their salary for the last 7 months
- Vehicles challenges were also mentioned as challenges to visit the secure Tabias
- Because of power cut for prolonged time and restricted transportation has forced them to change energy use to the biomass energy sources mainly fuelwood and charcoal
- Because of lack of alternative job exclosures are used as source of income by the community by collecting and selling fuelwood

Key issues and challenges on Natural resources

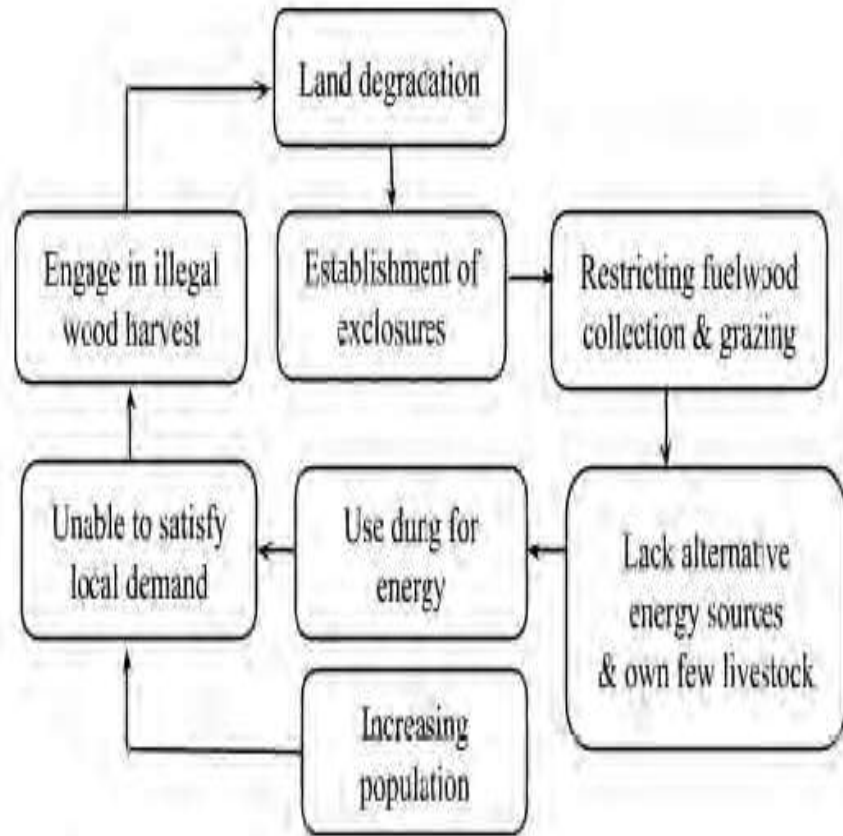


Photo credit: Birhane Etay

What is required (by whom)?

COVID-19

Tigray Bureau of Health together with other partners should continue to motivate the community to follow the prevention measures and provide the necessary health services

Locust invasion

- Further research should be conducted to document the actual impact of locust and the chemicals sprayed on the vegetative and ecosystem services in forest or area enclosures by the main players identified lead by TBoARD.

War crisis

- Similar stakeholder meeting within the Woreda and across the Woredas should be organized by the TBoARD and partner organizations to discuss on how to reduce forest degradation

What is required (by whom)?

COVID-19 and war crisis

Because of these two challenges, BoARD is planning to focus on multipurpose seedling distribution in the homesteads of farmers

Any interested organization can collaborate to combat this challengeing situation.

So, that the remaining nursery sites will start to produce seedlings for the coming rain season

Next steps/recommendation

COVID-19

- Because of the devastating challenges in Tigray individuals give less attention towards COVID-19, despite the alarming increases on cases in Addis Ababa

Locust invasion

- Proactive measures should be taken to reduce locust invasion
- Proper evaluation should be made on the chemicals or pesticides
- Early warning capacity to tackle locust invasion should be enhanced
- Adequate chemical, spraying equipment's and labour force
- Awareness on the lifecycle of locust should be created and communicated

Next steps/recommendation

War Crises

- Continuous stakeholder meetings should be organized
- The available seedlings should be planted in the coming rain season
- The current challenges can lead to irreversible changes and **coordinated action is needed**
- The issues of natural resources management and climate change affects across boundaries and immediate reaction should be made to reverse the situation in Tigray

Case study on charcoal

I have contacted two charcoal sellers from a charcoal market and asked them the source

One of them responded that it is from Gojam but could not tell the exact place

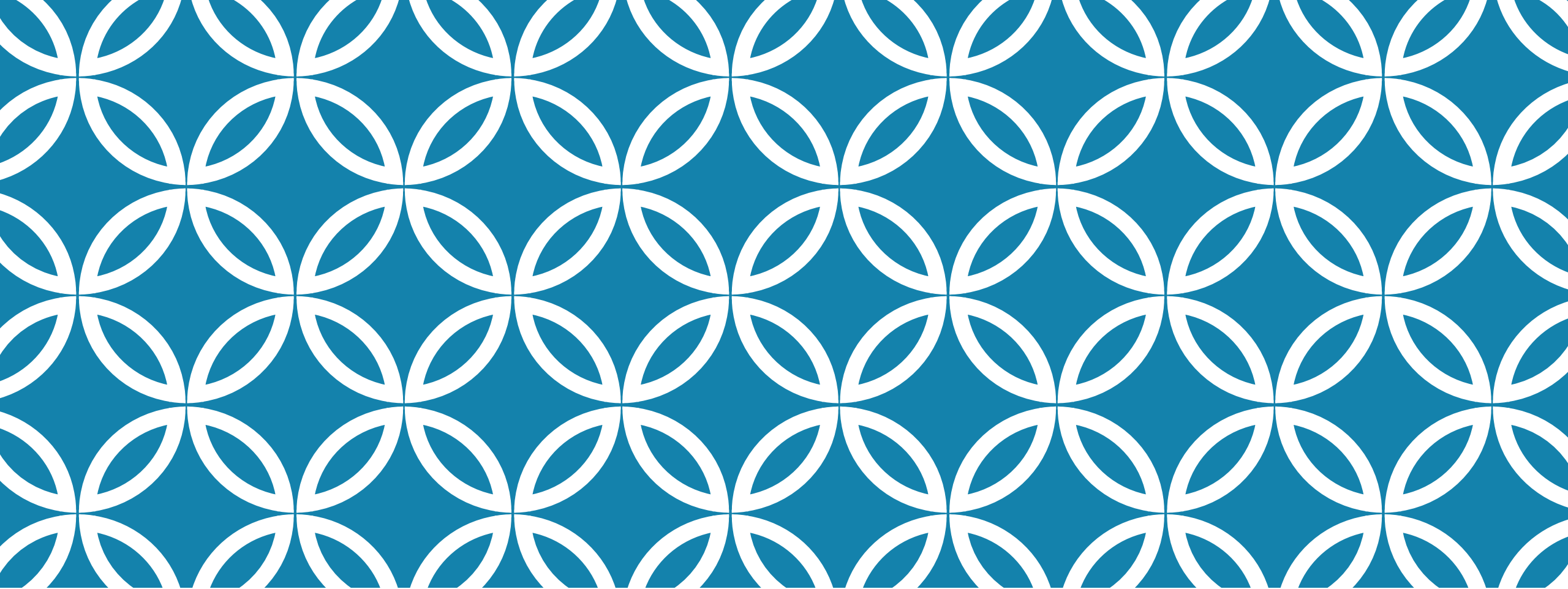
The prices are stated as follows the lowest is for wholesale prices and the higher prices is retailer prices

As can be seen from the photo they use 25 Kg sacks due to shortage of the other sizes

- The prices for 100Kg is 450-500 Ethiopia Birr
- The prices for 50Kg is 250-260 Ethiopia Birr
- The prices for 25Kg is 110-120 Ethiopia Birr

Case study on charcoal





“The urgent and pressing question is, what are you doing for other? ”Martin Luther king

Thank you