



# **HYBRID INSTITUTIONAL APPROACH TO SUPPORT RLAS OPERATIONAL WOREDAS**

## **AN EVOLVING PATHWAY TO CAPACITY BUILDING**

**LIFT**

**JANUARY 2019**



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## Acknowledgements

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## Acronyms

LIFT	Land Investment for Transformation Programme
MoANR	Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources
RTToTs	Regional Training of Trainers
RLAUD	Rural Land Administration and Use Directorate
RLAD	Regional Land Administration Directorate
RLAOs	Regional Land Administration Offices
RLAS	Rural Land Administration System
WLAOs	Woreda Land Administration Offices
ZANROs	Zonal Agriculture and Natural Resource Offices
ZRLAOs	Zonal Rural Land Administration Offices

## Background

As a key component of the LIFT programme, to ensure long-term tenure security of landholders post-SLLC, a computerised Rural Land Administration System (RLAS) is implemented to enable the woreda administration to maintain the land registry and record subsequent transactions. RLAS was first installed in 32 woredas over July/August 2016 and since then has increased to 76 woredas in September 2018.

In order to improve the skills and knowledge of the WLAOs, LIFT deployed the “*Training of Trainers (ToTs)*” approach, whereby the *Regional Training of Trainer’s (RToTs)* organise training, provide continuous technical support to RLAS operational woredas as well as undertake monitoring. This is based on a monitoring system jointly developed by LIFT, the RLAOs and the Rural Land Administration and Use Directorate (RLAUD) of the Ministry of Agriculture and Natural Resources (MoANR).

Updating the rural land registry is one of the core public services at the woreda government levels. However, during the first 2.5 years of implementation, it was identified that the RToTs approach didn’t deliver the expected results on effectiveness of land administration service delivery and specifically registering rural land right transfers.

This was due to limitations associated with the current organisational structure of the RLAOs, weak political support to rural land administration operations, assigning trained RToT to other duties and tasks combined with staff turnover. As a result, a growing number of RLAS operational woredas are now unable to get the continuous technical support that they need. The above is evidenced by series of RLAS implementation assessment studies undertaken in 2017 and 2018 that covered 32 RLAS operational woredas.<sup>1234</sup>

Recognizing the above problems, LIFT organized a meeting with the RLAOs in May 2018 to identify an alternative institutional arrangement to address the gaps in technical support to RLAS operational woredas. During the meeting two institutional arrangements were discussed which included: a) Strengthening the Zonal Rural Land Administration Offices (ZRLAOs); and b) Developing a “Satellite Woreda Approach”, where relatively better performing woredas would provide technical support to the neighbouring RLAS woredas.

Given the political importance of the Zonal Administration, the RLAO officials chose to strengthen and capacitate the ZRLAOs rather than woredas to serve as a satellite for neighbouring woredas. The political significance and administrative structure of zonal administration differs from one region to another. Within the zonal administration in Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR, the different sectoral offices are relatively well structured and staffed with a good number of technical staff unlike Tigray, which is loosely structured with nominal staffing.

Accordingly, the RLAOs of Oromia and SNNPR commenced strengthening the ZRLAOs through providing modest support to six selected ZRLAOs in their respective regional states. In parallel, LIFT supported training on RLAS/iWoRLAIS for six ZRLAOs in both Oromia and SNNPR. However, during the six-month implementation process, the offices did not deliver their planned outputs as expected.

This required the need to re-visit the programme’s on-going capacity building strategy based on the experiences and lesson learned with engagement of the RLAOs and Regional Land Administration Directorate (RLAD) of the MoANR. A series of RLAS implementation assessment studies undertaken by LIFT found that very few ZRLAOs were able to provide technical support to RLAS woredas in their respective zones. The assessments also illuminated an informal “*Woreda-to Woreda Support*” approach, where some better performing RLAS operational woredas in SNNPR and Oromia provided technical support to relatively poorly performing neighbouring woredas.

Based on this, a national level workshop was held from **13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> March 2019** to deliberate on alternative institutional arrangements to improve and consolidate the technical support being provided to the growing number of RLAS woredas in each of the four regions. As a conclusion to the workshop, a hybrid institutional approach was agreed upon to allow a better institutional base to provide technical support: a) The RTOT

<sup>1</sup> -LIFT. 2017.Rural Land Administration System (RLAS): Implementation Assessment-12 months after LIFT interventions have ceased. Addis Ababa.

<sup>2</sup> -LIFT.2018a. Land Administration System (RLAS): Implementation Assessment-12 months after LIFT interventions have ceased. Addis Ababa.

<sup>3</sup> - LIFT.2018b. Land Administration System (RLAS): Implementation Assessment-12 months after LIFT interventions have ceased. Addis Ababa.

<sup>4</sup> - LIFT.2018c. Land Administration System (RLAS): Operational woredas for the last 24 and 18 months. Addis Ababa.

approach; b) ZRLAOs with relatively better performance records and c) the “Satellite Woreda Approach”, whereby better performing woredas would provide technical support to neighbouring RLAS woredas.

This brief report sheds light on experiences and lessons learned with respect to the ZLAO and “Satellite Woreda Approach” in a process to provide technical support to the growing number of RLAS woredas in Oromia and SNNPR. It also highlights the hybrid institutional arrangements, as an effective alternative to build the organisational capacity of the WLAOs. The strategy aims to deploy three institutional pathways, with varied specificities from one region to another: The system referred to as the “Hybrid institutional arrangement” is a strategy for capacity building.

## Experiences and Lessons

### The Zonal Rural Land Administration Offices (ZRLAOs)

The engagement of the ZRLAOs in Oromia and SNNPR to strengthen the capacities of RLAS woredas in their respective regions commenced in **June/July 2018**. In each of the two regions, the following six ZLAOs were selected and capacitated both in terms in inputs and training to allow the offices to provide technical support to RLAS woredas in their respective zone:

#### a) Oromia region

- Arusi Administration Zone
- E. Shoa Administration Zone
- W. Shoa Administration Zone
- S.W Shoa Administration Zone
- E. Wollega Administration Zone and
- Horo Guduru Administration Zone

#### b) SNNP region

- Gurge Administration Zone
- Silti Administration Zone
- Wolayita Administration Zone
- Dawro Administration Zone
- Kembata Tembaro Administration Zone and
- Hadiya Administration Zone

To build the capacity of the selected ZRLAOs, the RLAs of Oromia and SNNPR provided two computers to each of the zonal offices. In parallel, training on RLAs/iWoRLAIS was provided to all 12 ZRLAO staff members in June 2018. The number of trainees from each of the ZLAO ranged from two to three staff members. Due to the limited political significance of the zonal administration in Tigray, its role in the capacity building process was ruled out. In Amhara, due to the low number of RLAS operational woredas at that time, no consideration was given to the zonal offices to play a role in the capacity building process of RLAS woredas.

During the implementation process, (July 2018 to February 2019) the performance was lower than planned, with a number of ZRLAOs failing to deliver their expected functions and roles. Very few ZLAOs were able to provide technical support to the RLAS woredas within their respective zones. In Oromia, none of the six ZLAOs were able to provide technical support to the RLAS woredas in their respective zone. While in SNNPR, of the six zonal offices, only **Wolayita ZRLAO** was able to provide technical support to the following four RLAS woredas:

- Damot Woyde
- Kindo Koyisha
- Damot Sore
- Offa

Wolayita ZRLAO successfully provided technical support to the above woredas due to the strong political commitment and high professional discipline and ethics of the Wolayita ZRLAO. The other five ZRLAOs, were unable to deliver their expected plans and mandates.

An important lesson learned was that strong political commitment and support for RLAS needs to be supported with practical measures to strengthen the WLAO through providing adequate budget, staffing and organisation of awareness raising to landholders on the benefits of RLAS, as opposed to relying only on verbal commitment.

### “Satellite Woreda Approach”: An evolving approach

The informal practice where better performing RLAS woredas provided technical support to neighbouring woredas was observed in some RLAS woredas of Oromia and SNNPR as an evolving phenomenon. These practices were recorded in the following woredas:

#### a) Oromia region

- **Sire** woreda provided technical support to **Lode Hettosa** woreda
- **Hetossa** woreda provided support to **Lode Hetoossa** and **Dodota** woredas
- **Kersa Malima** woreda provided technical support to **Sodo Dachi** woreda

#### b) SNNP region

- **Kacha Birra** woreda provided technical support to **Kedida Gamella** and **Doyogena** woredas
- **Meskan** woreda provided a support to **Sodo** woreda.

An overview on RLAS implementation performance level based on the volume of recorded transactions in RLAS woredas which provided technical support as well as recipient woredas, together with experiences and lessons learned from the above woredas in both Oromia and SNNP regional states, is summarized in the succeeding sections.

**Table-1: Lists of RLAS woredas which provided technical support and of support-recipient woredas: “Woreda-to-woreda support approach”**

Woreda name	Zonal administration name	No. of available trained staff	Total No. completed: (From record commencement date-31 <sup>st</sup> Dec 2018)	Transaction record commencement time
<b>1-Oromia regional state</b>				
1-Hetossa	Arussi Zone	5 trained staff	1512	July 2017
2-Sire	Arussi Zone	4 trained staff	1513	Jul, 2017
3-Lode Hetossa	Arussi Zone	6 trained staff	671	September 2017
4-Dodota	E. Shoa Zone	4 trained staff	528	September 2017
5-Kersa Malimma	S.W. Shoa Zone	6 trained staff	835	September, 2017
6-Sodo Dachi	S.W. Shoa Zone	6 trained staff	623	September, 2017
<b>2-SNNP regional state</b>				
1-Kacha Birra	Kembata Timbaro Zone	3 trained staff	425	January 2017 (2 Yrs.)
2-Doyogena	Kembata Timbaro Zone	3 trained staff (insufficient skills & lacking commitment)	19	January 2017 (2 Yrs.)
3-Kedida Gamella	Kembata Timbaro Zone		45	
4-Mekan	Gurage Zone	3 trained staffs	1144	August, 2016
5-Sodo	Gurage Zone	3 trained staffs	814	August, 2016

### Experiences from the SNNP region

#### Kacha Birra as a satellite woreda

**Kacha Birra** WLAO provided technical support to two neighbouring RLAS operational woredas: (**Kedida Gamella** and; **Doyogena** woredas). All are located in **Kembata Timbaro Administrative Zone**.

**a) Technical support to the neighbouring woredas:** The WLAO of **Kach Birra woreda** provided technical support to **Doyogena** and **Kedida Gamela** WLAOs. A one-day on-the-job training was given by **Kacha Birra WLAO** staff members of each of the two WLAOs and the training focussed on the following topics;

- Textual and spatial data processing
- Map extraction and certificate printing

The training was evaluated to be successful and trainees acquired enough skills to operate RLAS/iWoRLAIS.

**b) Administrative arrangements for organizing the training:** Both **Doyogena and Kedida Gamela** WLAOs requested support by writing an official letter to **Kembata Timbaro Zonal Agricultural and Natural Resources Office (ZANRO)** and subsequently the request was submitted to the **Kacha Birra** WLAO management. The trainings to **Doyogena and Kedida Gamela** WLAO staff members were organised after approval of the request by the **Kacha Birra** WLAO management.

**c) Budget sources:** In the case of **Kedida Gamela woreda**, the WLAO management covered the transport and per diem costs for **Kacha Birra** WLAO staff members who gave the training. While in the case of **Doyogena woreda** due to budget constraints, **Kembata Timbarro ZANRO** covered the transport and per diem costs for the **Kacha Birra** WLAO staff members who gave the training.

#### *Meskan as a satellite woreda*

**Meskan** WLAO provided technical support to the neighbouring **Sodo** woreda, (both woredas are located **Gurage Administrative Zone**) as follows:

**a) Technical support to Sodo woreda:** A long established informal mutually supportive collaboration between **Meskan and Sodo WLAOs** was identified with staff from **Meskan** WLAO providing technical support to **Sodo** WLAO roughly once every 3-months, where each time a 2-day on-the-job training is organised for Sodo WLAO staff members. The technical support given focused on the following two topics;

Textual and spatial data processing

Map extracts and certificate printing

**b) Administrative arrangements and budget sources;** Unlike the practices observed in **Kacha Birra** woreda, the support provided by **Meskan** WLAO to **Sodo** WLAO was done on an informal basis based on mutual understanding and goodwill with no budget being required to cover the per diem and transport cost as it was done on a volunteer basis.

#### *Oromia region*

**Hetossa, Sire and Kersa Malimma** WLAOs provided technical support to three neighbouring RLAS operational woredas which required the support as follows;

- **Hetossa** woreda: Provided support to **Lude Hetossa** woreda
- **Sire** woreda; Provided technical support **Lude Hetossa and Dodota** woredas; and
- **Kersa Malima** woreda: Provided support to **Sodo Dachi** woreda.

#### *Hetossa as satellite woreda*

**a) Technical support to Lode Hetossa woreda:** Two trained **Hetossa** WLAO staff members provided a 2-day on-the-job training to **Lude Hetossa** WLAO staff members. The training focussed on the following topics:

- Transaction data entry
- Textual and spatial data processing
- Certificate printing process

The on-the-job training given to **Lode Hetossa** WLAO staff members was found to be effective and all the trained staff members are now able to handle and process transaction cases.

**b) Administrative arrangements for organizing the training:** The support was undertaken after the technical support request from **Lode Hetossa** WLAO was accepted by **Hetossa** WLAO management.

**c) Budget sources:** **Lode Hetossa** WLAO management covered the transport and per diem costs for the two trainers from **Hetossa** WLAO.

#### *Sire as satellite woreda*

**a) Technical support to the neighbouring woredas:** **Sire** WLAO organized a formal 7-day training session for seven Lode **Hetoosa** WLAO staff members at Sire woreda capital town. The training mainly covered the following topics:

- Transaction application procedures for key transaction types
- Textual and spatial data processing



- Approval and certificate printing process

The training was successful with most of the trainees acquiring enough skills to handle and process key transaction types.

**b) Administrative arrangements for organizing the training:** The training was organized after the **Lode Hetossa** official support request was accepted by **Sire** WLAO management.

**c) Budget sources:** **Lode Hetossa** WLAO management covered all the transport, per diem and accommodation costs for the trainers from **Sire** WLAO.

#### *Kersa Malima as satellite woreda*

**a) Technical support to Sodo Dachi woreda:** One staff member from **Kersa Malima WLAO** provided on-the-job training for one day to three **Sodo Dachi** WLAO staff members. The training mainly covered the following topics:

- Transaction data entry process
- Textual and spatial data processing
- Approval and certificate printing process

The training was successful with most of the trainees acquiring sufficient skills to handle and process key transaction types.

**b) Administrative arrangements for organizing the training:** The On-the-Job training to **Sodo Dachi** WLAO staff was organized after **Sodo Dachi WLAO management's** official support request letter was accepted by **Kersa Malima** WLAO management.

**c) Budget sources:** **Sodo Dachi WLAO** management covered the transport and per diem costs for one trainer from **Kersa Malima** WLAO.

#### *Lessons from experiences*

The “**Woreda-to-Woreda Support Approach**” and/or “**Satellite Woreda Approach**” is an institutional arrangement that evolved from demand by RLAS operational woredas requiring additional support. The fact that the approach is demand-driven shows its potential for the approach to succeed in building capacity of WLAOs. Currently, poorly performing RLAS woredas require regular technical support coupled with rigorous monitoring to improve their performance.

In Oromia, the administrative process for a woreda to provide technical support to another is relatively smooth, less bureaucratic and benefits from a common understanding established between the woredas. The same is true with the woredas in SNNPR. However, the ZRLAO is involved in the approval process which adds an additional level of procedures.

There are strong justifications to further consolidate, promote and replicate the evolving “Satellite Woreda Approach” to strengthening the capacities of the RLAS woredas. These include:

- The limitation associated with current organisational structure and staffing of the RLAO fails to keep pace with the growing technical support demands. The growing number of RLAS operational woredas with time in all the four regional states coupled with limited capacity of the RLAOs necessitates an alternative institutional arrangement
- The satellite RLAS woredas are situated in geographic locations with better access to other neighbouring RLAS operational woredas than the regional and zonal capital towns
- Staff members working in the satellite RLAS woredas have the technical skills and competencies blended with real and rich practical experiences and lessons.

The introduction of the “Satellite Woreda Approach”, however, will not downplay or replace the roles and functions of the RLAOs. Rather it complements and strengthens the RToT's approach by covering the current organisational deficiencies to provide technical support to the growing number of RLAS operational woredas in a given region.

### **The Hybrid Institutional Arrangement**

Depending on the region, a combination of the following institutional arrangements will be deployed to provide regular technical support to RLAS woredas in the four regions. The combination of institutional arrangements in each region is determined by political significance of the zonal administration, performance records of the

ZLAO and preference and interest of the RLAO. The three components of the hybrid institutional arrangements are summarised below.

**a) The RToT Approach:** In all the four regions, RToTs will continue to provide technical support to RLAS woredas which are geographically close to the regional capital town. Based on the current arrangement, the support by RToTs to RLAS woredas ranges from four in Amhara region to nine in Oromia. Additionally, the RToTs undertake regular RLAS monitoring assessments and provide special support to poorly performing RLAS woredas which require close support and supervision.

**b) The ZRLAOs:** With exception of Tigray, one or two ZRLAOs will serve as satellite office(s) to support RLAS woredas in their respective zone. One of the satellite's ZRLAO will be strengthened with one well trained staff member. The number of RLAS woredas that will be supported by one satellite ZRLAO in each of the three regions will vary from four in Amhara to seven in Oromia

**c) Satellite woredas:** One or two woredas will be selected to serve as satellite woredas in each regional state. In Amhara, Oromia and SNNP regions only one woredas is selected to serve as satellite woreda. In Tigray region, two satellite woredas are selected. The total number of selected RLAS woredas which get technical support from satellite woredas range from 12 in Oromia region to five in Amhara regional state.

The selection of the satellite ZLAOs and RLAS woredas in a given region has been determined by geographic closeness of RLAS woredas comparative to the regional, zonal and woreda capital towns. Based on the above arrangements, a total of **80 RLAS woredas** will be able to receive a regular technical back up support via three and/or two hybrid institutional arrangements

**Table 3.1- Number of RLAS woredas to be supported by two and /or three institutional arrangements**

Region	No. of RLAS woredas to be supported by the three and/or two hybrid institutional arrangement					Total woredas	Satellite offices
	RToT approach	Zonal Offices		Satellite woredas			
		Zonal Office-1	Zonal Office-2	Woreda-1	Woreda-2		
1-Amhara <sup>1</sup>	4	4	6	5	0	16	E. Gojam & N. Shoa Zone and Mojana woreda
2-Oromia <sup>1</sup>	9	6	7	12	0	24	Arusi and S.W Shoa zones and Bako Tibe woredas
3-SNNP <sup>2</sup>	8	7	5	6	0	24	Wolayita zone and Analemo woreda
4-Tigray <sup>3</sup>	6	0	0	5	5	16	Tahitay Koraro and Adewa woredas
TOTAL						80	
1: In Amhara and Oromia; two zonal offices and one woreda office have been selected to serve as satellite offices. In one of the zonal offices and satellite woreda office, one additional staff member will be hired.							
2: In SNNPR; one zonal office and one satellite woreda are selected and each office staffed with one additional staff member.							
3: In Tigray, unlike Amhara, Oromia and SNNPR, two satellite woredas are selected and serve as satellite.							

## Amhara Region

The following three institutional arrangements will be in place to provide regular technical support to a total of 16 RLAS woredas;

**a) The RToTs:** The RLAO will provide support to six RLAS woredas, which are geographically close to the regional capital town.

**b) The ZLAOs:** E. Gojam and N. Shoa ZLAOs have been selected to serve as satellite offices. E. Gojam ZLAO will be provided one trained staff member and the N. Shoa ZLAO will operate with existing staff members. Both satellite ZLAOs will provide technical support to a total of 11 RLAS woredas.

**c) Satellite woreda:** **Mojana** woreda located in N. Shao Zone has been selected as a satellite woreda and will provide support to five neighbouring RLAS woredas

## Oromia Region

The following three institutional arrangements will be in place to provide regular technical support to a total of 24 RLAS woredas;

**a) The RToTs:** The RLAO will provide support to nine RLAS woredas, which are geographically close to the regional capital town.

**b) The ZLAOs: Arusi and S.W. Shoa ZLAOs** have been selected to serve as satellite offices, the latter office will be provided one trained staff member. The Arusi and S.W. shoa ZRLAOs will provide support to six and seven RLAS woredas, respectively.

**c) Satellite woreda: Bako Tibe woreda** located within W. Shao Zone has been selected to serve as a satellite woreda and planned to provide support to the neighbouring 12 RLAS woredas. A trained staff member will be assigned to Bako Tibe woreda.

## SNNP Region

The following three institutional arrangements will be in place to provide regular technical support to a total of 24 RLAS woredas;

**a) The RToTs:** The RLAO will provide support to eight RLAS woredas, which are geographically close to the regional capital town.

**b) The ZLAOs: Wolayita Zonal Agriculture and Natural Resources Office (ZANRO)** has been selected to serve as a satellite office and will be assigned one trained staff member. The Wolayaita zone showed a relatively good performance record in providing technical support to other RLAS woredas. The zonal office will provide technical support on two fronts i) Deployment of the zonal office staff members with ability to support seven nearby RLAS woredas; and ii) one trained staff member provided by LIFT will support to five nearby RLAS woredas.

**c) Satellite woreda: Analemo woreda** located within **Hadiya Zone** has been selected as a satellite woreda serving the neighbouring six RLAS woredas. The woreda office will be strengthened with f one well trained staff member.

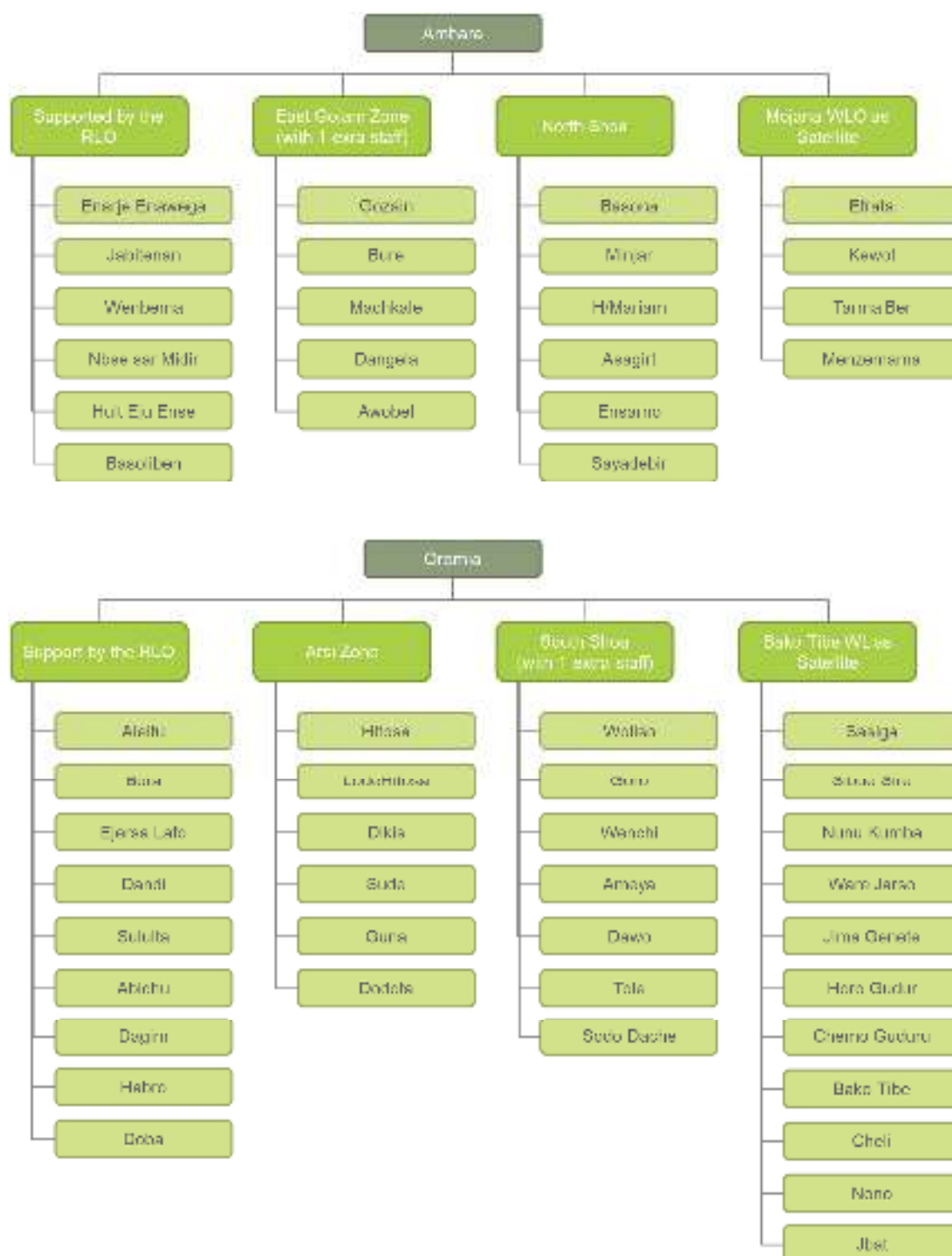
## Tigray Region

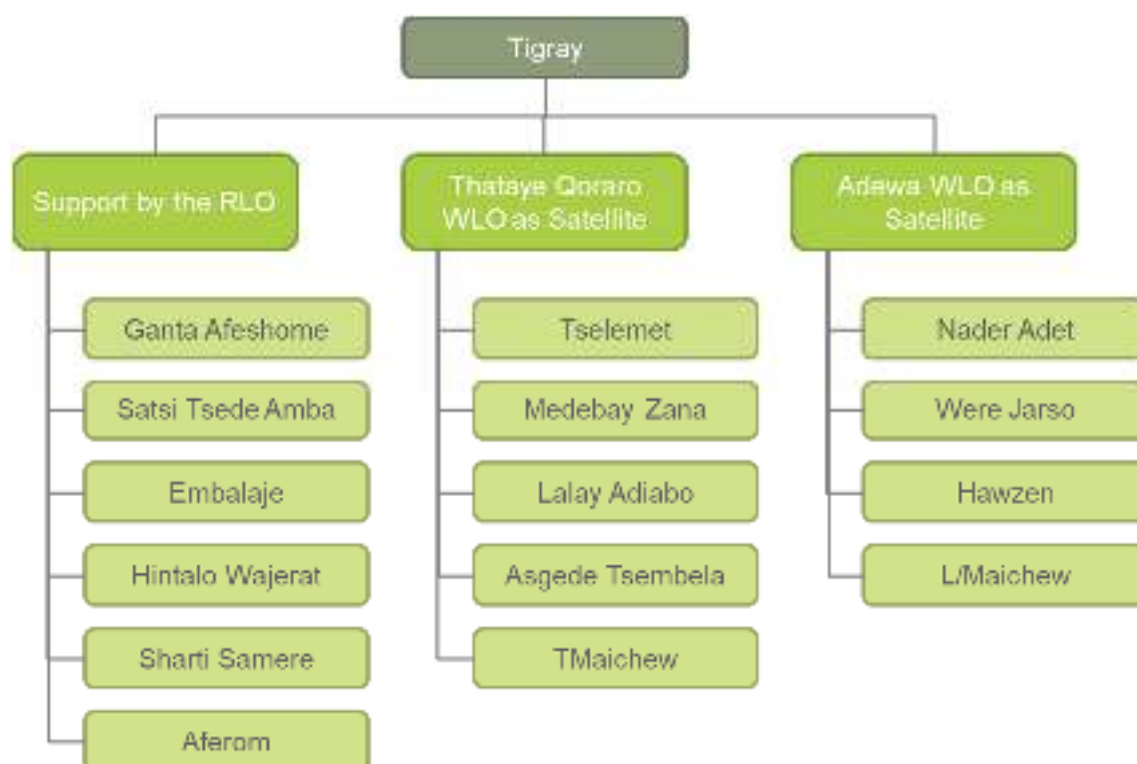
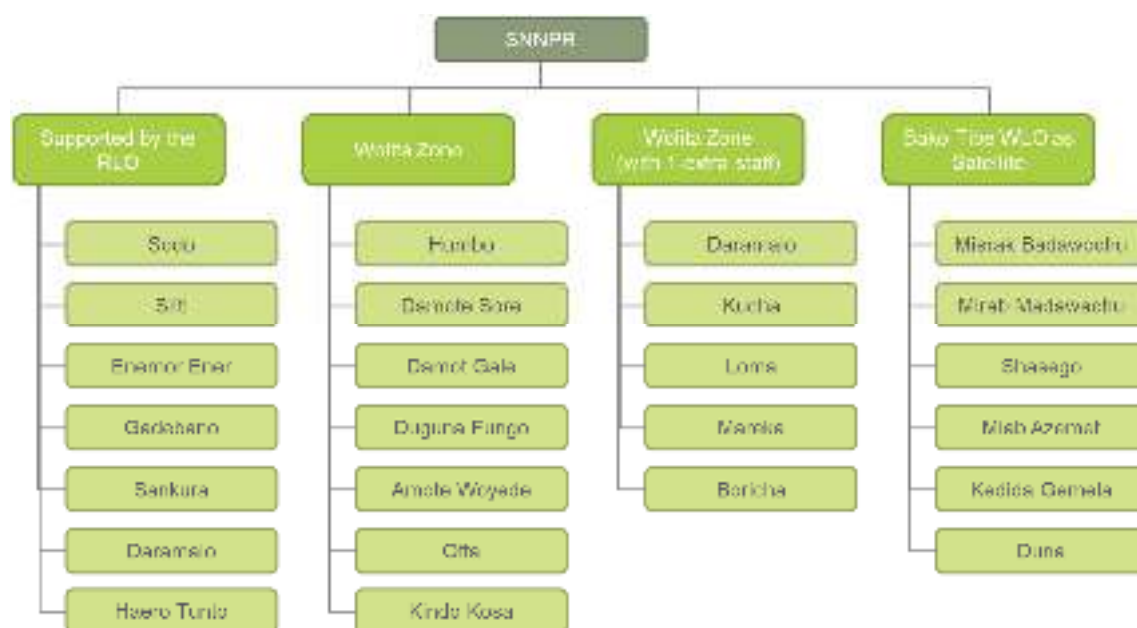
The following two institutional arrangements will be in place to provide regular technical support to a total of 16 RLAS woredas;

**a) The RToTs:** The RLAO will provide support to six RLAS woredas, which are geographically closer to the regional capital town

**b) Satellite woredas: Thahitay Korarro and Adewa woredas** have been selected as satellite woredas, each woreda will provide support to five neighbouring RLAS woredas. Both offices will be strengthened with the assignment of a trained staff member.

**Figure 3.1 Technical Support to RLAIIS Woredas: - Hybrid Institutional Arrangement**





## Success Factors

Based on the experience gained by LIFT, there are several factors to be considered for the strategy to be successful and effective and these include:

- Strong political support for RLAS operations by RLAOs and WLAO management
- The streamlining of RLAS operations and functions into the Annual Work Plans of the RLAOs and WLAOs
- The implementation of appropriate incentive mechanisms to retain trained and experienced staff members of the WLAOs. [Note: Retention of the trained staff members is increasingly becoming a chronic problem and has been aggravated by the introduction of the Job-Evaluation-Grading (JEG) system, where the base salary of professionals with the same qualification is lower in the WLAOs compared to professionals in different offices such as water resources development offices.]

- Additionally, other incentive mechanisms such as rewards to the best performing staff, performance-based staff promotions and other appropriate incentives should be implemented.

To minimize the risk of failure of the above conditions, regular monitoring will be undertaken to check their effectiveness. Additionally, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) will be signed between LIFT, RLAO and the selected satellite zonal and woredas offices, that will elaborate on the share of responsibility and obligations of each entity throughout the implementation stage.

## Action Plan

The series of activities needed to implement the strategy on capacity building of the WLAOs is shown in the table below. The key activities defined in the 6-month action plan include:

- Establishing responsibilities between the four implementing offices: LIFT, RLAO and selected zonal and woreda offices;
- Training of staff members from the selected satellite zonal and woreda offices; and
- Implementation of a monitoring process.

The designation of the required manpower and allocation of finances are the key resources required to implement the planned activities. Required key inputs are:

### a) The RLAO

- The RLAO will be responsible to assign the required number of staff members for RLAS operation at the regional and the selected satellite and woreda office levels
- Mainstreaming RLAS operations into the Annual Work Plans of the RLAOs and of the selected satellite zonal and woreda offices
- Allocating budget for the organization of refresher trainings for the staff members of the selected satellite zonal and woreda offices

### b) LIFT programme

- Hiring of eight contract staff members for the following selected satellite and woreda offices:
  - **Amhara region:** 1 contract staff member in each of E. Gojam and N. Shoa zonal offices
  - **Oromia region:** 1 contact staff member in S. West Shoa zonal office and Bako Tibe satellite woreda
  - **SNNP region:** 1 contract staff member in each of Wolyaita zonal office and Analemo satellite woreda
  - **Tigray region:** 1 contract staff member in each of Tahitay Koraro and Adewa satellite woredas.
- Allocation of a one-time budget to organise training on RLAS for staff members selected from satellite zonal and RLAS woreda offices
- Allocation of budget to cover expenses related to undertaking technical support and implementation monitoring assessment.

[illegible]