RWANDA

Ecosystem-based Adaptation 2016-2022

Supported by the
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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

Increasing water quality and improving hydrological regulation services by restoring more than 425 hectares of degraded lakes, wetlands and riverbanks.

15 LIFE ON LAND

Protecting, restoring and promoting the sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems through the restoration of more than 560 hectares of forests and savannahs in the country.

13 CLIMATE ACTION

Combating climate impacts through the training of 270 local government officials, environmental committee members and local community representatives on ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA)

UN environment programme

gef

PROJECT TITLE:

BUILDING RESILIENCE OF COMMUNITIES LIVING IN DEGRADED FORESTS, SAVANNAHS AND WETLANDS OF RWANDA THROUGH AN ECOSYSTEM-BASED ADAPTATION APPROACH

EXECUTING ENTITY:

REMA Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)

KEY TARGETS:

1,000

Hectares of degraded forests, savannahs and wetlands restored using climate-resilient species

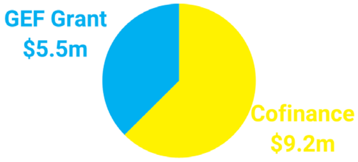
6,100+

Individuals benefitting directly from project interventions

1,600+

Community members, local government officials and others trained to plan and implement EbA

FUNDING:



PROJECT PARTNERS:

Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) and Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA) within the Ministry of Environment (MoE); Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI)

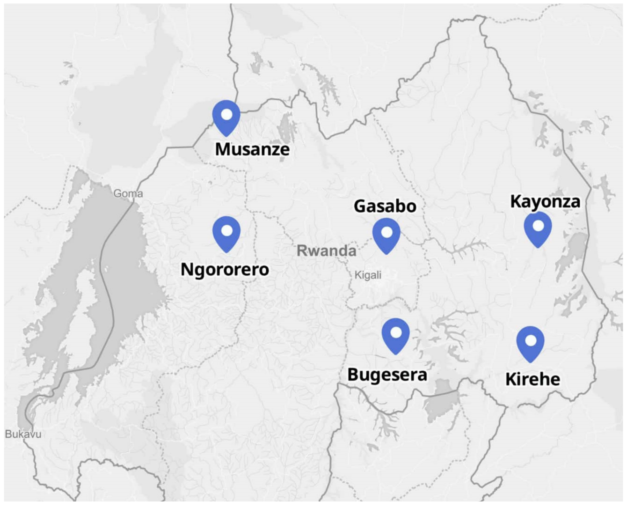
INTRODUCTION

- Rwanda is a landlocked country in East Africa with a topography characterised by steep hills and high mountains.
- Rwanda’s natural wetland, forest, and savannah ecosystems provide a wide range of services that increase the climate resilience of local communities, such as erosion control and flood mitigation.
- There remain many knowledge gaps in Rwanda that limit the use of ‘ecosystem-based adaptation’ - a strategy that draws on nature-based solutions to build climate resilience.
- The project’s main approaches are to: strengthen the capacity of institutions to plan and implement ecosystem-based adaptation; restore degraded ecosystems; and promote climate-resilient livelihoods in Kayonza, Bugesera, Ngororero, Kirehe, Musanze and Gasabo districts.

CLIMATE IMPACTS

- Climate change is negatively affecting rural communities in Rwanda through erratic rainfall and flooding events in the central and north-western highlands, along with increased mean temperatures that cause rainfall shortages and droughts in the eastern and southern lowlands.
- Global climate models predict that Rwanda’s average temperature may increase to 2.5°C by the 2050s and up to 4°C by the 2080s.
- Consequently, many sectors in Rwanda will be impacted, including agriculture, forestry, health and water. Such effects include a decrease in agricultural yields and water supplies.
- In addition, the unsustainable use of natural resources in certain parts of the country leads to the degradation of natural ecosystems, which reduces their capacity to provide ecosystem services and protect communities from the effects of climate change.

PROJECT LOCATION



The project interventions are taking place in degraded savannas in Kayonza and Kirehe districts, degraded forests on hill slopes in Ngororero district, and degraded wetlands in Musanze, Kayonza, Bugesera, Gasabo, and Ngororero districts.

TECHNOLOGIES & METHODS

- The project seeks to increase the **capacity of national and local authorities**, as well as local community representatives, to promote, plan, budget and implement large-scale **ecosystem-based adaptation** interventions.
- These interventions include, for example, **ecosystem restoration** activities, such as the rehabilitation of degraded wetlands, savannahs and forests to increase water security and to reduce flooding by absorbing excess rainfall.
- The interventions also include **climate-resilient agricultural practices**, such as soil conservation and agroforestry, which increases soil stability, reduces erosion and increases agricultural productivity.
- The ecosystem-based adaptation activities are being **implemented by local communities,** restoring at least 425 hectares of wetlands, 25 hectares of forests, and 535 hectares of savannahs.
- Local community members are also receiving **training, equipment, and technical support** to adopt climate-resilient livelihoods in the project intervention sites.
- To close knowledge gaps, **technical ecosystem-based adaptation guidelines** and other guidance documents are being developed by the project and disseminated to environmental committees and local authorities.
- **Educational resources**, including **university theses,** have been developed to increase climate knowledge and awareness, and to support a new **competency-based curriculum** for primary, secondary, and university levels that seeks to address climate impacts using ecosystem-based adaptation.
- To promote the uptake and sustained use of ecosystem-based adaptation in the country, **policy recommendations** and a **national upscaling strategy** are being developed.

CONTACTS

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RESOURCES

- UNEP project page - link
- Guidelines: Ecosystem-based Adaptation for Climate-resilient Restoration of Savannah, Wetland and Forest Ecosystems in Rwanda - link
- Ecosystem-based Adaptation Gap Analysis - link
- Learn more about ecosystem-based adaptation - link

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