



<b>Title of UNDP –Supported, GEF – Financed Project</b>	Forest Landscape Restoration in Mayaga Region Project
<b>UNDP PIMS#</b>	5702
<b>GEF Project ID#</b>	9385
<b>MTR Timeframe</b>	March 2023 – July 2023
<b>Region and Countries Included in the Project</b>	Rwanda, Africa
<b>GEF Focal Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Biodiversity</li><li>• Climate Change</li><li>• Land Degradation</li></ul>
<b>GEF Implementing Agency</b>	United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Rwanda
<b>Executing Agencies</b>	REMA (Rwanda Environmental Management Authority) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Gisagara, Ruhango, Nyanza and Kamonyi Districts</li></ul>
<b>MTR Team Members</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sharad Agarwal - Project Director</li><li>• Dr. Harbhajan Singh Pabla - Team Leader</li><li>• Gitau Wamukui - Landscaping Expert</li><li>• Ange Félix Nsanziyera - GIS &amp; Remote Sensing Expert</li><li>• Samarth Agarwal - Support Staff</li><li>• Tanvi Jain - Support Staff</li><li>• Suchayan Mondal – Support Staff</li><li>• 4 Surveyors</li></ul>

## Mid-term Review (MTR) Report Forest Landscape Restoration in Mayaga Region Project August 2023

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

CSO	Civil Society Organizations
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CC	Coordination Committees
ESMP	Environment and Social Management Plan
FFS	Farmer Field School
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration
FONERWA	Fund for Environment and Climate of Rwanda (Rwanda Green Fund)
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GoR	Government of Rwanda
Ha	Hectares
IP	Implementing Partner
JADF	Joint Action Development Forum
MTR	Midterm Review
MIGEPROF	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINAGRI	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources
MINALOC	Ministry of Local Government
MoE	Ministry of Environment
OPF	Operational Focal Point
PIR	Project Implementation Report
RAB	Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board
REMA	Rwanda Environment Management Agency
RFA	Rwanda Forestry Authority
RWB	Rwanda Water Resources Board
RTA	UNDP-GEF Regional Technical Adviser
SESP	Social and Environmental Screening Procedure
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDP IEO	UNDP Independent Evaluation Office



Buffer zone site in Ruhango

# Section 1

## Executive Summary



## 1. Executive Summary

### 1.1 Project Information Table

To provide an overview of the project, the table below summarizes the facts of the project. Furthermore, the project background and content are described.

<b>Title</b> - Forest Landscape Restoration in the Mayaga Region Project	
<b>UNDP PIMS Project ID</b> – 5702	<b>GEF project ID</b> – 9385
<b>Country</b> – Rwanda, Africa	<b>Country Region</b> – 4 districts (Kamonyi, Ruhango, Nyanza and Gisagara) in the Southern Province
<b>Implementing Partner</b> - Rwanda Environment Management Agency (REMA)	<b>GEF focal areas</b> - Biodiversity, Land Degradation, Climate Change Mitigation
<b>PIF Approval Date</b> - May 23, 2017	<b>GEF CEO Endorsement Date</b> - August 6, 2019
<b>Project Start Date</b> - December 9, 2019	<b>Project Manager Hiring Date</b> – March 5, 2023
<b>Project Duration</b> - 6 years	<b>Project Closing Date</b> - December 9, 2025
<b>MTR Inception Presentation Date</b> - April 19, 2023	<b>Midterm Review Completion Date</b> - July 31, 2023
<b>Project Financing</b>	<b>Total: US\$ 32,706,365</b> consisting of: a) GEF Grant: US\$ 6,213,538 b) UNDP Grant: US\$ 1,000,000 c) Govt. of Rwanda: US\$ 25,493,365

### 1.2 Project Description

The UNDP-supported, GEF-financed Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) Mayaga Project aims to restore degraded forest landscapes in the region. The project is designed to secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in four districts of Mayaga region – Kamonyi, Ruhango, Nyanza and Gisagara.

The project will deliver environmental benefits from improvements in vegetation cover and soil conservation including:

- a) Improved native biodiversity within a global priority ecoregion.
- b) Carbon sequestration.
- c) Improved watershed function, reducing sedimentation and related costs to downstream water infrastructure and fisheries; and
- d) Higher productivity and diversity of natural-resource-based livelihoods.

### 1.3 Project Progress Summary

The **project strategy** remains highly relevant in the context of Rwanda’s socio-economic and environmental conditions. Moreover, the project design sufficiently focuses on gender and inclusion issues.

The SMART analysis of the **project’s results framework** depicts that overall, the project has successfully been able to achieve the SMART conditions on most of the indicators and has been able to catalyze future beneficial development.

**Progress towards results** is Highly Satisfactory as the project has shown considerable progress towards the end term targets for several outcome level indicators. Gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks are largely on track with FLR coordination committees established. Focused group discussions with beneficiaries reveal that although the community mobilization has progressed well, there is significant demand for regular community capacity development.

Project implementation and adaptive management is satisfactory. The core project management structures are suitable. Co-Financing was delivered well, as most of the targets are well on track to be achieved. It can be said that the project’s finances are in good shape.

There is active participation of local government stakeholders at different levels contributing to effectual project implementation. The documentation of risks and adaptive management responses may be improved.

Sustainability of project outcomes is likely. In terms of strong ground level support for project objectives and accomplishments, socioeconomic risks are unlikely. Moreover, environmental risks are minimal as the project puts exemplary emphasis on environmental sustainability through the use of native species and the promotion of biodiversity-friendly renewable energy sources.

In three years, FLR Mayaga restored 13,486 ha (as per draft PIR 2023) of degraded forest landscapes through sustainable land management, tree plantation, and forest conservation activities. The project also conducted capacity-building workshops and training for REMA staff and other stakeholders. Going forward, the project will continue to prioritize forest landscape restoration, institutional strengthening, stakeholder engagement, and monitoring and evaluation. To increase impact in the region, the government plans to engage more stakeholders and restore larger areas of degraded forest landscapes in Mayaga.

1.4 MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
<b>Project Strategy</b>	Highly satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project strategy and design remain highly relevant in the context of the strategic aims of the Government of Rwanda, UNDP, and the GEF. The strategy's contribution to the forest landscape restoration goals is particularly notable.</li> <li>The project is designed to secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while also building livelihood resilience in the selected four districts of the Mayaga region, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies.</li> <li>The strategic results framework reflects a multi-stakeholder driven strategy that also recognizes assumptions regarding externalities and threats to sustainability of project results with more nuanced gender-sensitive outcomes, with sex-disaggregated indicators.</li> </ul>
<b>Progress Towards Results</b>	<b>Objective: Highly Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notable progress on the establishment of the district level co-ordination committees in all four target districts is evident from the project results.</li> <li>Moreover, the project has immensely contributed towards strengthening livelihood resilience as a significant number of persons have been reported to have benefited from the project activities.</li> <li>Additionally, the project contributed to forest restoration efforts by organizing farmer field schools (FFS) of various kinds such as climate smart agriculture, livestock maintenance, agroforestry etc.</li> </ul>
	<b>Outcome 1: Highly Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The project demonstrates impressive results on some indicators under this outcome that have exceeded the midterm targets, i.e., the FLR plans for all four targets districts have been developed and validated ensuring</li> </ul>

		gender considerations and participatory approach and methodology.
	<b>Outcome 2: Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been extensive focus on the capacity building activities and development of knowledge management plans.</li> <li>• There is progress on the target for mobilizing funding for sustaining the implementation of FLR plans post project and is in the working stage. A concept note/Proposal with budget equivalent to \$ 9,932,000 was submitted to GEF and approved. The next step is the detailed costing and pre-appraisal mission.</li> </ul>
	<b>Outcome 3: Highly Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There has been tremendous progress towards increasing agriculture productivity and plantation of forests in the target area.</li> <li>• The activities include afforestation woodlots, roadside protection, agroforestry, and river buffer zones protection for landscapes restoration additionally put under sustainable land management in production systems and for recovery of the ecosystems which were degraded by plantation of different tree species and grasses and with creation of ditches as erosion control measures.</li> </ul>
<b>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The project provides a well-structured management arrangement, and a dedicated project team,</li> <li>• Work planning is adequately results based, as most of the core activities included in the strategic results framework were efficiently pursued and targets have been successfully achieved and, in some cases, even been exceeded.</li> <li>• With the project results being achieved; resources and Financing &amp; Co-financing are efficiently utilized.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability</b>	<b>Likely</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The environmental risks of the project are minimal as the project itself focuses on environmental protection. Progress towards financial sustainability of the FLR initiatives is also evident.</li> <li>• The project sufficiently focuses on implementing a strategy to reduce risks of project dependence on UNDP and GEF technical and financial support once the project closes as evident from the active support and participation from district government and the district co-financing being triple of the funds from UNDP and GEF.</li> </ul>

### 1.5 Concise summary of conclusions

The project strategy is in line with the country's national priorities and presents immense opportunities for collaboration and private sector engagement. From the foregoing account, the project is well designed and is on its way to achieving or exceeding most of its targets.

The project has progressed well and has sufficiently focused on land restoration activities, including biodiversity conservation. Moreover, the plantation and the climate smart agriculture (CSA) activities will reap socio-economic benefits for the people and contribute to land rejuvenation.

The development and imparting of comprehensive community awareness raising and capacity development on FLR/SFM is highly important in light of the low level of community awareness on the concept of SFM. Overall, the capacity development has progressed well and following



interlinked courses/ trainings were delivered: Environment management, Forest management plan, Tree and land husbandry, Climate change and climate smart agriculture, Nurseries preparation, Business plan for community driven development projects related to the maintenance of project interventions.

The sustainability of project results is largely ensured and sets an example in demonstrating best practices of environmental sustainability. The PIR represents that several of the project results achieved through midterm have enhanced the likelihood that benefits will continue to be generated after donor funding ceases.

## 1.6 Recommendation Summary Table

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible
A	<i>Project Objective: To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province</i>	
A.1	Upscale the adoption of clean technologies, such as solar energy and biogas, to reduce reliance on wood fuel and contribute to carbon emissions reduction.	PMU, District Governments, FONERWA, APEFA
A.2	There should be specific focus on preserving, restoring, and monitoring native plant biodiversity to conserve the natural forest ecosystem.	PSC, PMU and RFA
B	<i>Outcome 1: Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture, covering 263,270 ha in 4 districts</i>	
B.1	Advocate for supportive policies at the regional and national levels that prioritize biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, and sustainable livelihoods.	Project Board (PSC), RFA, PMU, District Governments,
C	<i>Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management</i>	
C.1	Empower the community members to further expand their understanding of environmental conservation and sustainable agriculture.	RGB, RFA, PMU, APEFA
D	<i>Outcome 3: Implementation of FLR plans secures 555 ha of natural forests, puts 300 ha of forests under participatory forest management, establishes 1,000 ha of plantations under the New Forest Company through co-finance, increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 25,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%</i>	
D.1	Promotion of startups for manufacturing and distribution of clean energy cookstoves.	FONERWA, PMU, District Governments
D.2	As Kibirizi-Muyira forest is the only remaining natural forest in the Mayaga region, its status should be upgraded to IUCN III category level (Natural Monument of Feature) status rather than category IV.	Project Board, UNDP, RFA, PMU,
E	<i>Project Strategy</i>	
E.1	Diversification of rural livelihoods and expansion of non-farm activities for holistic and sustainable development.	APEFA, RGB, District Governments, PMU
E.2	Enhance the regular monitoring of the issues/ complaints registered in the established grievance redressal mechanism.	District Governments, sRGB and PMU

F	<i>Progress Towards Results</i>	
F.1	Consider the revaluation and revision of targets for certain project indicators given the overestimation of results as per the project intervention area and project activity target.	PSC and PMU
G	<i>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</i>	
G.1	It is important to enhance monitoring processes and tools / checklists on assessing the capacity of stakeholders and project implementing agencies on achieving the project targets.	RGB, RFA and PMU
H	<i>Sustainability</i>	
H.1	Fast track the development of a well-thought-out exit strategy to ensure a smooth transition and sustainability of the project outcomes.	UNDP, PMU, FONERWA
H.2	Encourage the dissemination of success stories, best practices, and lessons learned through farmer-to-farmer learning sessions, field demonstrations, and awareness campaigns.	UNDP and PMU



Youth Nursery site in Gisagara

## Section 2

### Introduction

## 2. Introduction

### 2.1 Purpose of the MTR and objectives

As per the terms of reference (ToR) agreed between UNDP Rwanda and Lochan & Co, this MTR's main goal was to examine how well the project is doing in terms of achieving its goals and producing the intended results, identify areas for improvement in its execution, assess the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives and delivering its intended outputs, within the current timeframe.

The MTR was also intended to review the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability and assess progress made in the implementation of the project's social and environmental management measures as outlined in the Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP). Moreover, the mission was expected to provide recommendations on modifications to increase the likelihood of success of the project and the monitoring system that guides these findings.

### 2.2 Scope of MTR, Approach & Methodology

#### Scope of MTR

The scope of the MTR includes the following:

- Assess the level of achievement of key project indicators by reviewing the project design, scope, status of implementation and capacity to achieve the set objectives.
- Assess challenges met and threats if any as a means of validating or filling the gaps in the initial assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability, and impact of interventions obtained from monitoring.
- Collate and analyze lessons learned and best practices obtained during the period of implementation of the project;
- Propose recommendations for the remaining implementation period of the project to improve project performance.

#### MTR Approach

The above activities and outputs require a deeper understanding of the FLR Mayaga project than what may be available in the progress reports. To gain this understanding, the consultants reviewed and analyzed the following categories of project progress:

- **Project Strategy:** i.e., Project Design and the Results Framework/ Logframe.
- **Progress towards Results:** The progress made toward end-of-project targets based on the indicators and targets in the Results framework is colour coded in accordance with a "traffic light system" provided in the MTR Guidance document.
- **Project Implementation and Adaptive Management:** Management Arrangements, Work Planning, Finance and Co-Finance, Project Level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems, Stakeholder Engagement, Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards), Reporting, and Communications & Knowledge Management.
- **Sustainability:** Financial risks to sustainability, Socioeconomic risks to sustainability, Environmental risks to sustainability, and Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability

The assignment includes a document review, an assessment of project outcomes and indicators, site visits, and interviews. The objective is to gauge the progress of the project activities, identify lessons learned during project implementation and provide recommendations for the remaining implementation period.

We adopted various methods to collect data, including field visits, stakeholder consultations, key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and document review to ensure that the data collected is representative of the project's progress & performance.



The schedule for interviews and field visits was finalised in consultation with the project authorities once the mission dates were finalised. Efforts were made to give sufficient notice to the participants to prepare for the interaction and be available as required.

### 2.3 Data Collection Method

We adopted a participatory approach that included all the stakeholders involved in the implementation of this project. We worked not only with UNDP but also with the government side as well as the beneficiaries and other parties involved in the implementation of this project.

This MTR was carried out through collection of secondary data (documentary review) and primary data (field visits direct observations, individual and group interviews using questionnaires, with all key stakeholders) to verify achievements of the project to date.

#### Stakeholder Consultations

We conducted a stakeholder mapping exercise to identify the key stakeholders involved in the project, including the project team, implementing partners, government agencies, and local communities. This helped us to develop a stakeholder engagement plan which ensured that all relevant stakeholders were included in the review process.

We conducted a stakeholder consultation process to gather input and feedback on the project's performance and outcomes. The consultation process involved engaging with key stakeholders, including the project team, implementing partners, government agencies, and local communities in the 4 target districts.

For the FLR in the Mayaga Region project, the stakeholder consultations included key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and community meetings.

The community meetings were conducted with the local communities (particularly the project beneficiaries) during the field visit to understand the benefits, impact and the feedback on the different project activities (cookstoves, livestock, agroforestry, youth nurseries, climate smart agriculture, buffer zones, woodlots). In total 21 community meetings were conducted in different sectors of the 4 target districts.

#### Key Informant Interviews

Key informant interviews involved conducting structured/semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the project including project staff, beneficiaries, government officials, donors, and other relevant stakeholders. The interviews were conducted to obtain insights into the project's implementation, outcomes, and impacts. In total, 9 institutions involved in the project were interviewed.

#### Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions involved a group of people discussing project specific topics that were particularly useful in understanding the perspectives of project beneficiaries and other stakeholders on the implementation of different project activities. In total, 66 beneficiaries were interviewed.

#### Document Review

Document review served as an efficient data collection method. This involved reviewing relevant project documents, such as project reports, annual work plans, budget reports, and other project-related documents mentioned in Annexure 7. These documents provided valuable insights into the project's design, implementation, and performance.

### 2.4 Limitations to the MTR

Although the MTR team faced certain limitations, we ensured that these limitations are fundamentally mitigated, and that the assessment provides a comprehensive and accurate picture of the project's progress.

Our team had anticipated that communicating with the local team would be an issue due to foreign language, thus we made arrangements of recruiting facilitators and interpreters during



the field visits for interviews and focus group discussions. Also, the presence of the female facilitator was assured in the team to maintain gender balance by interviewing female beneficiaries.

The project sites were distributed over a large area; thus, we adopted a stratified purposive sampling for the selection of sites for field visits based on a list of field sites, stratification was carried out by landscape and intervention type.

We maintained regular follow-ups with the project management unit to retrieve project data and information required to perform the MTR.

## 2.5 Principles of MTR

We followed a set of principles and criteria for selecting interviewees and field site visits to undertake the MTR.

Firstly, we ensured that our selection of stakeholders is relevant to the objectives, outcomes, and outputs of the project. This means identifying key stakeholders involved in the project, such as beneficiaries, partners, and implementing agencies.

Secondly, we ensured diversity in our MTR process. This means considering gender, age, and geography. We also considered the project's impact on different groups, such as women, youth.

Thirdly, we prioritized the selection of stakeholders who can provide valuable information about the project's progress, achievements, and challenges. We selected stakeholders who have been involved in the project from its inception.

## 2.6 Structure of the MTR report

The MTR report is divided into six sections. The first section presents an executive summary of the MTR project including a brief project description, project progress summary and a concise summary of MTR ratings and achievements, conclusion, and recommendations.

The second section provides the introduction to the MTR including an overview of the purpose and scope of the MTR project, the approach & methodology including data collection methods and MTR project limitations.

The third section provides an account of the FLR project background and implementation strategy including the description of the development context and field sites, problems that the project sought to address, key stakeholders, and project timing and milestones.

The fourth section presents the MTR findings. based on the following four criteria: strategy, progress, implementation and adaptive management, as well as sustainability.

The fifth section presents in detail the conclusions and recommendations highlighting the strengths, weaknesses, and results of the FLR project and proposing future corrective actions for the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project.

The sixth section compiles the list of annexes and operational documents including list of persons interviewed, used for undertaking the MTR mission.



Woodlot site in Kamonyi

## **Section 3**

# **Project Description and Background**

### 3. Project Description and Background Context

#### 3.1 Development context

As stated in the Project Document and confirmed by document review, field survey and interviews with key informants, the Project is aligned well with the governments' and UNDP's strategies and priorities.

Rwanda pledged to the Bonn Challenge in 2011 to restore 2 million hectares of forest and agricultural land as part of the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration's "The Bonn Challenge" that aims to restore 150 million hectares of deforested and degraded land worldwide by 2020. Rwanda seeks to use this endeavor as part of its low-carbon economic development to improve ecosystem quality and resilience, provide new livelihood opportunities for rural communities, and ensure appropriate water and electricity supplies.

Rwanda's National Transformation Strategy, Priority Area 7, recognizes sustainable management of the environment and natural resources as the path to healthy lifestyles and a green economy, with a focus on forestry, land, water, environment, and climate change. The percentage of households relying on biomass as a source of energy for cooking is predicted to fall to 42% by 2024<sup>1</sup> with increased access to and use of sustainable and low-carbon energy.

Moreover, the area covered by forest will be expanded from 29.8% (2017) to 30% under greater sustainability and profitability of forestry management. This will be accomplished through continued afforestation and enhanced forest management in accordance with the National and District Forest Management Plans.

Additionally, the National Forest Policy of Rwanda (put into place in 2004 and most recently amended in 2018) promotes the goal of making forestry one of the economic pillars and ensuring a balance in the environment that benefits all facets of society. In 2011, Rwanda's National Forest Policy was recognized as the world's most inspiring and innovative forest policy with the Gold Future Policy Award.

Enhanced project capacities and improved cross-sector collaboration will aid in the restoration of the damaged forest environment across over 263,270 hectares in four districts. Forest protection, increased productivity of expanded plantation forests, enhanced agriculture, and strengthened SFM and watershed management will result in economic advantages as a result of the combined impacts of all project components.

The UNDP Strategic Plan emphasizes the strengthening of gender-responsive legal and regulatory frameworks, policies, and institutions. This is aimed at tackling issues related to the conservation, sustainable utilization, and fair distribution of benefits from natural resources, in accordance with both international agreements and domestic laws.

#### 3.2 Problems that the project sought to address: threats and barriers targeted

Despite their importance, the natural forests in Mayaga are threatened by agricultural expansion and overharvesting of forest products. Many of the threats to Rwanda's important biodiversity, carbon stocks and livelihoods originate from the fact that the country has a relatively small surface area (26,338 km<sup>2</sup>) supporting a high and growing population with high dependence on agriculture and wood fuel for energy.

Ecosystems degradation has taken three pathways in Mayaga:

- i) Quantitative loss – leading to a decline in areal extent of discrete ecosystem types;
- ii) Qualitative loss, leading to degradation in the structure, function, or composition of several ecosystems; and

<sup>1</sup> Republic of Rwanda, 2017: National Strategy for Transformation 1: THE 7YEAR GOVERNMENT PROGRAM 2017-2024



iii) Fragmentation, caused largely by encroachment for agriculture.

Increasing forest and agroforest cover in the Mayaga region from the current 5% in the four Districts to close to the national target is hampered by three key barriers:

- Inadequate use of knowledge-based planning for resource use and forest management;
- Inadequate technical skills and institutional capacities for increasing land productivity while simultaneously restoring ecosystems, and
- Inadequate market-based incentives to adopt climate smart technologies, forestry, and biodiversity friendly businesses.

Although the Mayaga region's arable land is fertile, many of its areas are impacted by land degradation, which includes soil loss, deforestation, and forest degradation, as well as the corresponding loss of carbon stocks.

Moreover, several wetlands have been turned into farms without taking the proper conservation measures, and some riverbanks and woodlands have been turned into fields. Annual crops (tubers like cassava) are replacing perennial ones (like coffee and bananas), leaving the soil more vulnerable to erosion and carbon loss.

### 3.3 Project Description and Strategy

The project identifies the overall objective “To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province”.

The Project objective will be achieved through three mutually interconnected Outcomes, which will be achieved through several Outputs generated by the FLR Mayaga Project as presented below in Table 1.

Table 1: Project Outcomes and Outputs

<b>Project Objective:</b> To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province
Outcome 1: Knowledge based forest restoration plans, covering over 263,270 ha, with institutional and legislation frameworks
Output 1.1: Legislation and coordination mechanism in place for effective FLR
Output 1.2: Four FLR plans ready for implementation, covering 263,270 ha
Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management
Output 2.1: Training programs implemented for all stakeholders, increasing the average individual score on the UNDP Capacity Assessment by 20 percentage points for all stakeholder groups
Output 2.2: Institutional capacity for the extension service and community knowledge sharing forums increased by 25 percentage points on the UNDP Capacity Assessment for all stakeholder groups
Output 2.3: Monitoring & Evaluation plans, Knowledge Management, and gender mainstreaming strategy in place
Outcome 3: Implementation of FLR plans improves management of forest biodiversity in 555 ha of natural forests (increasing protection status of 354 ha of the 555ha), increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 27,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%.
Output 3.1: Management enhanced on 555 ha of high conservation value forest, including increased protection status of 354 ha of the 555 ha

Output 3.2: Buffer zones and hill-tops afforested with a mix of indigenous trees and higher productivity plantations

Output 3.3: SLM/SFM practices implemented in > 25,000 ha of agriculture land, including agroforestry on 1,000 ha of consolidated land

Output 3.4: Wood consumption reduced by 25% from improved household and institutional cooking energy technologies

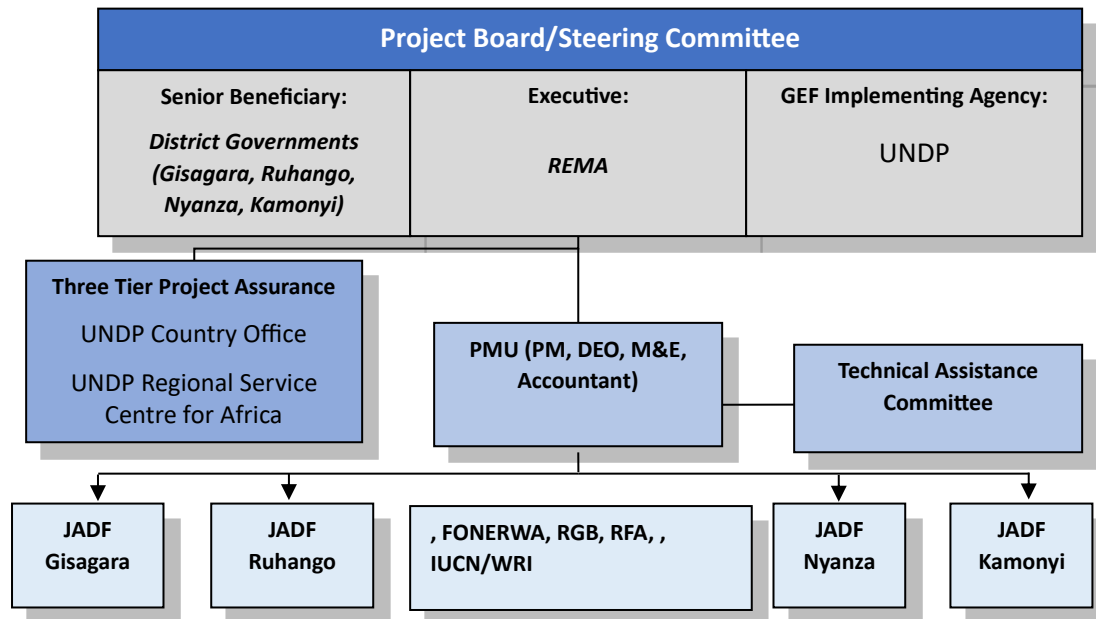
#### Description of field sites

District	Project Activity Sectors	Activities Implemented
<b>Kamonyi District</b>	Mugina and Nyamiyaga	Cook Stoves Woodlot Buffer Zones Livestock Argo-forestry Climate Smart Agriculture
<b>Nyanza District</b>	Busasaman, Muyira, Busoro, and Ntyazo	Cook Stoves Woodlot Buffer Zones Livestock Argo-forestry Fruit trees LPG Gas
<b>Ruhango District</b>	Mbuye, Ruhango, Ntongwe, and Kinazi	Cook Stoves Woodlot Buffer Zones Live-stock Argo-forestry Fruit trees LPG Gas Youth Nursery Climate Smart Agriculture
<b>Gisagara District</b>	Ndora, Gishubi, Mamba, and Save	Cook Stoves Roadside Afforestation Woodlot Buffer Zones Live-stock Fruit trees LPG Gas Complete Agroforestry Youth Nursery Climate Smart Agriculture



### 3.4 Project Implementation Arrangements

The project is executed by Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) which is under the Ministry of Environment (MoE), with the overall responsibility for the achievement of project results, as the national Implementing Partner. UNDP provides oversight and quality assurance from its Country Office in Rwanda and Regional Office in Ethiopia and is responsible for ensuring that GEF and UNDP requirements are met, including monitoring and evaluation of the project. The project is executed according to UNDP’s National Implementation Modality



(NIM).

Figure 1: Project Organization Structure

#### Roles and responsibilities

The Project Steering Committee (PSC) consists of 17 members including key national governmental agencies, district governments, REMA, and UNDP. The PSC is responsible for making project management decisions. The board approves the annual work plans and budgets, and also plays a critical role in project monitoring and evaluation.

The Project Management Unit (PMU) is comprised of 7 members and is responsible for the overall execution and management of the project activities. The PMU closely coordinates project activities with relevant Government institutions and holds regular consultations with other project stakeholders and partners.

While the participation of women in both PSC and PMU is less than 30%, it is worth highlighting that both Chair and Co-chair of the PSC are women. In addition, the project does take sufficient cognizance of gender matters during the implementation and monitoring of the project interventions.

### 3.5 Project timing and milestones

PIF submitted	April 7th, 2017
PIF approved	May 23rd, 2017
GEF CEO Endorsement submitted	August 6th, 2019
Project document signed	December 9th, 2019
MTR Inception Presentation	April 19th, 2023
Midterm review	March - July 2023
Expected date of terminal evaluation	September 25th, 2025

Expected closing date December 9th, 2025

As evident from document review and interviews with stakeholders, the Project had a long development process of more than two years between the submission of the PIF (April 2017) and the signing of the Project Document (December 2019). The Project effectively started in December 2019.

Thus, the MTR took place approx. 2.5 years after the effective start, whereas it is 3.5 years into the formal project period. The operational closing date of the project is stated as December 2025, leaving two years between the MTR and the terminal evaluation unless the project is extended.

### 3.6 Main stakeholders: summary list

- GoR – Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)
- GoR – Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA)
- GoR – Rwanda Governance Board (RGB)
- Rwanda Green Funds (FONERWA)
- National Land Authority (NLA)
- Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB)
- Rwanda Standards Boards (RSB)
- Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB);
- National Industrial Research and Development Agency (NIRDA);
- Ministry of Local Government;
- Ministry of Infrastructure
- GoR – Gisagara District
- GoR – Nyanza District
- GoR – Ruhango District
- GoR – Kamonyi District
- Action for Environment Protection and Promotion of Agricultural Sector (APEFA)
- Local community members



FFS and CSA in Ruhango

## Section 4 Findings

## 4. Findings

This section presents the results of the midterm review in accordance with the ToR for this assignment and UNDP guidelines for midterm review of projects funded by the GEF, results of this review consist of four sub parts:

- 4.1) **Project strategy** – This includes the assessment of the project’s overall strategy and design of the result framework. All the 10 indicators were assessed against the SMART evaluation criteria. This evaluation is, however, independent of the project progress.
- 4.2) **Progress towards Results** – This involved the evaluation of the progress in project implementation, measured against planned midterm targets for each of the 10 indicators set forth in the Project Document.
- 4.3) **Project Implementation and Adaptive Management** – This is the evaluation of the project’s overall efficiency in project implementation and management. It was also assessed if there were any changes made to the project strategy from the start of the project and its adeptness in achieving project results.
- 4.4) **Sustainability** – The project was evaluated for sustainability of the project outcomes considering potential risks (if any) for project implementation and future subsistence.

The indicators mentioned in Table 2 below give the list of 10 indicators that were evaluated for the project strategy and assessing the Progress towards Results as part of the MTR project. The indicators are spread across 1 overall project objective and 3 project outcomes:

Table 2: Project Outcomes and Indicators

<b>Project Objective:</b> To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province
<b>Indicator 1:</b> Number of new gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks in place in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity (via FLR)
<b>Mandatory indicator 2:</b> Number of people benefitting financially from FLR initiatives (fruit/tree cropping and one cow per family initiative, improved cookstoves): - GEF Core Indicator 11
<b>Mandatory indicator 3:</b> Tons of carbon mitigated - GEF Core Indicator 6
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture, covering 263,270 ha in 4 districts
<b>Indicator 4:</b> Number of FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level
<b>Indicator 5:</b> Definitions of SFM and FLR clarified in the National Forest Policy (2018)
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management
<b>Indicator 6:</b> Aggregated Capacity Score using UNDP Capacity Scoring system for MINILAF, Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority; MINAGRI; Agriculture and NRM departments of Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts.
<b>Indicator 7:</b> Number of key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation and clean household and institutional energy documented, disseminated, and adopted at local and national levels
<b>Indicator 8:</b> Funding mobilized for sustaining implementation of FLR plans post project
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Implementation of FLR plans improves management of forest biodiversity in 555 ha of natural forests (increasing protection status of 354 ha of the 555ha), increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 27,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%.
<b>Indicator 9:</b> Area of High Conservation Value Forest loss avoided - GEF Core Indicator 4.1
<b>Indicator 10:</b> Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems - GEF Core Indicator 4.3



## 4.1 Project strategy

### Project Design

As mentioned before, the objective of the project is “To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province”. The project proposes to achieve the objective through the FLR approach, consisting of three pathways, namely, (i) preparation of a long-term FLR plan and strategy for four districts, (ii) building the capacity of project stakeholders, and implementation of SLM/SFM activities and (iii) increased productivity of agriculture and plantation forests and reduced use of energy systems with negative impact on forests.

The current forest and tree cover of Rwanda (total area of 696,402 ha) is approximately 29.5%, consisting of 10.8% natural forest and the rest 18.4% plantations of various species, dominated by Eucalyptus and Grevillea. Most of the forests, which are the centers of biodiversity, are located in the west and northwest of the country, while the project is situated in the Southern province. The project area, the Mayaga region, has only a little around 5% forest and tree cover (29,913 ha), comprising of only 555.04 ha of natural forests and 29,358.6 ha of plantations (total geographical area of four target districts is 263,270 ha).

Rwanda is also known to be the most densely populated country in Africa. The main threat to the forests and biodiversity of the country is agricultural expansion and extraction of firewood from the forests. According to the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization 2020<sup>2</sup> statistics 72% of the working population in Rwanda is employed in the agriculture sector and 73.4% of its land is agriculture land. According to the project document wood and charcoal together comprise of the most used cooking fuels source by the people in the Mayaga region. It is evident from the field visits and beneficiary interviews that other cooking fuels are not affordable.

In such a scenario, a landscape restoration approach aimed at the promotion of SLM/SFM, thus reducing the pressure on remaining forests for agricultural expansion, coupled with an emphasis on the introduction of fuel saving cookstoves, makes eminent sense. However, the natural forests of the region are already gone, except only 555 ha (0.2% of the geographical area of the region), that too in several fragments.

Further, Rwanda is one of the most densely populated countries in the world, not just Africa, with an estimated population density of 582 persons per square km in 2023, growing by 2.31% over the previous year<sup>3</sup>. This obviously indicates extreme land scarcity. Coupled with unsustainable agricultural practices, this leads to severe land degradation and soil erosion.

Given that the soils of Mayaga region are especially fragile as they are loose and sandy, the scope for improving the productivity and stability of these lands under this project is severely limited and will require heavy investments for upscaling. Therefore, improvement in land use practices, as proposed in the project, is a must to increase productivity and sustain the people. However, in the long-term solution to Rwanda’s ecological and economic problems the expansion of off-farm livelihoods and occupations in line with the GEF requirements that include environmental benefits such as land restoration, biodiversity conservation and GHG emission reductions is critical.

No doubt, the three impact pathways chosen by the project, along with the emphasis on the consolidation of agricultural land are extremely important for the region (and the country as a whole), their impact would have been amplified if another pathway, to diversify rural livelihoods away from small farms, had also been extended. Perhaps, this need can now be addressed by integrating this component in the FLR plans developed under the project and seeking multilateral support for its implementation under a new project. This will allow the country to

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.fao.org/rwanda/our-office-in-rwanda/rwanda-at-a-glance/en/>

<sup>3</sup> United Nations - World Population Prospects -

<https://population.un.org/dataportal/data/indicators/54/locations/646/start/1990/end/2030/table/pivotbylocation>



address the problems of ecosystem degradation and rural poverty in a more holistic, effective, and integrated manner rather than only through land-based interventions and approaches.

The project has been developed on a very sound foundation laid by several ongoing ecosystem restoration projects in the country and is well designed to achieve the goals it has set for itself. The Prodoc mentions several projects and programs run by/under The Restoration Initiative (TRI) of the United Nations, FONERWA, The Rwanda Agricultural Board (RAB) and Girinka, Forest Investment Program (FIP) for Rwanda, Nordic Development Fund (NDF) and The World Bank, and the New Forest Company (NFC), whose learnings have been incorporated into the design of this project. In particular, the project has committed to work closely with the Landscape Approach to Forest Restoration and Conservation (LAFREC) Project being implemented by REMA under support from GEF and The World Bank, which has a similar approach and objectives.

The project is well-aligned with the country priorities enshrined in the Vision 2020 and Vision 2050 documents and various other strategic documents, including the National Forest Policy (2018) and is in continuation of the forest landscape restoration strategies implemented by several ongoing and concluded projects run by REMA and other government agencies mentioned above.

The PPG exercise clearly indicates that the project was designed through very extensive consultations with stakeholders and potential partners at all levels. All the significant stakeholders at the national level and district level have been incorporated in the Project Steering Committee and the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) respectively, the latter institution playing a crucial role in project planning and implementation at the ground level. Thus, it is obvious that all stakeholders have a say in the decisions and implementation of the project.

The emphasis of the project on gender issues and equity is reflected throughout the document and the results framework clearly requires that the project outputs provide gender disaggregated data. Focus group discussions with women during project formulation and the significant presence of women in the project implementation bodies indicate a conscious approach to empower and involve women in project implementation. The Gender Action Plan (GAP) provided in the project has been documented well as reflected in the 'Participatory and Gender Inclusive Monitoring and Evaluation Plan' for Forest Landscape Restoration in The Mayaga Region.

#### **4.1.1 Strategic Results Framework**

Relying on a review of the Project Document, PIR reports, and key stakeholder interviews, the FLR strategic results framework was assessed against "SMART" criteria to evaluate whether the indicators and targets were sufficiently specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time bound. With respect to the time-bound criterion, all targets are assumed compliant, as they are set as end-of-project performance metrics.

The project has performed well on most of the indicators; it is, however, important to note that according to advisory from the GEF Technical Expert, the SMART rating determination should be made purely on the merits of the indicator itself and should be assessed independent of project progress. Thus, the SMART assessment is the evaluation of the project design in realizing the overall project objectives and not the project implementation progress.

The SMART assessment is significant in evaluating how well the indicators have been designed and suggest recommendations in improving the indicator strategy, contributing to sustainable achievement of the overall project goals - in the case of this project to secure biodiversity & carbon benefits and strengthening livelihoods. Furthermore, the SMART assessment will contribute to efficient design of project strategy for similar projects in future.

The project results framework is comprehensive, with 10 multifaceted indicators having 3 at the objective level and 7 distributed across the 3 project outcomes.

Indicator	Baseline	Mid – Term Target	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
				S	M	A	R	T
<p><b>Objective:</b> To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province</p>								
<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Number of new gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks in place in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity (via FLR)</p>	<p>No FLR coordination mechanism in any of the four districts; by law, only forest exceeding 2 ha need a permit to cut trees; national laws on forests not well understood by local communities because of none available in local languages;</p>	<p>4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF; area of land requiring a permit to cut trees reduces to 1.5 ha;</p>	<p>4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF fully functional and exit strategy has secured funds for sustainability of at least four more years.</p>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<p><b>Mandatory indicator 2:</b> Number of people benefitting financially from FLR initiatives (fruit/tree cropping and one cow per family initiative, improved cookstoves): - GEF Core Indicator 11</p>	<p>Various to be established during year one and reported in the first PIR (number of farmers engaged in plantation farming under contract; number participating in FFS, number engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops, number benefiting from one cow per family and number using improved cookstoves;</p>	<p>179,050 additional - At least 50 tree farmers under contract; at least 25,000 participating in FFS, 1,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops, 3,000 benefiting from one cow per family and 150,000 using improved cookstoves (50:50 ratio on gender for all numbers)</p>	<p>362,144 additional - At least 100 tree farmers under contract; at least 50,000 participating in FFS, 5,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops, 10,000 benefiting from one cow per family and 300,000 using 60,000 improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)</p>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<p><b>Mandatory indicator 3:</b> Tons of carbon mitigated - GEF Core Indicator 6</p>	<p>To be determined in Year one, reported in the first PIR</p>	<p>At least 2,060,000 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</p>	<p>At least 4,700,825 tCO<sub>2</sub>e</p>	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
<p>SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria</p>								

Indicator 1 describes the number of new gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks in place in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity (via FLR). At project start, no such plans were present and one plan for each of the 4 districts is targeted until the end of the Project. The MTR reveals that 4 thematic groups on FLR under the JADF have been established, one in each district of project interventions as FLR ‘coordination committees.’

At present, according to the National Forest Law 2013, an area equal to or greater than 0.5 ha will require informing the authorities of harvesting a private forest which is already less than the area specified in the project. The mid-term target states that an area of land requiring a

permit to cut trees is reduced to 1.5 ha from the baseline mark of 2 ha. Thus, this target is no longer applicable to the project.

Overall, the indicator is SMART in terms of establishing specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks approach and methodology (described in the FLR Plans prepared for the 4 target districts) towards realizing the overall project objective.

Indicator 2 represents the ‘number of people benefiting financially from FLR initiatives.’ The results framework shows that the project has exceeded the target number of people to be provided with support under the project through various activities. However, SMART assessment is independent of the project progress.

Moreover, the indicator demonstrates a tick box approach that provides only the targets to measure the ‘number of people’ to be extended support and does not mention any specific targets to measure the ‘financial benefits’ like improved income & economic conditions (standard of living).

The indicator has achieved and completed the project targets however to measure and achieve specific long-term ‘financial benefits’ the indicator must include targets (end term target) for undertaking surveys and studies to measure the ‘financial benefits’ gained by the people from the support provided to them as part of the project.

This is because, although some people may participate in the project activities and are recipients of project aid, they may not actually gain any financial benefit for various reasons. For example, there may be natural uncertainties like there may be long waiting periods before a tree crop matures, a cow may fall sick or die, a cookstove may lie unused, and so on.

Indicator 3 captures the Tons of carbon mitigated and provides specific, measurable, and relevant targets. However, the achievability of these targets is unlikely in view of the limited plantation area targets.

Therefore, it is suggested to be revised by utilizing reliable data and information, and the recommended tools based on 2006 IPCC guidelines to accurately estimate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions at the project level.

Indicator	Baseline	Mid – Term Target	End-of-Project target	SMART analysis				
				S	M	A	R	T
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture, covering 263,270 ha in 4 districts								
<b>Indicator 4:</b> Number of FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level	0	2, covering at least 96,000 ha;	4, covering at least 263,270 ha;	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Indicator 5:</b> Definitions of SFM and FLR clarified in the National Forest Policy (2018)	SFM and FLR definitions clear at international level, not clear in the National Forest Policy	Recommendations for policy amendment to clarify SFM and FLR definitions available in an addendum to the National Forest Policy	Addendum clarifying SFM and FLR definition part of the National Forest Policy (2018).	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria								

Indicator 4 is SMART compliant as it mentions specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant number of FLR plans to be developed guiding restoration at landscape level. The project has been successful and ahead of schedule in achieving the midterm target with all four FLR plans already prepared.

Indicator 5 states that the definitions of SFM and FLR are clarified in the National Forest Policy (2018). The indicator can be defined as SMART for stating specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant target which aptly recognizes the project’s overall objective.

Indicator	Baseline	Mid – Term Target	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
				S	M	A	R	T
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management								
<b>Indicator 6:</b> Aggregated Capacity Score using UNDP Capacity Scoring system for MINILAF, Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority; MINAGRI; Agriculture and NRM departments of Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts.	Aggregated score is 36.5 (systemic - 41.67; institutional - 31.25; individual - 36.46)	Aggregated score at least 45, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project	Aggregated score at least 57, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<b>Indicator 7:</b> Number of key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation and clean household and institutional energy documented, disseminated, and adopted at local and national levels	None	Initial project results and lessons learned shared through website (one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 5 completed technical reports available online);	All project results and lessons learned shared through website with one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 15 completed technical reports available online.	Y	Y	?	Y	Y
<b>Indicator 8:</b> Funding mobilized for sustaining implementation of FLR plans post project	None	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize up to a million USD	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize enough funds for at least 4 additional years of FLR plans implementation	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria								

Indicator 6 outlines the capacity score for different project stakeholders including the MoE, Rwanda Forestry Authority; Rwanda Water Resources Board, MINAGRI; Agriculture and NRM units of Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts, and local communities using UNDP Capacity Scoring system. The targets are specifically defined and are relevant to the project outcomes.,

Additionally, other indicators, such as the number of training/orientation events, the number of participants, and participants’ evaluation of training events, may be used for a more detailed analysis of the stakeholder’s capacity for planning and implementation of gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies.




Indicator 7 defines the number of key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation and household and institutional clean energy documented, disseminated, and adopted at local and national levels.

While the indicator mentions specific, measurable, and relevant targets, assessing the overall effectiveness of the indicator towards realization of lessons and adoption at local and national level require further analysis of processes and results and setting more robust targets beyond sharing results and publishing news articles periodically. The indicator can thus include additional targets beyond the number of articles/technical reports published to measure the lessons learned and adapted such as beneficiary satisfaction and usage of innovative practices survey, etc.

Moreover, as per the MTR and discussions with the PMU it is learnt that the indicator is not achievable, thus the end term target is suggested to be revised to “one news article per Quarter – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 10 completed technical reports available online.”

Indicator 8 represents the target for funding mobilized for sustaining implementation of FLR plans post project and mentions specific and relevant targets for the sustainability of the project. The indicator focuses on increasing ownership, reducing financial risk; and enhancing sustainable outcomes contributing to the project’s overall outcome. Thus, the indicators can be interpreted as all SMART.

Indicator	Baseline	Mid-Term Target	End-of-Project target	MTR SMART analysis				
				S	M	A	R	T
<p><b>Outcome 3:</b> Implementation of FLR plans secures 555 ha of natural forests, puts 300 ha of forests under participatory forest management, establishes 1,000 ha of plantations under the New Forest Company through co-finance, increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 25,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%</p>								
<p><b>Indicator 9:</b> Area of High Conservation Value Forest loss avoided - GEF Core Indicator 4.1</p>	<p>354 ha of the 555 ha forest is currently Forest Reserve; there are no Participatory Forest Management agreements and levels of degradation of the whole 555 ha forest are high (to be confirmed during inception)</p>	<p>Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest started: Nomination file for the 354 ha Forest Reserve completed upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with business management plans (354 ha); At least 5 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation</p>	<p>Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest advanced: Nomination file for the 354 ha Forest Reserve submitted to Cabinet upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with business management plans (354 ha); At least 10 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation</p>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
<p><b>Indicator 10:</b> Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems - GEF Core Indicator 4.3</p>	<p>Table 7 gives basic statistics of land under soil conservation and irrigation while Table 2 shows land under plantation. However, these statistics are not specific to the SLM/SFM interventions the project will undertake.</p>	<p>Additional 10,800 (10,000 ha under FFS, 500 ha of plantations, 100 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara, at least 200 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces with at least 20% increase</p>	<p>Additional 26,300 (25,000 ha under SLM/FFS, 1,000 ha of plantations, 300 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara, 1,000 ha consolidated land with commercial tree crops, at least 500 ha put under new or rehabilitated</p>	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

	These statistics will be refined in year 1 and reported in the first PIR.	in average crop yields)	terraces with at least 25% increase in average crop yields)	
<p>SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-Bound                  Green: SMART criteria compliant; Yellow: questionably compliant with SMART criteria; Red: not compliant with SMART criteria</p>				

Indicator 9 mentions the targets and actions for avoiding the loss and conservation of high value forest. The targets confirm the specific, measurable, and achievable and time bound markers as defined and reported in the final report on Development of a Comprehensive Management Plan for Kibirizi-Muyira Natural Forest.

The indicator is overall SMART compliant, the targets however need to be revised as the area deserves much better protection than an IUCN category IV Protected Area because it is the only intact specimen of the nation’s indigenous forests in the entire Mayaga region. Therefore, it should be considered for notification as a category III (Natural Monument of Feature) instead of Category IV. In fact, it does not seem to qualify to be notified as category IV PA because it is not associated with any specific species or biological community.

The target may be revised as follows: Restoration of the 466.9 ha of natural forest advanced: Nomination file for the 466.9 ha Forest Reserve submitted to Cabinet upgrading it to PA IUCN Category III status, with management plans (354 ha); At least 10 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation.

Indicator 10 complies to SMART criteria as it mentions specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant targets. However, the target numbers do not add up properly in the “End of the Project Target”. Instead of 26,300 ha, the categories total up to 27,800 ha.

## 4.2 Progress towards Results

**Objective:** To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province

Progress towards achieving the project objective is rated as:

**Highly Satisfactory (HS)**

The project has been successful in achieving targets under almost all sub-indicators. The quality of work observed in the field was very good. No shortfalls are expected. In view of the impressive performance of the project, as illustrated in this section (Progress towards Results Analysis), the barriers that project sought to address (discussed in section 3.2) have been successfully addressed.

The district level coordination mechanisms for the preparation of the participatory FLR plans were established promptly and these committees continue to guide the implementation of the FLR plans. As most project benefits come at no cost to the beneficiaries, this has created a huge demand for almost all the project outputs such as plantation/replantation of woodlots, supply of fruit trees, provision of livestock and improved cookstoves.

Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-Project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in % vis-à-vis end term target
<b>Indicator 1:</b> Number of new gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks in place in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity (via FLR)	No FLR coordination mechanism in any of the four districts; by law, only forest exceeding 2 ha need a permit to cut trees; national laws on forests not well understood by local communities because none available in local languages;	4 thematic groups on FLR under the JADF have been established, one in each district of project interventions as FLR coordination committees. The thematic groups are gender balanced, and helped in plantation of new trees and forest, conservation of Biodiversity and forest among other roles. The thematic meeting was held quarterly, and they meet as stakeholder working groups in each district.	4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF;	4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF fully functional and exit strategy has secured funds for sustainability of at least four more years.	All four coordination committees are established and functional	100%
			Area of land requiring a permit to cut trees reduces to 1.5 ha		The indicator is no more applicable to the project as the government decision	

Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-Project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in % vis-à-vis end term target
					on this is already beyond the goal of the project - the Forest Law of 2013, requires license for harvesting the forest of above 0.5 ha.	
<b>Mandatory indicator 2:</b> Number of people benefitting financially from FLR initiatives (fruit/tree cropping and one cow per family initiative, improved cookstoves): - GEF Core Indicator 11	Various to be established during year one and reported in the first PIR (number of farmers engaged in plantation farming under contract; number participating in FFS, number engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops, number benefiting from one cow per family and number using improved cookstoves;	During this reporting period, as achievements of this first year of project implementation, additional (new) 93,634 people benefitted financially from FLR initiatives and among them 55,000 people were provided with energy saving improved cookstoves (49% of them are female) from the project. 15,878 beneficiaries have been employed in forest landscape restoration in the Mayaga region while 13,227 people received grafted fruits trees from the project and 500 of them are engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crop and 9,529 people are participating in FFS.	179,050 additional	362,144 additional	388,261 persons benefitting from project activities	107%
			At least 50 tree farmers under contract;	At least 100 tree farmers under contract	A total of 47,891 tree farmers have benefitted from the project across 4 districts and these farmers will be organized into groups under contractual agreements.	50%
			At least 25,000 participating in FFS	At least 50,000 participating in FFS	34,418 individuals participated in FFS of various kinds such a climate smart agriculture, livestock maintenance, agroforestry etc.	69%
			1,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops	5,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops	3,385 persons provided fruit trees for planting on farmlands.	68%
			3,000 benefiting from one cow per family	10,000 benefiting from one cow per family	3,826 cows were distributed. In addition, goats, pigs and chickens were also	38%



Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-Project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in % vis-à-vis end term target
					distributed. In total, 18,044 livestock were distributed, these include 15,510 livestock received from co-financing partners. The distribution of small livestock was introduced due to beneficiaries' choices.	
			150,000 using improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)	300,000 using (60,000) improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)	233,227 people use improved cookstoves (with 38.3:61.7 male to female ratio). Out of these, 203,877 persons received stoves from co-financing partners.	78%
<b>Mandatory indicator 3:</b> Tons of carbon mitigated - GEF Core Indicator 6	To be determined in Year one, reported in the first PIR	The measure of the amount of tCO2e was not conducted in this reporting period.	At least 2,060,000 tCO2e	At least 4,700,825 tCO2e	The estimated greenhouse gas emissions avoided for the mid-term period (3 years) -346,646 tCO2e. Over 6 years, 608,374 tons are estimated to be mitigated	7.3%

Green = Achieved, Yellow = On target to be achieved, Red = Not on target to be achieved

**Outcome 1:** Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture, covering 263,270 ha in 4 districts

Progress towards achieving the Outcome 1 is rated as:

**Highly Satisfactory (HS)**

The rating is “Highly Satisfactory” because the project has completed the huge task of preparing the district level FLR plans ahead of time. The quality of the plans is also excellent. There are likely no shortfalls, only in the case of indicator 5 for defining of FLR and SFM the indicator is suggested to be in the process of revision.

Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-Project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in %
Indicator 4: Number of FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level	0	2 FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level were designed and distributed among stakeholders. In total, 131,635 ha were restored by the project in Ruhango and Nyanza Districts.	2, covering at least 96,000 ha;	4, covering at least 263,270 ha;	All four plans are ready and approved and published on RFA website.	100%
Indicator 5: Definitions of SFM and FLR clarified in the National Forest Policy (2018)	SFM and FLR definitions clear at international level, not clear in the National Forest Policy	In this first year of the project implementation, this activity was not implemented. Nothing was done for this indicator yet.	Recommendations for policy amendment to clarify SFM and FLR definitions available in an addendum to the National Forest Policy	Addendum clarifying SFM and FLR definition part of the National Forest Policy (2018).	FLR has been defined in the new district level FLR plans under the title “Defining the FLR from global to local context” (this includes SFM as well), and recommendations for policy amendment are ready.	50%

Green = Achieved, Yellow = On target to be achieved, Red = Not on target to be achieved

**Outcome 2:** Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management

Progress towards achieving the Outcome 2 is rated as:

**Satisfactory (S)**

Rating is Satisfactory because the End of the project target has already been achieved in terms of capacity building. In fact, the achievement has exceeded the project target. Although a sufficient number of articles and technical reports have not been completed yet, this can be expedited in future. Project is in advanced negotiations with GEF for securing funding for FLR beyond the project period.

Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of- project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in %
Indicator 6: Aggregated Capacity Score using UNDP Capacity Scoring system for MINILAF, Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority; MINAGRI; Agriculture and NRM departments of Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts.	Aggregated score is 36.5 (systemic - 41.67; institutional - 31.25; individual - 36.46)	No target was set this year for this indicator; however, training has started for project beneficiaries on improved techniques of tree and husbandry. The intensive trainings related to tree and land husbandry techniques and forests monitoring for staff from different institutions are planned	Aggregated score at least 45, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project	Aggregated score at least 57, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project	The current capacity score is reported to be 59.85%, with 61.6% for systemic capacity, 58% for institutional capacity and 60% for individual capacity, even better than the terminal target. Knowledge management plan has been prepared and is being executed through different practices such as FFS for Climate Smart Agriculture, SFM practices, etc.	59.85%
Indicator 7: Number of key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation and clean	None	During this reporting period two news articles were put on the REMA website. Communications and outreach activities were organized on national and private	Initial project results and lessons learned shared through website (one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 5 completed technical reports available online);	All project results and lessons learned shared through website with one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 15	By MTR, at least 16 news articles have been produced and posted on REMA website and many more in various other media platforms. 6 Technical reports have been documented, 3 news articles	50%

Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in %
household and institutional energy documented, disseminated and adopted at local and national levels		media houses. The Project's feasibility study was completed. The baseline was updated, and an M&E plan was designed. In this reporting period, the number of hectares to be restored in each intervention area were determined through an adequate participatory and gender inclusive process.		completed technical reports available online.	on gender issues reported.	
Indicator 8: Funding mobilized for sustaining implementation of FLR plans post project	None	The local communities were mobilized to plant trees through community work, and in-kind contribution from the districts beneficiaries of the project was received by the project.	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize up to a million USD	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize enough funds for at least 4 additional years of FLR plans implementation	The exit strategy is planned. Negotiations with GEF for a USD 9.9 million grant are in progress. Funds not yet guaranteed but highly likely as the proposal has been approved and is in the costing and pre-appraisal mission stage. In addition, UNDP together with REMA are also working on a new project proposal of around 20 million USD under Mayaga Project (PIF development).	30%
Green = Achieved, Yellow = On target to be achieved, Red = Not on target to be achieved						



**Outcome 3:** Implementation of FLR plans secures 555 ha of natural forests, puts 300 ha of forests under participatory forest management, establishes 1,000 ha of plantations under the New Forest Company through co-finance, increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 25,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%

Progress towards achieving the Outcome 3 is rated as:

**Highly Satisfactory (HS)**

Rating is Highly satisfactory because the targets have been achieved or exceeded in almost all sub-indicators, except one.

Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in %
Indicator 9: Area of High Conservation Value Forest loss avoided - GEF Core Indicator 4.1	354 ha of the 555-ha forest is currently Forest Reserve; there are no Participatory Forest Management agreements and levels of degradation of the whole 555 ha forest are high (to be confirmed during inception)	In this reporting period, community-level awareness campaigns for enhancement of management of 354 ha of Kibirizi-Muyira (a natural forest in the project's interventions areas) were organized. This awareness raising activities contributed to reducing the intensity of human activities in the natural forest.	Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest started	Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest advanced:	Restoration work has started. Area demarcated, buffer plantation on boundary completed, agreement with local communities in place.	N/A
			Nomination file for the 354 ha Forest Reserve completed upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with business management plans (354 ha)	Nomination file for the 354 ha Forest Reserve submitted to Cabinet upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with business management plans (354 ha);	As per the discussions with PMU and Technical committee, there are ongoing discussions for revising the Nomination category to IUCN III.	N/A
			At least 5 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation	At least 10 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation	5 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed, and implementation is ongoing.	50%
Indicator 10: Area of landscapes under	Table 7 gives basic statistics of land under soil	The results for forest management in Mayaga, as evidenced from a	Additional 10,800	Additional 26,300	Total 13,486 ha planted and/or replanted	51%
			10,000 ha under FFS	25,000 ha under SLM/FFS	10,000 ha under climate smart agriculture and agroforestry	40%

Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Project Progress in %
sustainable land management in production systems - GEF Core Indicator 4.3	conservation and irrigation while Table 2 shows land under plantation. However, these statistics are not specific to the SLM/SFM interventions the project will undertake. These statistics will be refined in year 1 and reported in the first PIR.	recent concluded project baseline study (2021), the forest cover in Mayaga region in agro-ecosystems and buffer zones and hilltops is totaling 35,950ha, of which 34,343ha are forests plantation. In this reporting period, over 4,820ha of landscapes have been additionally put by the project under sustainable land management in production systems and for recovery of the ecosystems which were degraded by plantation of different tree species and grasses and with creation of ditches as erosion control measures.	500 ha of plantations	1,000 ha of plantations	858 ha of new plantation in woodlots, buffer zones and roadsides.	86%
			100 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara	300 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara	150.8 ha replanted with indigenous species.	50%
			At least 200 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces	1,000 ha consolidated land with commercial tree crops, at least 500 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>970.64ha of consolidated land with commercial tree crops covered</li> <li>400ha of radical terraces have been protected by agroforestry trees plantation. In addition, 13,886 ha of progressive terracing were created with the help of water retention trenches and tree planting on excavated soil.</li> </ul>	88.5%
			At least 20% increase in average crop yields	At least 25% increase in average crop yields	The estimated increase is 36.8% (APEFA 2023. Quarter 6 Technical Progress Report, March 2023)	147%

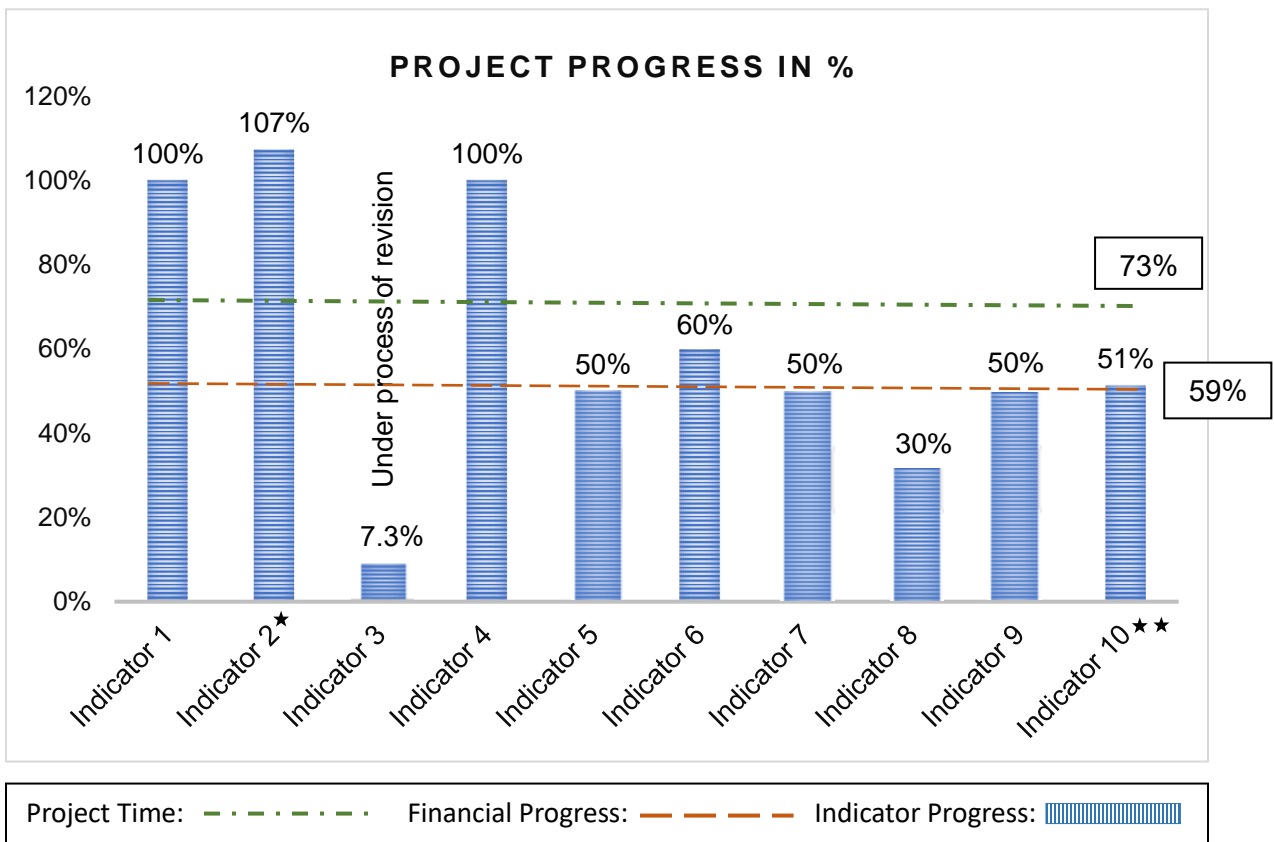
Green = Achieved, Yellow = On target to be achieved, Red = Not on target to be achieved

### Progress Performance

The following analysis presents a comprehensive overview of the project's performance, depicting the interplay between Time, Project Progress, and Financial Performance. As indicated, Time stands at 59% of the project timeline. Meanwhile, Financial Performance stands at a robust 73%.

The individual indicator progress depicts the percentage of results achieved up to the MTR in comparison to the end of the project target. Although some indicators are qualitative, it is essential to note that this element likely played a critical role in evaluating the project's overall advancement.

The following chart represents the performance of indicators (in %) mentioned in table 2 based on the progress towards results assessment in section:



- \* Indicator 2 presents the percentage for the persons benefiting from project activities target.
- \*\* Indicator 10 presents the percentage of total Hectares planted and/or replanted under the project.

### 4.3 Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

Achievement Rating for project implementation and adaptive management is rated as:	<b>Satisfactory (S)</b>
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#### 4.3.1 Management Arrangement

The project is designed to be managed under the “National Implementation Modality (NIM)”. The Director General of REMA is the “Executive” of the project who is assisted by a Project Coordinator to run and manage the day-to-day affairs of the project. The approval body is the Project Steering Committee (PSC) comprising representatives of all the national level stakeholders and apex environmental and development organisations of the country. While REMA is the implementing partner (IP) of the project, the districts of Kamonyi, Nyanza,

Ruhango and Gisagara are listed as the senior beneficiaries and Responsible Parties who would receive the funds from REMA and execute the works on the ground.

UNDP has the dual role of being the GEF Implementing Agency as well as in-charge of the supervision and Quality Assurance. The project also has a national Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to ensure technical support from various technical arms of the government. At the district level, the Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) spearheads the project activities through their FLR Thematic Groups. REMA, RWFA (now RFA), RAB and FONERWA have been named as being responsible for the following areas:

- REMA - responsible for technical support for activities within its mandate for Outcome 2 and Output 3.1;
- RWFA - responsible for technical support for activities within its mandate on all outputs of Outcome 1 and Output 3.2;
- RAB - responsible for technical support and linkages to the Girinka programme on the distribution of cows for terraces, under Output 3.3;
- FONERWA - responsible for technical support for activities within its mandate for Output 3.4.

The current management structure of the project closely follows the structure given in the project document.

Project Coordinator along with two District Environment Officers (DEO), are working full time for the FLR Mayaga Project. The M&E Specialist and all the support staff are shared with and have responsibilities for several other projects. This arrangement have propelled the project beyond its targets across various indicators.

#### 4.3.2 Workplan

As per the project document, the official start date for the project was November 2019 and it would end in November 2025. The project identification form (PIF) was prepared in 2015 and was submitted to GEF on 19 July 2016. The mid-term review of a GEF funded project is normally conducted after the submission of the second annual Project Implementation Report (PIR) i.e., in the third year of the project.

It is obvious that the project is making good use of the results framework of the project in work planning as annual targets are set on the basis of the end-of-the-project targets.

#### 4.3.3 Finance and co-finance

By midterm, USD 11,856,551 or 63% of the 4-target district's in-kind grant of USD 18,931,484 had been expended, as broken down in the Table 2 attached in Annexure 9.

At the MTR stage the overall financial health of the project is promising as 73% of the funds have been utilized and many of the end term targets have been achieved. The co-financing table provides the information for the district wise contribution and other stakeholders including RFA, FONERWA, UNDP, GEF, MoE. As prescribed in the project document and PIR, most of the targets are well on track with a fair degree of confidence that the project's finances are in good health and that there are effective internal controls to ensure efficiency, accountability, and transparency.

The project has been able to leverage a considerable volume of co-finance, thus the progress for some indicators have surpassed the targets.

#### 4.3.4 Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

The project prepared an elaborate monitoring and evaluation plan (M&E Plan) focused on stakeholder participation and gender considerations. The M&E plan has provided specific formats for collecting data for monitoring outcomes, outputs, and indicators. The implementation of the M&E Plans, is regularly documented through field visits reports, quarterly reports and annual PIRs for the UNDP and GEF to monitor the progress of the project.



So far three PIRs for the years 2021, 2022 and draft 2023 have been produced which give a fairly good idea of the project performance.

The mid-term evaluation confirms that the M&E function is well funded and supported which results in the project being on track to achieve all or most of its targets.

#### 4.3.5 Stakeholder Engagement

The MTR team found a strong focus on stakeholder engagement in the project. The project steering committee has representation from all major national level stakeholders such as the RFA, RGB, RAB, FONERWA and all the four district governments. Very vibrant partnerships exist with RFA, RGB and RAB.

The meetings of the steering committee and the national technical advisory committee are regularly held. All the technical specifications for tree planting have been developed by the PMU in close collaboration with RFA, while RAB is playing an active role in guiding the implementation of climate smart agriculture.

Local communities are being regularly consulted in planning and implementing project activities. Most villages, cells and sectors have constituted environmental committees who meet at least once a week and review the progress of project activities along with other environmental activities. The project has the full support of various sister organizations as indicated by the role played by them in the implementation of field activities and the role played by them in various committees.

#### 4.3.6 Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

As part of the feasibility study for the project, an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) has been prepared in accordance with the Social and Environmental Standards (SES) of UNDP and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and keeping in view UNDP's commitment to quality assurance and risk mitigation. It is intended with the project that the environmental and social (E&S) sustainability are integrated into program design and implementation. The purpose is to assist the Project in the next stage of implementation to reduce and mitigate any risks & negative E&S impacts of the Project.

Further, to achieve long-term sustainability, the ESMP plan recommends various strategic risk management measures to ensure the effects of the suggested mitigation measures are felt sustainably that includes enhancing the project-level grievance redressal mechanism, implementing a collaborative system for monitoring, inspection, reporting, and review, and strengthening the necessary skills and capabilities. This will also include continuing stakeholder engagement and ensuring scientifically sound and location-specific planning.

#### 4.3.7 Reporting

The project has been regularly reporting its progress and adaptive management changes to UNDP and GEF through the PIRs and other periodic reports. The salient deviations from the project document noticed by the MTR team are, 1) not involving FONERWA in supporting any startup companies to spearhead the production and sale of cookstoves, 2) providing cookstoves free of cost rather than at subsidized rates.

#### 4.3.8 Communication and Knowledge Management

There is no issue of internal communication. The PMU consists of different members, with primarily two people, (Project Coordinator and the M&E Officer), involved in day-to-day management of the project activities with the help of district officials. All other resources are shared with other projects within REMA. Regular meetings of the project steering committee and the national technical advisory committee are being held and regular meetings at the grassroots levels with the participating communities were also reported during the field visits. Regular visits from the PMU to the districts also ensure close communications between the stakeholders.

The project has a section in the REMA website (<https://www.rema.gov.rw/our-work/projects/green-amayaga#section4>) which is regularly updated. The project is well focused on external communications as the web is well populated with the news on the project.

The project prepared an elaborate knowledge management plan for the year 2022. The PIR 2021 and 2022 provide a large number of external links to news items that have been published on various media channels and publications. Thus, overall, the project has a reasonable communications mechanism both internally as well externally.

#### 4.1 Sustainability

Achievement Rating for the sustainability of the project is rated as:

**Likely (L)**

Sustainability means the likelihood of the project activities and approaches continuing beyond the project period. In the light of the emergence of a strong ecosystem in support of FLR model of rural development, as reflected in several ongoing and upcoming FLR programs, the FLR has a good future in the country. Most key informants also supported this notion in interviews and meetings. A summary of the feasibility scenario for the FLR in Mayaga Region project is given below:

##### **Financial risk to sustainability**

The project document lists a large number of domestic and international programs aimed at enlarging the FLR resource basket. This means any expansion of the FLR initiatives in the Mayaga region beyond the project period is unlikely to suffer from any shortage of funds. The country has already demonstrated its will to sustain the FLR approach to enhance forest cover in the country by voluntarily committing to the restoration of 2 million hectares of degraded forests under the Bonn Challenge, which aims to restore 350 mha of degraded forests, globally, by 2030, out of which 100 mha will be in Africa (AFR 100).

In consonance with this commitment, the country has already undertaken a National Forest Landscape Restoration Opportunity Assessment in 2014. The fact that ecosystem restoration is a global priority is also evidenced by the fact that 2021- 2030 period has been declared as the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration by UNEP and FAO.

A Forest and Landscape Investment Forum (FLIF) was launched in Kigali in 2017, aiming to explore opportunities to finance the African target under the Bonn Challenge. Moreover, Rwanda's proposal to the Green Climate Fund to finance the implementation of Forest Investment Program (FIP) also indicates its commitment to the FLR approach as the outcomes of the FIP in Rwanda almost completely align with the outcomes of the FLR approach.

Rwanda's environmental fund FONERWA can also fund FLR plans in the country. Recent reports of GEF securing USD 43 million for helping the countries in preventing species loss also indicates that Rwanda may not find it difficult to garner the requisite resources. Thus, there are clear indications that FLR approach in Rwanda is likely to gather further momentum in future and any sequel to the Mayaga FLR project will not lack financial support. GoR is also reported to be in talks with GEF to finance new FLR projects in the country. A grant of USD 9.932 million has already been approved by GEF for the upcoming "Ecosystem-Based Restoration Approach for Nyungwe-Ruhango Corridor" project and an appraisal mission is expected soon. These plans are an excellent basis for securing climate funding from multilateral sources.

##### **Socio economic risk to sustainability**

FLR approach is rooted in strong socioeconomic support. It primarily aims at improving the economic well-being of the rural communities. Its core activities such as agroforestry, woodlots on private farms, reduction in the consumption of wood fuels through improved cookstoves, sustainable farm management, livestock distribution etc. will directly contribute to the incomes of the people. The Rwandan society has already demonstrated its support for FLR by making

strong international commitments on the issue, as mentioned before. Employment of thousands of rural people in activities related to FLR in Mayaga region clearly demonstrates the strong socioeconomic sustainability of FLR in the region. Expansion of FLR into other parts of the country, as indicated by the several programs mentioned above, will lend further support to the strengthening of the FLR initiatives in the region.

The best contribution of the FLR Mayaga project is the equipping of the local communities with skills and knowledge that they can use beyond the project period to enrich their lives. The sustainable farm management, agroforestry, livestock maintenance, introduction of improved cookstoves and cultivation of fruit trees etc. are likely to bring about a cultural change in the area as more and more people try to use these vocations to supplement their farm incomes. Although introduced by the project, these activities have a relevance to the day to day lives of the people and are likely to be widely adopted irrespective of the fact whether there is a sequel to the current FLR project or not. We saw a great deal of desire among people for adopting these economic avenues during the MTR mission.

The country is experiencing a period of complete peace, and law and order is reported to be in good shape. The country is also reported to have zero tolerance for corruption. Thus, it can be said with a fair degree of confidence that the project sequel is unlikely to face any socioeconomic hurdles in its implementation if resources are in place.

### **Institutional framework and governance risk to sustainability**

FLR in the Mayaga region is backed by strong institutional support. REMA, which houses the PMU of the project, is a prominent government body spearheading environmental conservation in the country. The futuristic FLR plans for the four districts of Mayaga have been prepared through active support from the district level Joint Action Development Forum (JADF) in which FLR thematic groups have been constituted.

Environmental committees have been constituted in hundreds of villages, cells, and sectors. Technical and financial strengthening of the JADFs through this project will provide strong support to future FLR action in the area and can also become an example for other provinces for scaling up. Community consultations have been central to most project activities.

The successful implementation of the current project through the district administration, supported by technical back up from the Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA) and Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) clearly indicates that various agencies are able to cooperate and collaborate with each other for a common cause like the FLR. Although, enforcement of the legal framework for the protection of public forests is rather weak in Rwanda, there is not much risk of this coming in the way of rejuvenating the Mayaga and neighboring ecosystems as most of the interventions will be in private agricultural lands, not in public forests.

The only weak spot in this scenario is that the current project could not support the private sector in manufacturing and retailing improved cookstoves beyond the project targets. Improved cookstoves are likely to be a key tool in conserving wood fuels, and thereby, trees. This can happen only if a sufficient number of startups are encouraged and supported in starting businesses related to cookstoves, as was proposed in this project.

### **Environmental risk to sustainability**

There is likely to be no environmental risk to the sustainability of FLR as the program is itself aimed at improving environmental sustainability. It will improve the protection of surviving natural forests of the region and will reduce people's dependence on forests by providing the options to reduce their need for wood fuels.

The emphasis of the project on indigenous species of trees and improvement of germplasm of the planting stock further enhances the sustainability of the FLR approach. Extreme climatic conditions like prolonged droughts or floods may pose some risk for the survival of trees planted under the project but the emphasis on soil and water conservation in agroforestry and climate smart agriculture under the project can mitigate this risk substantially by moderating the slopes (in progressive terraces) and conserving water through the water retention ditches.





Buffer Zone site in Gisagara

## **Section 5**

# **Conclusions and Recommendations**

## 5. Conclusions and Recommendations

### 5.1 Conclusions

**Overall Project Progress:** The project has been in operation for approximately close to four years and is being reviewed at its halfway point to review the project strategy, assess achievements to date, evaluate project implementation, adaptive management, and project sustainability, and suggest corrective measures to improve delivery and upscale results for biodiversity conservation and strengthening the resilience of livelihoods.

From the foregoing account, it is clear that the project is well on its way to achieve or exceed most of its targets. The project objective (To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province) can be broken up into three sub-objectives, namely, 1) to secure biodiversity; 2) carbon benefits; and 3) strengthening the resilience of rural livelihoods.

This objective is proposed to be achieved through the restoration of the forest landscape and promotion of clean technologies in the project area. Restoration of the forest landscape is proposed to be carried out in the form of agroforestry and creation/improvement of woodlots while the reference to clean technologies means the induction of fuel-efficient domestic cookstoves and institutional cooking facilities.

Resilience of livelihoods is proposed to be strengthened through climate smart agriculture, distribution of livestock and soil and water conservation, improved beekeeping techniques, among others.

Biodiversity conservation is proposed to be achieved by enhancing the protection of a few small fragments of remnant natural forests in the region and through the planting of indigenous tree species.

The project strategy has been very well designed to achieve all these objectives and the results on the ground are very encouraging. The growth rate and survival of plants are outstanding. Local communities and individual beneficiaries are seriously committed to the objectives of the project. Implementing partners like RFA, RAB, RGB and district governments, are actively participating in the planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the project. Although incomes from many of the project interventions have not yet started flowing to the beneficiaries, there is a lot of enthusiasm among rural people to adopt these practices even where the project has limited reach.

The project has ensured sustainability beyond the project period and project area by preparing long term FLR plans for the incumbent districts and funds for their implementation are already being negotiated with GEF. The production of good results shows that the implementation partners and major stakeholder institutions are playing a very active role in the achievement of the project objectives. This is a good practice which can be emulated by other projects and organizations.

However, there are some concerns which need to be taken cognizance of, namely:

- The project interventions aimed at improving the resilience of rural livelihoods, namely climate smart agriculture, livestock rearing, agroforestry, fruit trees etc. are essentially land based while Rwanda is a land starved country due to its high population density. The farm sizes are going to become even smaller as the rural population grows, making the affordability of these inputs progressively lower as time passes. Although the country has started a programme of land consolidation to deal with this problem, a complementary strategy to promote off-farm livelihoods for rural youth should be undertaken at a large scale, along with the promotion of sustainable land management, to reduce pressure on land. This element is missing in the current project and should be a prime area of consideration in any future ecosystem restoration project.



- The project speaks of conserving local biodiversity by preserving the remaining natural forests in the region and, also, by planting more indigenous trees. However, in actual practice, very few indigenous trees are being planted. All the woodlots are Eucalyptus plantations and all the trees planted in agroforestry are Grevillea. Indigenous species are being planted only on the roadsides and are proportionately very few in number. Plantation of Eucalyptus and Grevillea in the farms is primarily based on the choice of the landowners due to their fast growth as no indigenous species is comparable to these species. Thus, in order to encourage the plantation of indigenous species, some special incentive scheme could have been included in the project.
- Improved domestic cookstoves and LPG cookers to schools are being provided to relieve pressure on trees for firewood. While it is true that institutions like schools, prisons, depend entirely on firewood for cooking; the local people in the Mayaga region have adapted to the non-availability of wood fuels and extensively use farm residues in their stoves for cooking. Additionally, the availability and affordability of the Improved cook stoves still poses a serious challenge.
- On the contrary, the provision of mass-cooking techniques like the LPG stoves to schools, prisons and other institutions will go a long way in reducing pressure on trees because they use nothing but firewood for cooking. Therefore, in any future projects aimed at saving tree cover, more emphasis should be given to provision of wood saving devices to institutions and commercial kitchens (e.g. rural restaurants and eateries) along with the improved domestic cookstoves.

## 5.2 Recommendations

As the project is already doing well and is also quite close to its end, there is not much scope for course correction at this stage. However, the following actions may be considered for further improving the project performance, namely:

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible
A	<i>Project Objective: To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province</i>	
A.1	<b>Upscale the adoption of clean technologies, such as solar energy and biogas, to reduce reliance on wood fuel and contribute to carbon emissions reduction.</b> An important aspect of the FLR process, promotion of alternative clean energy sources can be strengthened through awareness campaigns, financial incentives, and partnerships with local businesses and organizations.	PMU, District Governments, FONERWA, APEFA
A.2	<b>There should be specific focus on preserving, restoring, and monitoring native plant biodiversity to conserve the natural forest ecosystem.</b> Currently, there's limited focus on planting indigenous trees in the project due to prioritizing fast-growing trees on private lands. Illegal logging in natural forests like Kibirizi-Muyira has dangerously reduced biodiversity. Thus, PMU should prioritize enriching Kibirizi-Muyira and other forests with depleted indigenous species to extend beyond trees to encompass shrubs, herbs, and grasses for rehabilitation.	PSC, PMU and RFA
B	<i>Outcome 1: Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture, covering 263,270 ha in 4 districts</i>	
B.1	<b>Advocate for supportive policies at the regional and national levels that prioritize biodiversity conservation, carbon sequestration, and sustainable livelihoods.</b> Categorize and prioritize activities into active	Project Board (PSC), RFA, PMU, District

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible
	restoration efforts (afforestation, reforestation) and passive restoration efforts (assisted natural regeneration through grazing exclusion, firewood collection guidelines, etc.). Strengthening environmental regulations and enforcement mechanisms can safeguard restored landscapes and ensure their long-term viability.	Governments
C	<i>Outcome 2: Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management</i>	
C.1	<b>Empower the community members to further expand their understanding of environmental conservation and sustainable agriculture.</b> In the coming three years, host routine training on advanced soil techniques, sustainable farming, and plantation management. Promote community-driven research for local environmental issues, fostering ownership and resilient ecosystems, enhancing lives, and nurturing environmental stewardship. This effort will lead to more resilient ecosystems, improved livelihoods, and a stronger sense of environmental stewardship within the community.	RGB, RFA, PMU, APEFA
D	<i>Outcome 3: Implementation of FLR plans secures 555 ha of natural forests, puts 300 ha of forests under participatory forest management, establishes 1,000 ha of plantations under the New Forest Company through co-finance, increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 25,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%</i>	
D.1	<b>Promotion of startups for manufacturing and distribution of clean energy cookstoves.</b> Improved cookstoves are in high demand in the rural areas but are not available in the market. The project had plans to promote startups in this field through subsidized manufacturing and sale. However, the project leaned towards a free distribution of improved cookstoves. It is therefore recommended that the project looks into the possibility of encouraging stove manufacturing and marketing startups as provided in the project, during the remaining project period.	FONERWA, PMU, District Governments
D.2	<b>As Kibirizi-Muyira forest is the only remaining natural forest in the region, its status should be upgraded to IUCN category III (Natural Monument of Feature) status rather than category IV.</b> It is a very valuable heritage site which should not be left at any risk of destruction. It should also be completely fenced with only regulated entry and extraction. Implementing proper fencing and surveillance measures will deter illegal activities and encroachments into the forest, enhancing protection and security. However, strict protection measures should be balanced with the needs of surrounding communities to create a successful conservation model that benefits both people and the environment.	Project Board, UNDP, RFA, PMU,
E	<i>Project Strategy</i>	
E.1	<b>Diversification of rural livelihoods and expansion of non-farm activities for holistic and sustainable development.</b> A significant program to promote off-farm livelihoods in the project area should be undertaken by saving funds from other activities, if possible, in order to reduce pressure on land. This will include conducting a comprehensive baseline assessment to understand the existing economic activities, skills, and needs of the local communities. Explore and identify potential off-farm livelihood opportunities that align with the skills and resources available in the project area. This could include activities such as handicrafts production, agro-processing, eco-tourism, small-scale retail, and service-oriented businesses.	APEFA, RGB, District Governments, PMU

Rec #	Recommendation	Entity Responsible
E.2	<p><b>Enhance the regular monitoring of the issues/ complaints registered in the established grievance redressal mechanism.</b></p> <p>Even though it was noticed during the MTR that a grievance redressal mechanism is established and works in a decentralized model, a few cases were observed during the field visit where the beneficiaries have undertaken activities and met their targets but still had not received in kind support and have approached the authorities but there were delays in getting feedback.</p> <p>Thus, by strengthening the grievance redressal mechanism and providing solutions and regular feedback to people, can help identify project improvement opportunities to produce better results.</p>	District Governments, RGB and PMU
F	<i>Progress Towards Results</i>	
F.1	<p><b>Consider the revaluation and revision of targets for certain project indicators given the overestimation of results as per the project intervention area and project activity target.</b> This could include factors such as changes in the local context, stakeholder needs, or unforeseen challenges that may impact the original targets.</p> <p>For instance, indicator 3 target for Tons of carbon mitigated might have been set too high. To ensure accuracy, it's recommended to re-evaluate the target using reliable data and tools, with any adjustments supported by well-documented justifications.</p> <p>After approval by the Project Board and UNDP Regional Technical Advisor, updated targets should be incorporated into the Strategic Results Framework and the PIR.</p>	PSC and PMU
G	Project Implementation & Adaptive Management	
G.1	<p><b>It is important to enhance monitoring processes and tools/checklists on assessing the capacity of stakeholders and project implementing agencies on achieving the project targets.</b> Use the assessment results and feedback from stakeholders to adapt capacity building strategies as needed. Flexibility and responsiveness to changing needs are essential for successful project development.</p>	RGB, RFA and PMU
H	Sustainability	
H.1	<p><b>Fast track the development of a well-thought-out exit strategy to ensure a smooth transition and sustainability of the project outcomes.</b> Plan for a phased reduction of external support, allowing local stakeholders to gradually assume responsibility for project activities, fostering capacity building and leadership.</p> <p>The practice of providing everything free of cost to the public should be avoided in order to conserve resources and improve coverage, and to increase ownership. Develop sustainable funding mechanisms to ensure the financial stability of the projects. Explore options such as grants, income-generating activities, or partnerships with local businesses or organizations interested in supporting environmental conservation and sustainable practices.</p>	UNDP, PMU, FONERWA
H.2	<p><b>Encourage the dissemination of success stories, best practices, and lessons learned through farmer-to-farmer learning sessions, field demonstrations, and awareness campaigns.</b> Encourage peer-to-peer learning and knowledge sharing within the community. Foster a culture where experienced individuals mentor others and share their successes and challenges in adopting sustainable practices.</p>	UNDP and PMU





Fruit Tress Plantation in Ruhango

## **Section 6**

### **Annexes**

MTR ToR

Application Type:	International firm’s Contract for Professional Services
Project Title:	Forest Landscape Restoration in the Mayaga Region
Category:	Landscape degradation
Application deadline:	TBC
Type of Contract:	International Consultancy Firm
Languages Required:	English
Duration of Assignment:	3 months
Expected Starting Date:	Immediately after signing the contract

**1. INTRODUCTION**

This is the Terms of Reference (ToR) for -the Midterm Review (MTR) of the full-sized UNDP-supported GEF-financed project titled Forest Landscape Restoration in Mayaga Region (FLR Mayaga) Project (PIMS:5702). The project is being implemented through the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) which is to be undertaken in 6 years. The project started on December 9, 2019 and is in its third year of implementation. This ToR sets out the expectations for the MTR. The MTR process must follow the guidance outlined in the document *Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* ([http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance\\_Midterm%20Review%20\\_EN\\_2014.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/guidance/GEF/mid-term/Guidance_Midterm%20Review%20_EN_2014.pdf))

**2. PROJECT BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The project was designed to secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in four Districts of Amayaga region namely Kamonyi, Ruhango, Nyanza and Gisagara.

The project has three major outcomes:

- a) Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture;
- b) Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management;
- c) Implementation of Forest Landscape Restoration plans secures 555 ha of natural forests, puts 300 ha of forests under participatory forest management, increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 25,000 ha and 1,000 ha respectively; and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%. The project will deliver four Forest Landscape Restoration plans covering 263,270 ha, leading to avoided emissions of 4,700,825 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent in five years and 12,950,839 tons in indirect GHG emissions avoided in 20 years.

Executed by the Rwanda Environment Management Agency in partnership with key Ministries, the six-year project total cost is US\$ 32,706,365 consisting of a GEF Grant of \$6,213,538, UNDP Grant of \$1,000,000 and Government of Rwanda Co-fin of \$25,493,365. The implementation is supported by the technical assistance from Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA).



### 3. MTR PURPOSE

The MTR will assess the progress towards the achievement of project objectives and outcomes as specified in the Project Document and assess early signs of project success or failure with the goal of identifying the necessary changes to be made in order to set the project on-track to achieve its intended results. The MTR will also review the project's strategy and its risks to sustainability.

The present Mid-term Evaluation has been commissioned by REMA and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and will be conducted according to the guidance, rules and procedures for such evaluations established by UNDP. It will also produce an evaluation report containing a detailed list of lessons learned.

The overall objective of this evaluation is to review the progress towards achievement of the project objectives and outputs, identify strengths and weaknesses in implementation, assess the likelihood of the project achieving its objectives and delivering its intended outputs, within the current timeframe. The mission will provide recommendations on modifications to increase the likelihood of success of the project and the monitoring system that guides these findings.

This evaluation will provide an assessment of the project design, scope, status of implementation and capacity to achieve the set objectives. It will also collate and analyze lessons learned and best practices obtained during the period of implementation of the project that shall be taken into consideration during the remaining project implementation period.

The evaluation will identify, and document lessons learned (including lessons that might improve design and implementation) and make recommendations regarding specific actions that might be taken to improve the project. It is expected to serve as a means of validating or filling the gaps in the initial assessment of relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, sustainability and impact of interventions obtained from monitoring. Generally, the mid-term evaluation provides the opportunity to assess signs of project success or failure and prompt necessary adjustments. Therefore, the UNDP is recruiting a consulting firm to undertake the activities outlined below. Specifically, it is to:

- Assess the level of achievement of key project indicators
- Assessment of met the challenges, and treats if any;
- Draw the lessons learnt during the implementation of the project;
- Propose recommendations for the remaining implementation period of the project.

### 4. MTR APPROACH & METHODOLOGY

The MTR report must provide evidence-based information that is credible, reliable and useful. The MTR team will review all relevant sources of information including documents prepared during the preparation phase (i.e., PIF, UNDP Initiation Plan, UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure/SESP), the Project Document, project reports including annual PIRs, project budget revisions, national strategic and legal documents, and any other materials that the team considers useful for this evidence-based review. The MTR team will review the baseline GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools submitted to the GEF at CEO endorsement, and the midterm GEF focal area Core Indicators/Tracking Tools that must be completed before the MTR field mission begins.

The MTR team is expected to follow a collaborative and participatory approach<sup>9</sup> ensuring close engagement with the Project Team, government counterparts (the GEF Operational Focal Point), the UNDP Country Office(s), the Nature, Climate and Energy (NCE) Regional Technical Advisor, direct beneficiaries, and other key stakeholders.

Engagement of stakeholders is vital to a successful MTR. Stakeholder involvement should include interviews with stakeholders who have project responsibilities, including but not limited to REMA, FONERWA, MoE, RFA, Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi Districts, Southern Province, executing agencies, senior officials and task team/ component leaders, key experts and consultants in the subject area, Project Board, project

stakeholders, academia, local government and CSOs, etc. Additionally, the MTR team is expected to conduct field missions to Kamonyi, Nyanza, Ruhango and Gisagara Districts including the project sites in the project reports.

The specific design and methodology for the MTR should emerge from consultations between the MTR team and the above-mentioned parties regarding what is appropriate and feasible for meeting the MTR purpose and objectives and answering the evaluation questions, given limitations of budget, time and data. The MTR team must use gender-responsive methodologies and tools and ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as other cross-cutting issues and SDGs are incorporated into the MTR report.

The final methodological approach including interview schedule, field visits and data to be used in the MTR must be clearly outlined in the Inception Report and be fully discussed and agreed between the consultancy firm and UNDP.

The final MTR report must describe the full MTR approach taken and the rationale for the approach making explicit the underlying assumptions, challenges, strengths and weaknesses about the methods and approach of the review.

## 5. DETAILED SCOPE OF THE MTR

The MTR team will assess the following four categories of project progress. See the Guidance for Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, *GEF-Financed Projects* for extended descriptions.

### i. Project Strategy

#### Project design:

- Review the problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions. Review the effect of any incorrect assumptions or changes to the context to achieving the project results as outlined in the Project Document.
- Review the relevance of the project strategy and assess whether it provides the most effective route towards expected/intended results. Were lessons from other relevant projects properly incorporated into the project design?
- Review how the project addresses country priorities. Review country ownership. Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country (or of participating countries in the case of multi-country projects)?

<sup>9</sup> For ideas on innovative and participatory Monitoring and Evaluation strategies and techniques, see [UNDP Discussion Paper: Innovations in Monitoring & Evaluating Results](#), 05 Nov 2013.

- Review decision-making processes: were perspectives of those who would be affected by project decisions, those who could affect the outcomes, and those who could contribute information or other resources to the process, taken into account during project design processes?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were raised in the project design. See Annex 9 of Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for further guidelines.
- Were relevant gender issues (e.g. the impact of the project on gender equality in the program country, involvement of women's group, engaging women in project activities) raised in the Project Document?
- If there are major areas of concern, recommend areas for improvement.

**Results Framework/Logframe:**

- Undertake a critical analysis of the project’s logframe indicators and targets, assess how ‘SMART’ the midterm and end-of-project targets are (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time- bound), and suggest specific amendments/revisions to the targets and indicators as necessary.
- Are the project’s objectives and outcomes or components clear, practical, and feasible within its time frame?
- Examine if progress so far has led to, or could in the future catalyse beneficial development effects that should be included in the project results framework and monitored on an annual basis.
- Ensure broader development and gender aspects of the project are being monitored effectively.
- Develop and recommend SMART development indicators including sex - disaggregated indicators and indicators that capture development benefits.

**ii. Progress Towards Results**

**Progress Towards Outcomes Analysis:**

- Review the logframe indicators against progress made towards the end-of-project targets using the Progress Towards Results Matrix and following the Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects; colour code progress in ‘traffic light system’ based on the level of progress achieved; assign a rating on progress for each outcome; make recommendations from the areas marked as ‘Not on target to be achieved’ (red).

Table. Progress Towards Results Matrix (Achievement of outcomes against End-of-project Targets)

Project	Indicator <sup>10</sup>	Baseline	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup>	Midterm	End-of-	Midterm	Achievement	Justification
Strategy		Level <sup>11</sup>	PIR (self-reported)	Target <sup>12</sup>	project Target	Level & Assessment <sup>13</sup>	Rating <sup>14</sup>	for Rating

<sup>10</sup> Populate with data from the Logframe and scorecards

<sup>11</sup> Populate with data from the Project Document

<b>Objective:</b>	Indicator (if applicable):							
<b>Outcome 1:</b>	Indicator 1:							
	Indicator 2:							
<b>Outcome 2:</b>	Indicator 3:							
	Indicator 4:							
	Etc.							
<b>Etc.</b>								

**Indicator Assessment Key**

Green= Achieved	Yellow= On target to be achieved	Red= Not on target to be achieved
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In addition to the progress towards outcomes analysis:

- Compare and analyse the GEF Tracking Tool/Core Indicators at the Baseline with the one completed right before the Midterm Review.
- Identify remaining barriers to achieving the project objective in the remainder of the project.
- By reviewing the aspects of the project that have already been successful, identify ways in which the project can further expand these benefits.

### iii. Project Implementation and Adaptive Management

#### Management Arrangements:

- Review overall effectiveness of project management as outlined in the Project Document. Have changes been made and are they effective? Are responsibilities and reporting lines clear? Is decision-making transparent and undertaken in a timely manner? Recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of execution of the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner(s) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Review the quality of support provided by the GEF Partner Agency (UNDP) and recommend areas for improvement.
- Do the Executing Agency/Implementing Partner and/or UNDP and other partners have the capacity to deliver benefits to or involve women? If yes, how?
- What is the gender balance of project staff? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in project staff?
- What is the gender balance of the Project Board? What steps have been taken to ensure gender balance in the Project Board?

<sup>12</sup> If available

<sup>13</sup> Colour code this column only

<sup>14</sup> Use the 6-point Progress Towards Results Rating Scale: HS, S, MS, MU, U, HU

#### Work Planning:

- Review any delays in project start-up and implementation, identify the causes and examine if they have been resolved.
- Are work-planning processes results-based? If not, suggest ways to re-orientate work planning to focus on results?
- Examine the use of project's results log framework/ logframe as a management tool and review any changes made to it since project start.

#### Finance and co-finance:

- Consider the financial management of the project, with specific reference to the cost-effectiveness of interventions.
- Review the changes to fund allocations as a result of budget revisions and assess the appropriateness and relevance of such revisions.
- Does the project have the appropriate financial controls, including reporting and planning, that allow management to make informed decisions regarding the budget and allow for timely flow of funds?
- Informed by the co-financing monitoring table to be filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team, provide commentary on co-financing: is co-financing being used strategically to help the objectives of the project? Is the Project Team meeting with all co-financing partners regularly in order to align financing priorities and annual work plans?

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financer	Type of Co-financing	Co-financing amount confirmed at CEO Endorsement (US\$)	Actual Amount Contributed at stage of Midterm Review (US\$)	Actual % of Expected Amount
	GoR Gisagara District		6 954 989		
	GoR Nyanza District		3 867 597		
	GoR Ruhango District		2 149 660		
	GoR Kamonyi District		5 959 238		
	GoR Ministry of Environment		1 929 625		
	GoR Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority		1 097 967		
	GoR Rwanda Environment Management Authority		2 060 155		
	FONERWA		1 474 135		
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25 493 366</b>		

- Include the separate GEF Co-Financing template (filled out by the Commissioning Unit and project team) which categorizes each co-financing amount as investment mobilized or recurrent expenditure. (This template will be annexed as a separate file.)

#### Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:

- Review the monitoring tools currently being used: Do they provide the necessary information? Do they involve key partners? Are they aligned or mainstreamed with national systems? Do they use existing information? Are they efficient? Are they cost-effective? Are additional tools required? How could they be made more participatory and inclusive?
- Examine the financial management of the project monitoring and evaluation budget. Are sufficient resources being allocated to monitoring and evaluation? Are these resources being allocated effectively?
- Review the extent to which relevant gender issues were incorporated in monitoring systems. See Annex 9 of Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects for further guidelines.

#### Stakeholder Engagement:

- Project management: Has the project developed and leveraged the necessary and appropriate partnerships with direct and tangential stakeholders?
- Participation and country-driven processes: Do local and national government stakeholders support the objectives of the project? Do they continue to have an active role in project decision-making that supports efficient and effective project implementation?
- Participation and public awareness: To what extent has stakeholder involvement and public awareness contributed to the progress towards achievement of project objectives?



- How does the project engage women and girls? Is the project likely to have the same positive and/or negative effects on women and men, girls, and boys? Identify, if possible, legal, cultural, or religious constraints on women's participation in the project. What can the project do to enhance its gender benefits?

#### Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)

- Validate the risks identified in the project's SESP, and those risks' ratings; are any revisions needed?
- Summarize and assess the revisions made since CEO Endorsement/Approval (if any) to:
  - The project's overall safeguards risk categorization
  - The identified types of risks<sup>15</sup> (in the SESP).
  - The individual risk ratings (in the SESP).
- Describe and assess progress made in the implementation of the project's social and environmental management measures as outlined in the SESP submitted at CEO Endorsement/Approval (and prepared during implementation, if any), including any revisions to those measures. Such management measures might include Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) or other management plans, though can also include aspects of a project's design; refer to Question 6 in the SESP template for a summary of the identified management measures.

The project should be assessed against the version of UNDP's safeguard policy that was in effect at the time of the project's approval

#### Reporting:

- Assess how adaptive management changes have been reported by the project management and shared with the Project Board.
- Assess how well the Project Team and partners undertake and fulfil GEF reporting requirements (i.e. how have they addressed poorly-rated PIRs, if applicable?)
- Assess how lessons derived from the adaptive management process have been documented, shared with key partners and internalized by partners.

#### Communications & Knowledge Management:

- Review internal project communication with stakeholders: Is communication regular and effective? Are there key stakeholders left out of communication? Are there feedback mechanisms when communication is received? Does this communication with stakeholders contribute to their awareness of project outcomes and activities and investment in the sustainability of project results? Review external project communication: Are proper means of communication established or being established to express the project progress and intended impact to the public (is there a web presence, for example? Or did the project implement appropriate outreach and public awareness campaigns?)
- For reporting purposes, write one half- paragraph that summarizes the project's
- towards results in terms of contribution to sustainable development benefits, as well as global environmental benefits.
- List knowledge activities/products developed (based on knowledge management approach approved at CEO Endorsement/Approval).

<sup>15</sup> Risks are to be labeled with both the UNDP SES Principles and Standards, and the GEP's "types of risks and potential impacts": Climate Change and Disaster; Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Individuals or Groups; Disability Inclusion; Adverse Gender-Related impact, including Gender-based Violence and Sexual Exploitation; Biodiversity Conservation and the Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources; Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement; Indigenous Peoples; Cultural Heritage; Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention; Labor and Working Conditions; Community Health, Safety and Security.

#### iv. Sustainability

- Validate whether the risks identified in the Project Document, Annual Project Review/PIRs and the ATLAS Risk Register are the most important and whether the risk ratings applied are appropriate and up to date. If not, explain why.
- In addition, assess the following risks to sustainability:

##### Financial risks to sustainability:

What is the likelihood of financial and economic resources not being available once the GEF assistance ends (consider potential resources can be from multiple sources, such as the public and private sectors, income generating activities, and other funding that will be adequate financial resources for sustaining project's outcomes)?

##### Socio-economic risks to sustainability:

Are there any social or political risks that may jeopardize sustainability of project outcomes? What is the risk that the level of stakeholder ownership (including ownership by governments and other key stakeholders) will be insufficient to allow for the project outcomes/benefits to be sustained? Do the various key stakeholders see that it is in their interest that the project benefits continue to flow? Is there sufficient public / stakeholder awareness in support of the long-term objectives of the project? Are lessons learned being documented by the Project Team on a continual basis and shared/ transferred to appropriate parties who could learn from the project and potentially replicate and/or scale it in the future?

##### Institutional Framework and Governance risks to sustainability:

Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes pose risks that may jeopardize sustenance of project benefits? While assessing this parameter, also consider if the required systems/ mechanisms for accountability, transparency, and technical knowledge transfer are in place.

##### Environmental risks to sustainability:

Are there any environmental risks that may jeopardize the sustenance of project outcomes?

#### Conclusions & Recommendations

The MTR team will include a section in the MTR report for evidence-based conclusions, in light of the findings.

Additionally, the MTR consultant/team is expected to make recommendations to the Project Team. Recommendations should be succinct suggestions for critical intervention that are specific, measurable, achievable, and relevant. A recommendation table should be put in the report's executive summary. See the *Guidance For Conducting Midterm Reviews of UNDP-Supported, GEF-Financed Projects* for guidance on a recommendation table.

The MTR team should make no more than 15 recommendations total.

#### Ratings

The MTR team will include its ratings of the project's results and brief description of the associated achievements in a *MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table* in the Executive Summary of the MTR report. See Annex E for ratings scales. No rating on Project Strategy and no overall project rating is required.

[Table. MTR Ratings & Achievement Summary Table for Forest Landscape Restoration in Mayaga Region \(FLR Mayaga\) Project](#)

Measure	MTR Rating	Achievement Description
<b>Project Strategy</b>	N/A	
<b>Progress Towards Results</b>	Objective Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 1 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 2 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Outcome 3 Achievement Rating: (rate 6 pt. scale)	
	Etc.	
<b>Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>	(rate 6 pt. scale)	
<b>Sustainability</b>	(rate 4 pt. scale)	

## 6. MIDTERM REVIEW DELIVERABLES AND TIMEFRAME

The total duration of the MTR will be approximately 25 working days and shall not exceed three months from when the consultant(s) are hired. The tentative MTR timeframe is as follows: Options for site visits should be provided in the Inception Report.

#	Deliverable	Description	Timing	Responsibilities
1	<b>MTR Inception Report</b>	MTR team clarifies objectives and methods of Midterm Review	No later than 2 weeks after the contract signature, 23 <sup>rd</sup> November 2022	MTR team submits to the Commissioning Unit and project management
2	<b>Presentation</b>	Initial Findings	End of MTR mission, 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2022	MTR Team presents to project management and the Commissioning Unit
3	<b>Draft MTR Report</b>	Full draft report (using guidelines on content outlined in Annex B) with annexes	Within 3 weeks of the MTR mission, 15 <sup>th</sup> January 2023	Sent to the Commissioning Unit, reviewed by RTA, Project Coordinating Unit, GEF OFF
4	<b>Final Report*</b>	Revised report with audit trail detailing how all received comments have (and have not) been addressed in the final MTR report	Within 12 days of receiving UNDP comments on draft, 31 <sup>st</sup> January 2023	Sent to the Commissioning Unit

\*The final MTR report must be in English. If applicable, the Commissioning Unit may choose to arrange for a translation of the report into a language more widely shared by national stakeholders.

## 7. MTR ARRANGEMENTS

The principal responsibility for managing this MTR resides with the Commissioning Unit. The commissioning unit for this project's MTR is the UNDP Country Office.

The Commissioning Unit will contract the consultants and ensure the timely provision of per diems and travel arrangements within the country for the MTR team as reimbursable and will provide an updated stakeholder list with contact details (phone and email). The Project Team will be responsible for liaising with the MTR team to provide all relevant documents, set up stakeholder interviews, and arrange field visits.

## 8. TEAM COMPOSITION

The selection of consultants will be aimed at maximizing the overall "team" qualities in the following areas:

### (i) Team Leader

- Team Leader with at least a Master's degree in Environmental Economics, Forestry or with MBA with specialization in Project Management, (provide academic documents)
- A minimum of seven (7) years of relevant work experience in the field of project management and program/project evaluation in an international development context (Provide a CV);
- Proven expertise in evaluating multifaceted programs/projects and results-oriented monitoring and evaluation with at least 3 assignments conducted with supporting documents (completion certificate) for team leader;
- Previous experience in evaluating programs/projects funded through International organizations - Provide at least one certificate of good completion.

### (ii) Landscaping Expert

- Expert in landscaping with Master's Degree Biodiversity Conservation Forestry, Agroforestry, Soil, and water management
- Previous experience in evaluating donor funded programs/projects particularly those funded by the United Nations. (Provide at least one certificate of good completion)

### (iii) Livelihood improvement and social Expert

- Social Expert with at least Master's Degree in Sociology, development studies. Master's degree with five years' experience or Bachelor's degree with 10 years
- Previous experience in Monitoring and evaluating programs/projects for donor funded particularly those funded by the United Nations or other International Organization. (Provide at least one certificate of good completion.
- Ability to analyze the gender mainstreaming aspect and capacity building of community and stakeholders. (Proven by experience and certificates)

### (iv) GIS & Remote sensing Expert

- Master's degree in applied GIS
- Experience in use of Digital Elevation Model (DEM) and Remote sensing (5years).
- The consultants cannot have participated in the project preparation, formulation, and/or implementation (including the writing of the Project Document) and should not have a conflict of interest with project's related activities.

### **Experience of the firm**

The interested firm will demonstrate the experience in the field of project evaluation with atthree (3) certificates of good completion.

- Relevant experience with result-based management evaluation methodologies; Experience applying SMART indicators and reconstructing or validating baseline scenarios; Competence in adaptive management, as applied to GEF Focal Area;
- Experience in evaluating projects; Experience working in Rwanda;
- Experience in relevant technical areas for at least 10 years;
- Demonstrated understanding of issues related to gender and GEF Focal Area; experience in gender sensitive evaluation and analysis.
- Excellent communication skills; Demonstrable analytical skills;
- Project evaluation/review experiences within United Nations system will be considered an asset.

### **Language**

- Fluency in written and spoken English.
- Knowledge of local language is added asset.

## **9. ETHICS**

The MTR team will be held to the highest ethical standards and is required to sign a code of conduct upon acceptance of the assignment. This MTR will be conducted in accordance with the principles outlined in the UNEG 'Ethical Guidelines for Evaluation'. The MTR team must safeguard the rights and confidentiality of information providers, interviewees, and stakeholders through measures to ensure compliance with legal and other relevant codes governing collection of data and reporting on data. The MTR team must also ensure security of collected information before and after the MTR and protocols to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of sources of information where that is expected. The information, knowledge and data gathered in the MTR process must also be solely used for the MTR and not for other uses without the express authorization of UNDP and partners.

## **10. PAYMENT SCHEDULE**

- 20% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR Inception Report and approval by the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the draft MTR report to the Commissioning Unit
- 40% payment upon satisfactory delivery of the final MTR report and approval by the Commissioning Unit and RTA (via signatures on the TE Report Clearance Form) and delivery of completed TE Audit Trail

### **Criteria for issuing the final payment of 40%<sup>16</sup>:**

- The final MTR report includes all requirements outlined in the MTR TOR and is in accordance with the MTR guidance.
- The final MTR report is clearly written, logically organized, and is specific for this project (i.e., text has not been cut & pasted from other MTR reports).
- The Audit Trail includes responses to and justification for each comment listed.

## **11. APPLICATION PROCESS<sup>17</sup>**

### **Recommended Presentation of Proposal:**

- a) **Letter of Confirmation of Interest and Availability** using the [template](#)<sup>18</sup> provided by UNDP;
- b) **CV** and a **Personal History Form** ([P11 form](#)<sup>19</sup>);



- c) **Brief description of approach to work/technical proposal** of why the individual considers him/herself as the most suitable for the assignment, and a proposed methodology on how they will approach and complete the assignment; (max 1 page)

<sup>16</sup>The Commissioning Unit is obligated to issue payments to the MTR team as soon as the terms under the ToR are fulfilled. If there is an ongoing discussion regarding the quality and completeness of the final deliverables that cannot be resolved between the Commissioning Unit and the MTR team, the Regional M&E Advisor and Vertical Fund Directorate will be consulted. If needed, the Commissioning Unit's sector management, Procurement Services Unit and Legal Support Office will be notified as well so that a decision can be made about whether or not to withhold payment of any amounts that may be due to the evaluator(s), suspend or terminate the contract and/or remove the individual contractor from any applicable rosters. See the UNDP Individual Contract Policy for further details:

[https://popp.undp.org/\\_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP\\_POPP\\_DOCUMENT\\_LIBRARY/Public/PSU\\_Individual%20Contract\\_Individual%20Contract%20Policy.docx&action=default](https://popp.undp.org/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=/UNDP_POPP_DOCUMENT_LIBRARY/Public/PSU_Individual%20Contract_Individual%20Contract%20Policy.docx&action=default)

<sup>17</sup> Engagement of the consultants should be done in line with guidelines for hiring consultants in the POPP: <https://popp.undp.org/SitePages/POPPRoot.aspx>

<sup>18</sup><https://intranet.undp.org/unit/bom/psd/Support%20documents%20on%20IC%20Guidelines/Template%20for%20Confirmation%20of%20Interest%20and%20Submission%20of%20Financial%20Proposal.docx>

<sup>19</sup>[http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11\\_Personal\\_history\\_form.doc](http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/corporate/Careers/P11_Personal_history_form.doc)

MTR Evaluation Matrix

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
<b>A. Project Strategy</b>				
<b>I. Project Design</b>				
Project Design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Problem addressed by the project and the underlying assumptions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In what way do the project's assumptions or context, as specified in the Project Document, influence achieving project results?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>National Planning documents</li> <li>PIF and PIRs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> <li>Stakeholder Consultation</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevance of Project Strategy to achieving intended project results</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is the project designed in a way that the route towards achievement of the expected results is clear and the project interventions are planned to contribute to the achievement of the overall objectives?</li> <li>Were lessons from other relevant projects appropriately incorporated into the project design?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Project Reports of previous similar projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> <li>Stakeholder Consultation</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of coherence between project objective and national policy priorities and strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was the project concept in line with the national sector development priorities and plans of the country?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project Document</li> <li>Government Action Plan and Policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Desk review</li> <li>Interviews with project partners and stakeholders</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevance of project objectives to the needs and priorities of the target communities and stakeholders.</li> <li>Involvement of target communities and stakeholders in project design</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent does the project design respond to the needs and priorities of the target communities and stakeholders?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project document</li> <li>Community consultations (e.g. focus groups, community meetings)</li> <li>Stakeholder interviews (e.g. interviews with community leaders, civil society organizations, government officials)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> <li>Interviews with project partners and stakeholders</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriateness of project design and interventions to the socio-economic and ecological context of the project area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent is the project design appropriate to the socio-economic and ecological context of the project area?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project document</li> <li>Technical expert consultations (e.g. forestry experts, ecologists, social development experts).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> <li>Expert consultations</li> <li>Literature review</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integration of cross-cutting themes, such as gender and social inclusion, into project design</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Literature review (e.g. studies on forest landscape restoration in similar contexts)</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity and feasibility of project interventions and activities.</li> <li>Consistency of project design with project objectives.</li> <li>Adequacy of project resources to achieve objectives</li> </ul>	To what extent is the project design likely to achieve its objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project document.</li> <li>Budget and financial reports.</li> <li>Technical expert consultations (e.g. on the feasibility of project interventions).</li> <li>Implementation reports (e.g. progress reports, work plans)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review.</li> <li>Financial analysis.</li> <li>Expert consultations.</li> <li>Implementation review</li> </ul>
<b>II. Results Framework/Logframe</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity and completeness of the results framework/logframe.</li> <li>Logical coherence between project inputs, outputs, outcomes and impact</li> </ul>	To what extent is the results framework/logframe clear and well-structured?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project document.</li> <li>M&amp;E plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Specificity and measurability of results framework/logframe indicators</li> <li>Relevance and achievability of results framework/logframe indicators</li> </ul>	To what extent are the results framework/logframe indicators SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project document.</li> <li>M&amp;E plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevance and alignment of results framework/logframe indicators to project objectives and outcomes.</li> <li>Involvement of project partners and stakeholders in identifying and prioritizing results framework/logframe indicators</li> </ul>	To what extent are the results framework/logframe indicators relevant to the project objectives and outcomes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project document.</li> <li>Stakeholder consultations (e.g. with project partners and stakeholders).</li> <li>Needs assessment reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document review</li> <li>Interviews with project partners and stakeholders</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measurability and feasibility of results framework/logframe indicators.</li> <li>Availability and quality of baseline data and monitoring systems</li> </ul>	To what extent are the results framework/log frame indicators measurable and feasible to monitor and evaluate?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents</li> <li>M&amp;E plan</li> <li>Monitoring data (e.g. monitoring)</li> </ul>	Document review and analysis, Discussion with commissioning unit and project team
<b>B. Progress Towards Results</b>				
<b>Objective</b>	<b>Indicator 1:</b> Number of new gender-responsive legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks in place in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity (via FLR)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To what extent were new gender-responsive legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks developed and implemented in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity?</li> <li>How effective were the new frameworks in promoting gender equality and protecting forest and biodiversity resources?</li> <li>Were there any unintended consequences of the implementation of these frameworks?</li> </ol>	Government records and reports, stakeholder interviews and surveys	Document analysis, key informant interviews, focus group discussions
	<b>Indicator 2:</b> Number of people benefitting financially from FLR initiatives (fruit/tree cropping and one cow per family initiative, improved cookstoves): - GEF Core Indicator 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many people benefited financially from FLR initiatives?</li> <li>What proportion of the beneficiaries were women?</li> <li>Did the FLR initiatives have a significant impact on household incomes?</li> </ol>	FLR project records, beneficiary registers, government reports	Survey data analysis, key informant interviews
<b>Outcome 1</b>	<b>Indicator 3:</b> Tons of carbon mitigated - GEF Core Indicator 6	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many tons of carbon were mitigated through FLR activities?</li> <li>To what extent did the FLR interventions contribute to the national greenhouse gas emission reduction targets?</li> <li>What were the key factors that facilitated or hindered carbon mitigation efforts?</li> </ol>	FLR project records, national carbon accounting reports, government records	Quantitative analysis, document analysis, key informant interviews
	<b>Indicator 4:</b> Number of FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many FLR plans were developed and implemented at the landscape level?</li> </ol>	FLR project records, government reports, stakeholder surveys	Document analysis, key informant interviews, focus group discussions

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. What was the level of stakeholder participation in the development of these plans?</li> <li>3. Did the FLR plans result in measurable improvements in forest quality and biodiversity conservation?</li> </ol>		
	<p><b>Indicator 5:</b> Definitions of SFM and FLR clarified in the National Forest Policy (2018)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How were the concepts of SFM and FLR clarified in the National Forest Policy?</li> <li>2. Were the clarifications consistent with global definitions and best practices?</li> <li>3. Did the policy changes lead to improved forest management and conservation outcomes?</li> <li>4. What challenges hinder the integration of the definitions into forest management practices?</li> <li>5. What opportunities exist for enhancing the integration of the definitions into forest management practices?</li> </ol>	National Forest Policy, FLR project records, stakeholder interviews, project reports surveys	Document analysis, key informant interviews
<b>Outcome 2</b>	<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Aggregated Capacity Score using UNDP Capacity Scoring system for MINILAF, Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority; MINAGRI; Agriculture and NRM departments of Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What was the aggregated capacity score of the implementing agencies before and after the FLR project?</li> <li>2. Which agencies showed the most improvement in their capacity to implement FLR activities?</li> <li>3. What were the key factors that facilitated or hindered capacity building efforts?</li> </ol>	UNDP Capacity Scoring system, project records, stakeholder surveys	Quantitative analysis, key informant interviews
	<p><b>Indicator 7:</b> Number of key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation and clean household and institutional energy documented, disseminated and adopted at local and national levels</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How many key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation, and clean household and institutional energy were documented and disseminated?</li> <li>2. How were these lessons and strategies adopted at the local and national levels?</li> <li>3. Did the dissemination of these lessons and strategies lead to improved FLR and SLM/SFM outcomes?</li> </ol>	FLR project records, stakeholder surveys, government reports	Document analysis, key informant interviews, focus group discussions



Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<b>Indicator 8:</b> Funding mobilized for sustaining implementation of FLR plans post project	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. How much funding was mobilized for sustaining the implementation of FLR plans post-project?</li> <li>2. What were the sources of funding?</li> <li>3. How sustainable is the funding mechanism?</li> </ol>	FLR project records, government reports, stakeholder surveys	Quantitative analysis, key informant interviews
<b>Outcome 3</b>	<b>Indicator 9:</b> Area of High Conservation Value forest loss avoided - GEF Core Indicator 4.1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the baseline area of High Conservation Value Forest in the Mayaga region?</li> <li>2. What is the current area of High Conservation Value Forest in the Mayaga region?</li> <li>3. What is the rate of High Conservation Value Forest loss in the Mayaga region?</li> <li>4. How much of the High Conservation Value Forest loss has been avoided as a result of the project intervention?</li> <li>5. What are the key factors contributing to High Conservation Value Forest loss in the Mayaga region and how can they be addressed?</li> </ol>	Satellite imagery, national forest inventory data, Project progress reports and satellite imagery Stakeholder interviews, literature review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze satellite imagery and national forest inventory data to determine the baseline area of High Conservation Value Forest in the Mayaga region.</li> <li>• Analyze project progress reports to determine how much of the High Conservation *Value Forest loss has been avoided as a result of the project intervention.</li> <li>• Conduct stakeholder interviews and literature review to determine the key factors contributing to High Conservation Value Forest loss in the Mayaga region and develop recommendations for addressing them.</li> </ul>
	<b>Indicator 10:</b> Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems - GEF Core Indicator 4.3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. What is the total area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems in the Mayaga Region post-project implementation?</li> <li>2. How does the area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems compare to pre-project implementation in the Mayaga Region?</li> <li>3. What percentage of farmers in the Mayaga Region have adopted sustainable land management practices in their production systems as a result of the project?</li> <li>4. What are the key factors influencing the adoption of sustainable land management practices in production systems in the Mayaga Region?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remote sensing data collected by the project using drones and other technologies.</li> <li>• Project monitoring data, field surveys.</li> <li>• Data on agricultural practices and land management collected from farmer surveys conducted by project staff.</li> <li>• Baseline data from project documents.</li> <li>• Focus group discussions, interviews with project staff and stakeholders.</li> <li>• Soil sampling and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Field surveys to measure area of sustainable land management in Mayaga Region, cross-validate with project monitoring data.</li> <li>• Collect baseline data on sustainable land management in Mayaga Region, compare with post-project implementation data from project monitoring.</li> <li>• Surveys of farmers in Mayaga Region to assess adoption of sustainable land management practices, cross-validate with project monitoring data.</li> <li>• Focus group discussions with farmers and interviews with project staff and stakeholders to understand factors influencing adoption.</li> <li>• Soil sampling and analysis to assess impact of sustainable land management</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
		5. What is the impact of sustainable land management practices on soil health and productivity in the Mayaga Region?	analysis, yield assessment	practices on soil health and yield assessments to determine impact on productivity.
<b>C. Project Implementation &amp; Adaptive Management</b>				
<b>Management Arrangement</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a management plan.</li> <li>Level of stakeholder participation in the management process.</li> <li>Resource allocation efficiency</li> </ul>	1. How effective are the management arrangements for the restoration project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project management plan</li> <li>Project reports</li> <li>Interviews with project managers and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Focus group discussions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Compliance with relevant regulations.</li> <li>Alignment with national policies and strategies.</li> <li>Integration with other local development initiatives</li> </ul>	2. How well are the management arrangements aligned with local policies and regulations?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Government policies and regulations</li> <li>Local development plans and initiatives</li> <li>Project documents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Focus group discussions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frequency and quality of communication.</li> <li>Timeliness of information sharing.</li> <li>Level of stakeholder engagement</li> </ul>	3. How effective are the communication channels between project management and stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication records and logs</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback</li> <li>Interviews with project managers and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Focus group discussions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identification and analysis of risks.</li> <li>Mitigation strategies and contingency plans.</li> <li>Effectiveness of risk management</li> </ul>	4. How well are risks and uncertainties managed in the project implementation process?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk management plan*</li> <li>Project reports</li> <li>Interviews with project managers and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Focus group discussions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a monitoring and evaluation system.</li> <li>Quality and frequency of data collection.</li> <li>Use of monitoring data for decision making</li> </ul>	5. How effective is the monitoring and evaluation system for the management arrangements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and evaluation plan</li> <li>Project reports</li> <li>Interviews with project managers and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Focus group discussions</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of feedback and learning system.</li> <li>Quality and frequency of feedback and learning activities.</li> <li>Use of feedback and learning to improve management arrangements</li> </ul>	6. How effective is the feedback and learning system for the management arrangements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback and learning plan</li> <li>Project reports</li> <li>Interviews with project managers and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Focus group discussions</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Level of stakeholder capacity building.</li> <li>Effectiveness of capacity building activities.</li> <li>Use of capacity building to improve management arrangements</li> </ul>	7. How effective is the capacity building strategy for stakeholders involved in the management arrangements?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building plan</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback</li> <li>Interviews with project managers and stakeholders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis</li> <li>Key informant interviews</li> <li>Focus group discussions</li> </ul>
<b>Work Plan</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timeliness of work plans</li> <li>Accuracy of work plan budgets</li> <li>Utilization of available resources</li> <li>Achievement of planned activities</li> </ul>	1. Is the work planning process efficient and effective?	Project reports and work plans	Review of project reports and work plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clarity of objectives in work plans</li> <li>Relevance of planned activities to project goals</li> <li>Consistency with project's overall strategy</li> </ul>	2. Are work plans aligned with the project's objectives and goals?	Project proposals and work plans	Review of project proposals and work plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timeliness of updates to work plans</li> <li>Flexibility in adapting to changes in project conditions</li> </ul>	3. Are work plans responsive to changing circumstances?	Project reports and work plans	Review of project reports and work plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Involvement of stakeholders in work planning process</li> <li>Effectiveness of stakeholder input in shaping work plans</li> </ul>	4. Is stakeholder participation integrated in the work planning process?	Stakeholder engagement reports and work plans	Review of stakeholder engagement reports and work plans

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of resources in accordance with work plans</li> <li>Identification of resource gaps and steps taken to address them</li> </ul>	5. Are resources allocated efficiently and effectively in work plans?	Work plans and financial reports	Review of work plans and financial reports
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of completed activities according to schedule</li> <li>Identification of reasons for delays in implementation</li> </ul>	6. Are work plans being implemented according to schedule?	Project reports and work plans	Review of project reports and work plans
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Quality and frequency of monitoring reports</li> <li>Completeness and timeliness of progress reports</li> </ul>	7. Is there adequate monitoring and reporting on the progress of work plans?	Project reports and monitoring reports	Review of project reports and monitoring reports
<b>Finance and co-finance:</b>				
	Actual project expenditures vs budgeted expenditures	1. To what extent was the project budget sufficient to achieve the project objectives?	Project financial reports	Review project financial reports to assess if the actual project expenditures align with the budgeted expenditures
	Amount and sources of co-finance secured	2. How effective were the co-finance efforts in supporting the project?	Project financial reports and co-finance agreements	Review project financial reports and co-finance agreements to assess the amount and sources of co-finance secured
	Cost-effectiveness and efficiency of project activities	3. Did the project achieve value for money?	Project reports and financial records	Analyze project reports and financial records to assess the cost-effectiveness and efficiency of project activities
	Identification and mitigation of financial risks	4. How well did the project manage financial risks?	Project financial reports and risk management plans	Review project financial reports and risk management plans to assess how well financial risks were identified and mitigated
	Changes to project budget and co-finance arrangements	5. Were there any significant changes to the project budget or co-finance arrangements?	Project reports and financial records	Review project reports and financial records to assess if there were any significant changes to the project budget or co-finance arrangements
<b>Project-level Monitoring and Evaluation Systems:</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress towards specific objectives.</li> </ul>	1. To what extent are project objectives being achieved?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documents</li> <li>Analysis of monitoring data</li> <li>Site visits and field assessments</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of planned activities.</li> <li>• Achievement of expected outputs</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work plans and budgets* Monitoring data</li> <li>• Evaluations and reviews</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Area of degraded land restored</li> <li>• Increase in biodiversity and ecosystem services</li> <li>• Adoption of sustainable land use practices</li> <li>• Community engagement and participation</li> </ul>	2. How effective are the project activities in contributing to Forest Landscape Restoration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring data</li> <li>• Community surveys and feedback</li> <li>• Site visits and field assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data analysis and interpretation</li> <li>• Stakeholder consultations</li> <li>• Participatory assessments</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of activities completed within planned timeframe</li> <li>• Cost-effectiveness of activities</li> <li>• Efficiency of resource utilization</li> </ul>	3. Are the project activities being implemented efficiently and within budget?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Project budgets and financial reports</li> <li>• Work plans and progress reports</li> <li>• Monitoring data</li> <li>• Evaluations and reviews</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of financial and monitoring data</li> <li>• Site visits and field assessments</li> <li>• Consultations with project staff</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Integration with local policies and plans</li> <li>• Long-term benefits to communities and ecosystems</li> <li>• Strengthening of local institutions and capacities</li> <li>• Use of adaptive management practices</li> </ul>	4. Are project activities contributing to the sustainability of Forest Landscape Restoration efforts in the Mayaga Region?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitoring data</li> <li>• Interviews with key stakeholders</li> <li>• Document review</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of monitoring data</li> <li>• Stakeholder consultations</li> <li>• Desk review of policies and plans</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representation of women and marginalized groups in project activities</li> <li>• Benefits received by women and marginalized groups</li> <li>• Participation of women and marginalized groups in decision-making processes</li> </ul>	5. To what extent is the project promoting gender equity and social inclusion in Forest Landscape Restoration?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community surveys and feedback</li> <li>• Project reports and evaluations</li> <li>• Gender and social inclusion assessments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analysis of monitoring data and surveys</li> <li>• Participatory assessments and focus groups</li> <li>• Stakeholder consultations</li> </ul>



Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Usefulness of data and information for decision-making</li> <li>Timeliness and availability of data and information</li> <li>Participation of stakeholders in M&amp;E processes</li> <li>Use of M&amp;E findings for adaptive management</li> </ul>	6. How can the project's monitoring and evaluation system be improved for better decision-making and learning?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder consultations and feedback</li> <li>Internal project reviews and evaluations</li> <li>Comparative studies with similar projects</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Analysis of stakeholder feedback and internal reviews</li> <li>Identification of best practices and lessons learned</li> <li>Development of action plans for improvement</li> </ul>
<b>Stakeholder Engagement</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of stakeholder consultations held</li> <li>Level of participation and diversity of stakeholders engaged</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback and satisfaction</li> </ul>	1. How effectively are stakeholders engaged in project planning and implementation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder engagement reports</li> <li>Minutes from stakeholder meetings</li> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of stakeholder engagement reports</li> <li>Analysis of meeting minutes</li> <li>Survey analysis</li> <li>Content analysis of feedback forms</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of stakeholder concerns incorporated into project plans</li> <li>Stakeholder perception of their level of influence on project decisions</li> </ul>	2. Are stakeholder concerns and perspectives adequately considered in project decision-making?	*Stakeholder feedback forms * Meeting minutes	*Content analysis of feedback forms * Review of meeting minutes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of information-sharing events held</li> <li>Level of stakeholder participation in information-sharing events</li> <li>Stakeholder perception of the usefulness of information shared</li> </ul>	3. How effectively is information about the project shared with stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project reports</li> <li>Meeting minutes</li> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project reports</li> <li>Analysis of meeting minutes</li> <li>Survey analysis</li> <li>Content analysis of feedback forms</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of conflicts identified</li> <li>Number of conflicts resolved</li> <li>Stakeholder perception of the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms</li> </ul>	4. Are there effective mechanisms for addressing conflicts between stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conflict resolution reports</li> <li>Meeting minutes</li> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of conflict resolution reports</li> <li>Analysis of meeting minutes</li> <li>Survey analysis</li> <li>Content analysis of feedback forms</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of stakeholder consultations held for monitoring and evaluation purposes .</li> <li>Level of participation and diversity of stakeholders engaged in monitoring and evaluation</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback on the usefulness of monitoring and evaluation processes</li> </ul>	5. Are stakeholders adequately involved in monitoring and evaluation of the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Monitoring and evaluation reports</li> <li>Meeting minutes</li> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Stakeholder feedback forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of monitoring and evaluation reports</li> <li>Analysis of meeting minutes</li> <li>Survey analysis</li> <li>Content analysis of feedback forms</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of feedback mechanisms in place</li> <li>Timeliness and adequacy of responses to stakeholder feedback</li> </ul>	6. How effectively are feedback mechanisms established and utilized to respond to stakeholder feedback?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project reports</li> <li>Meeting minutes</li> <li>Feedback forms</li> <li>Survey data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project reports</li> <li>Analysis of meeting minutes</li> <li>Content analysis of feedback forms</li> <li>Survey analysis</li> </ul>
<b>Social and Environmental Standards (Safeguards)</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of safeguard issues identified and addressed</li> <li>Compliance with national and international environmental and social standards</li> <li>Stakeholder perception on safeguards implementation</li> </ul>	1. How effectively are social and environmental safeguards being implemented?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental and social safeguards policies and procedures</li> <li>National and international environmental and social standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documents</li> <li>Stakeholder interviews and surveys</li> <li>Site visits and observations</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and nature of social and environmental risks identified</li> <li>Number and nature of social and environmental risks mitigated</li> </ul>	2. How are potential social and environmental risks being identified and mitigated?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental and social safeguards policies and procedures</li> <li>Environmental and social risk assessment reports</li> <li>National and international environmental and social standards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documents</li> <li>Stakeholder interviews and surveys</li> <li>Site visits and observations</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number and nature of vulnerable groups identified and addressed</li> </ul>	3. How is the project addressing the needs and interests of vulnerable groups?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental and social safeguards policies and procedures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documents</li> <li>Stakeholder interviews and surveys</li> <li>Site visits and observations</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder perception on project's responsiveness to the needs and interests of vulnerable groups</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Social and gender assessments</li> <li>Stakeholder engagement reports</li> </ul>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of grievances received and resolved</li> <li>Timeliness of grievance resolution</li> <li>Stakeholder perception on the effectiveness of the grievance redress mechanism</li> </ul>	4. How effective is the project's grievance redress mechanism?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Environmental and social safeguards policies and procedures</li> <li>Grievance redress mechanism reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documents</li> <li>Stakeholder interviews and surveys</li> <li>Site visits and observations</li> </ul>
<b>Reporting</b>				
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timeliness of reports</li> <li>Completeness and accuracy of information</li> <li>Usefulness and effectiveness of reports in decision-making</li> <li>Frequency of corrective actions taken</li> <li>Feedback and utilization of reports by stakeholders</li> <li>Management of project risks and issues</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are project activities and outputs being accurately and comprehensively documented and reported?</li> <li>Are reporting requirements being met in a timely manner?</li> <li>Are reports being reviewed and analyzed for effectiveness and impact?</li> <li>Are corrective actions being taken as needed based on reported results?</li> <li>Are stakeholders receiving and utilizing project reports effectively? 6. Are project risks and issues being adequately reported and managed?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project documents and templates (e.g. reporting guidelines, data collection forms, templates)</li> <li>Project management team</li> <li>External evaluators or auditors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project reports and documentation</li> <li>Stakeholder surveys and feedback</li> <li>Interviews with project management team</li> <li>Analysis of corrective actions taken</li> </ul>
<b>Communications &amp; Knowledge Management</b>				
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholder feedback on communication effectiveness</li> <li>Usage of knowledge management tools and processes</li> <li>Documentation of project knowledge and information</li> <li>Alignment of communication and knowledge management with project objectives</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Are project stakeholders effectively engaged and informed through project communication activities?</li> <li>Is project information and knowledge being effectively shared within the project team and with stakeholders?</li> <li>Is project knowledge being effectively captured and disseminated for future use?</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project communication and knowledge management plan</li> <li>Project documents and templates (e.g. communication plan, knowledge management guidelines)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of communication and knowledge management plans and activities</li> <li>Interviews with project management team and stakeholders * Utilization of feedback mechanisms for stakeholders</li> <li>Analysis of utilization of knowledge management tools and processes</li> </ul>

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<p>5. Evaluation and analysis of communication and knowledge management effectiveness</p> <p>6. Utilization of best practices and tools for communication and knowledge management</p>	<p>4. Are project communication and knowledge management activities aligned with project objectives?</p> <p>5. Are project communication and knowledge management activities being effectively evaluated and improved?</p> <p>6. Is the project team utilizing best practices and tools for effective communication and knowledge management?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>External experts or consultants</li> </ul>	
<b>D. Sustainability</b>				
<b>Financial risks to sustainability</b>				
	Potential sources of government and non-government finance to sustain and further build on project results in the 4 demonstration sites	How will project results including systems and processes put in place by the project be sustained financially after the end of the project and scaled up and replicated?	Project Documents,	Document review and analysis, interviews
	Extent and duration of financial input required after project termination	To what extent will financial input be required to sustain project achievements beyond project?	Technical reports, PIRs, MTR, feedback	Document review and analysis, interviews
	Likelihood for funding for investments initiated by multiple sources such as public and private sectors and other funding resources	What is the likelihood that financial resources will not be adequately available after the FLR Project?	Government strategic documents, Government budget allocations, MTR feedback	Document review, interviews, personal, observation
<b>Socio-economic risk to sustainability</b>				
1	Number and severity of socio-economic risks identified	Does the socio-economic situation create risks that may jeopardize the sustainability of project outcomes?	Social and economic screening, PIRs, risk log, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal, observation
2	Level of risk of political change	Are there any political risks that threaten the sustainability of the project achievements?	Government documents, security analyses, risk log, PIF, Project Documents, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal, observation
3	Extent of government ownership over FLR	Is there a risk of insufficient ownership over project investments by certain stakeholders?	Organograms, Government documents, PIRs, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal, observation

Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	concepts, guidelines processes, platforms			
4	Level of understanding of project achievements by target groups	Is the communication of project achievements tailor made to the socio-economic conditions of the target group?	Project communication strategy, project communication products, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal observation
5	Proportion of stakeholder with clarity on the concept of community based FLR	What is the level of awareness and support for FLR among stakeholders?	Project Reports, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal observation
6	Proportion of stakeholder with clarity on the concept of community based FLR	Do the many important stakeholders recognise that it is in their best interests for the initiative to continue to bring benefits?	Reports, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal observation
7	Extent of lessons learnt applied in adaptive management to ensure sustainability	What lessons can be drawn regarding sustainability of project results, and what changes could be made (if any) to the design of the project to improve sustainability of project results?	Lessons learnt reports, PIRs, Project Board minutes of meetings, national and provincial development strategies, MTR feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document analysis</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>
8	Frequency of documenting lessons learnt and extent of knowledge transfer	Are project team members regularly documenting their lessons learnt and transferring them to the apt parties so they may benefit from them?	Project documents and reports, Baseline surveys and needs assessments, Lessons learnt report	Document analysis Focus group discussions
9	Extent of lessons learnt and shared with appropriate parties Likelihood of future replication and/or expansion	Are the Project Team's ongoing efforts to record lessons learned being shared with the right parties so they can learn from the project and possibly replicate and/or scale it up in the future?	Project documents and reports, Baseline surveys and needs assessments, Lessons learnt report	Document analysis Focus group discussions
<b>Institutional framework and governance risks to sustainability</b>				
	Existence of mechanisms and their degree of independence from the project	Are there mechanisms for accountability, transparency and knowledge transfer in place that will remain after project closure?	Government documents, PIRs, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal observation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supportiveness of the legal framework</li> <li>• Appropriateness and supportiveness of governance structures and processes</li> </ul>	Do the legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes support post-project continuation of the results achieved, processes initiated, and systems put in place by the project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports/PIRs</li> <li>• ATLAS Risk Log</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document review</li> <li>• Interviews</li> </ul>



Criteria	Indicators/criteria	Evaluative questions	Data sources	Methodology
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likely status of institutional capacity by the end of the project</li> <li>Potential for developing influential project champions</li> <li>Potential for mainstreaming PAs/project strategies into government planning processes at national and subnational levels</li> </ul>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Extent of regulatory uncertainty</li> <li>Level of governance and institutional capacity</li> <li>Legal and regulatory barriers</li> <li>Conflict resolution and access to justice</li> </ul>	Are there any risks associated with the legal frameworks, regulations, governance structures, and processes that could affect the sustainability of project benefits?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Legal and regulatory framework</li> <li>Government and institutional structures</li> <li>Project agreements and contracts</li> <li>Risk assessments and management plans</li> </ul>	Document Review and Stakeholder engagement and consultation reports
	Level of consideration of FLR in recently approved government documents and plans	Does the FLR Mayaga Project successfully mainstream its agenda into national and provincial policy and government action?	Government documents, MTR feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Document analysis,</li> <li>Interviews, personal observation</li> </ul>
	Existence of government policies to change institutional setup and/or legal frameworks	Are there any changes in legal frameworks, policies, governance structures and processes likely that may pose risks to the sustainability of project benefits?	Government documents, policy documents, MTR feedback	Document analysis, interviews, personal observation
<b>Environmental risks to sustainability</b>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Likelihood of natural hazards (drought, floods, earthquakes)</li> <li>Climate change impacts</li> </ul>	Are there any environmental factors that could undermine and reverse the project's outcomes and results, including factors that have been identified by project stakeholders?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress reports/PIRs</li> <li>ATLAS Risk Log</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review of project documents</li> <li>Stakeholder interviews and surveys</li> <li>Site visits and observations</li> </ul>

## Annexure 3

## Interview Guide

## Sample Interview Questions: Government Officials, Partner Ministries/Departments

Name		Gender	
Organization		Designation:	
Place of Interview		Date of Interview:	
Name of Interviewer			

S. No	Question	Answers
1.	What is the role of your organisation in the FLR Mayaga Project?	
2.	How long have you been associated with the project?	
3.	Do you participate in the project related meetings regularly?	
4.	How often are meetings with your department held?	
5.	Can you briefly describe the contribution of your organisation to the project?	
6.	Does your organisation get regular updates on project performance?	
7.	Is your organisation comfortable playing the role assigned to it in this project?	
8.	How do you rate the performance of the project so far? (good/bad/no idea)	
9.	Do you have any suggestions to improve the performance of the project?	
10.	Do you think the activities/outcomes of the project will make a significant improvement in the condition of the forests of Mayaga?	
11.	Do you think the project will change the way people manage their farms in Mayaga region?	
12.	Do you think the project beneficiaries will continue the land management practices introduced by the project beyond the project period?	

13.	Do you think the GoR will be interested in continuing the project activities beyond the project period?	
14.	Do you have any suggestions to improve the performance of the project?	
15.	Any other comments?	

A list of sample questionnaires is attached in the below file:



Interview  
Questions.pdf

Annexure 4

Progress towards Results Matrix

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Midterm Level & Assessment	Achievement Rating	Justification for Rating
<p><b>Objective:</b> To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province</p>	<p>Indicator 1: Number of new gender-responsive legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks in place in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity (via FLR)</p>	<p>No FLR coordination mechanism in any of the four districts; by law, only forest exceeding 2 ha need a permit to cut trees; national laws on forests not well understood by local communities because none available in local languages;</p>	<p>4 thematic groups on FLR under the JADF have been established, one in each district of project interventions as FLR coordination committees. The thematic groups are gender balanced, and helped in plantation of new trees and forest, conservation of Biodiversity and forest among other roles. The thematic meeting was held quarterly, and they meet as stakeholder working groups in each district.</p>	<p>4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF;</p>	<p>4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF fully functional and exit strategy has secured funds for sustainability of at least four more years.</p>	<p>All four coordination committees are established and functional</p>	<p><b>Highly Satisfactory</b></p>	<p>Achievement rating is “Highly Satisfactory” because targets under almost all sub-indicators have been achieved. The quality of work observed in the field was very good. No shortfalls are expected.</p>
	<p>Mandatory indicator 2: Number of people benefitting financially from FLR initiatives (fruit/tree cropping)</p>	<p>Various to be established during year one and reported in the first PIR (number of farmers engaged)</p>	<p>During this reporting period, as achievements of this first year of project implementation, additional (new) 93,634 people</p>	<p>179,050 additional</p>	<p>362,144 additional</p>	<p>388,261 persons benefitting from project activities</p>		

	<p>and one cow per family initiative, improved cookstoves): - GEF Core Indicator 11</p>	<p>in plantation farming under contract; number participating in FFS, number engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops, number benefiting from one cow per family and number using improved cookstoves;</p>	<p>benefitted financially from FLR initiatives and among them 55,000 people were provided with energy saving improved cookstoves (49% of them are female) from the project. 15,878 beneficiaries have been employed in forest landscape restoration in the Mayaga region while 13,227 people received grafted fruits trees from the project and 500 of them are engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crop and 9,529 people are participating in FFS.</p>	<p>At least 50 tree famers under contract;</p>	<p>At least 100 tree famers under contract</p>	<p>A total of 47,891 tree farmers have benefitted from the project across 4 districts and these farmers will be organized into groups under contractual agreements.</p>		
				<p>At least 25,000 participating in FFS</p>	<p>At least 50,000 participating in FFS</p>	<p>34,418 individuals participated in FFS of various kinds such a climate smart agriculture, livestock maintenance, agroforestry etc.</p>		
				<p>1,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops</p>	<p>5,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops</p>	<p>3,385 persons provided fruit trees for planting on farmlands.</p>		
				<p>3,000 benefiting from one cow per family</p>	<p>10,000 benefiting from one cow per family</p>	<p>3,826 cows were distributed. In addition, goats, pigs and chickens were also distributed. In total, 18,044 livestock were distributed, these include 15,510 livestock received from co-financing partners. The distribution of small livestock was introduced due to beneficiaries' choices.</p>		



				150,000 using improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)	300,000 using 60,000 improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)	233,227 people use improved cookstoves (with 38.3:61.7 male to female ratio).. Out of these 203877 persons received stoves from co-financing partners.		
	Mandatory indicator 3: Tons of carbon mitigated - GEF Core Indicator 6	To be determined in Year one, reported in the first PIR	The measure of the amount of tCO <sub>2</sub> e was not conducted in this reporting period.	At least 2,060,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	At least 4,700,825 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	The estimated greenhouse gas emissions avoided for the mid-term period (3 years) - 346,646 tCO <sub>2</sub> e. Over 6 years, 608,374 tons are estimated to be mitigated		
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture, covering 263,270 ha in 4 districts	Indicator 4: Number of FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level	0	2 FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level were designed and distributed among stakeholders. In total, 131,635 ha were restored by the project in Ruhango and Nyanza Districts.	2, covering at least 96,000 ha;	4, covering at least 263,270 ha;	All four plans are ready and approved and published on RFA website.	<b>Highly Satisfactory</b>	The rating is "HS" because the project has completed the huge task of preparing the district level FLR plans ahead of time. The quality of the plans is also excellent.
	Indicator 5: Definitions of SFM and FLR clarified in the National Forest Policy (2018)	SFM and FLR definitions clear at international level, not clear in the National Forest Policy	In this first year of the project implementation, this activity was not implemented. Nothing was done for this indicator yet.	Recommendations for policy amendment to clarify SFM and FLR definitions available in an addendum to the National Forest Policy	Addendum clarifying SFM and FLR definition part of the National Forest Policy (2018).	FLR has been defined in the new district level FLR plans under the title "Defining the FLR from global to local context" (this includes SFM as well), and recommendations for policy amendment are ready.		

<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management</p>	<p>Indicator 6: Aggregated Capacity Score using UNDP Capacity Scoring system for MINILAF, Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority; MINAGRI; Agriculture and NRM departments of Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts.</p>	<p>Aggregated score is 36.5 (systemic - 41.67; institutional - 31.25; individual - 36.46)</p>	<p>No target was set this year for this indicator; however, the trainings have started for project beneficiaries on improved techniques of tree and husbandry. The intensive trainings related to tree and land husbandry techniques and forests monitoring for staff from different institutions are planned</p>	<p>Aggregated score at least 45, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project</p>	<p>Aggregated score at least 57, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project</p>	<p>The current capacity score is reported to be 59.85%, with 61.6% for systemic capacity, 58% for institutional capacity and 60% for individual capacity, even better than the terminal target. Knowledge management plan has been prepared and is being executed through different practices such as FFS for Climate Smart Agriculture, SFM practices, etc.</p>	<p><b>Satisfactory</b></p>	<p>Rating is Satisfactory because the End of the project target has already been achieved in terms of capacity building. In fact, the achievement has exceeded the project target. Project is in advanced negotiations with GEF for securing funding for FLR beyond the project period.</p>
	<p>Indicator 7: Number of key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation and clean household and institutional energy documented, disseminated and adopted at local and national levels</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>During this reporting period two news articles were put on the REMA website. Communications and outreach activities were organized on national and private media houses. The Project's feasibility study was completed. The baseline was updated, and an M&amp;E plan was designed. In this reporting period, the number of hectares to be restored in each intervention area were determined through</p>	<p>Initial project results and lessons learned shared through website (one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 5 completed technical reports available online);</p>	<p>All project results and lessons learned shared through website with one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 15 completed technical reports available online.</p>	<p>By MTR, at least 16 news articles have been produced and posted on REMA website and many more in various other media platforms. 6 Technical reports have been documented, 3 news articles on gender issues reported.</p>		

			an adequate participatory and gender inclusive process.					
	Indicator 8: Funding mobilized for sustaining implementation of FLR plans post project	None	The local communities were mobilized to plant trees through community work, and in-kind contribution from the districts beneficiaries of the project was received by the project.	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize up to a million USD	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize enough funds for at least 4 additional years of FLR plans implementation	The exit strategy is planned. Negotiations with GEF for a USD 9.9 million grant are in progress. Funds not yet guaranteed but highly likely as the proposal has been approved and is in the costing and pre-appraisal mission stage. In addition, UNDP together with REMA are also working on a new project proposal of around 20 million USD under Mayaga Project (PIF development).		
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Implementation of FLR plans secures 555 ha of natural forests, puts 300 ha of forests under participatory forest management, establishes 1,000	Indicator 9: Area of High Conservation Value Forest loss avoided - GEF Core Indicator 4.1	354 ha of the 555 ha forest is currently Forest Reserve; there are no Participatory Forest Management agreements and	In this reporting period, community-level awareness campaigns for enhancement of management of 354 ha of Kibirizi-Muyira (a natural forest in the project's	Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest started;	Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest advanced:	Restoration work has started. Area demarcated, buffer plantation on boundary completed, agreement with local communities in place.	<b>Highly Satisfactory</b>	Rating is Highly satisfactory because the targets have been achieved or acceded in almost all sub-indicators, except one.

<p>ha of plantations under the New Forest Company through co-finance, increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 25,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at least 25%</p>		<p>levels of degradation of the whole 555 ha forest are high (to be confirmed during inception)</p>	<p>interventions areas) were organized. This awareness raising activities contributed to reducing the intensity of human activities in the natural forest.</p>	<p>Nomination file for the 354 ha Forest Reserve completed upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with business management plans (354 ha)</p>	<p>Nomination file for the 354 ha Forest Reserve submitted to Cabinet upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with business management plans (354 ha);</p>	<p>As per the discussions with PMU and Technical committee, there are ongoing discussions for revising the Nomination category to IUCN III.</p>		
				<p>At least 5 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation</p>	<p>At least 10 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation</p>	<p>5 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed, and implementation is ongoing.</p>		
	<p>Indicator 10: Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems - GEF Core Indicator 4.3</p>	<p>Table 7 gives basic statistics of land under soil conservation and irrigation while Table 2 shows land under plantation. However, these statistics are not specific to the SLM/SFM interventions the project will undertake. These statistics will be refined in year 1 and reported in the first PIR.</p>	<p>The results for forest management in Mayaga, as evidenced from a recent concluded project baseline study (2021), the forest cover in Amayaga region in agro-ecosystems and buffer zones and hilltops is totaling 35,950ha, of which 34,343ha are forests plantation. In this reporting period, over 4,820ha of landscapes have been additionally put by the project under sustainable land</p>	<p>Additional 10,800</p>	<p>Additional 26,300</p>	<p>Total 13,486 ha planted and/or replanted</p>		
				<p>10,000 ha under FFS</p>	<p>25,000 ha under SLM/FFS</p>	<p>10,000 ha under climate smart agriculture and agroforestry</p>		
				<p>500 ha of plantations</p>	<p>1,000 ha of plantations</p>	<p>858 ha of new plantation in woodlots, buffer zones and roadsides.</p>		

			management in production systems and for recovery of the ecosystems which were degraded by plantation of different tree species and grasses and with creation of ditches as erosion control measures.	100 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara	300 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara	150.8 ha replanted with indigenous species.		
				At least 200 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces	1,000 ha consolidated land with commercial tree crops, at least 500 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces	970.64ha of consolidated land with commercial tree crops covered 400ha of radical terraces have been protected by agroforestry trees plantation. In addition, 13,886 ha of progressive terracing were created with the help of water retention trenches and tree planting on excavated soil.		
				At least 20% increase in average crop yields	At least 25% increase in average crop yields	The estimated increase is 36.8% (APEFA 2023. Quarter 6 Technical Progress Report, March 2023)		

## Annexure 5

## MTR Ratings

Table 1: Ratings for Progress Towards Results: (one rating for each outcome and for the objective)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve or exceed all its midterm project targets, without major shortcomings. The progress towards the objective/outcome can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its midterm project targets, with only minor shortcomings.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve most of its midterm project targets but with significant shortcomings.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome is expected to achieve its midterm project targets with major shortcomings.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	The objective/outcome are expected not to achieve most of its midterm project targets.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	The objective/outcome has failed to achieve its midterm targets and is not expected to achieve any of its midterm project targets.

Table 2: Ratings for Project Implementation & Adaptive Management: (one overall rating)		
6	Highly Satisfactory (HS)	Implementation of all eight components – management arrangements, work planning, finance and co- finance, project-level monitoring and evaluation systems, stakeholder engagement, reporting, and communications – is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management. The project can be presented as “good practice”.
5	Satisfactory (S)	Implementation of most of the eight components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management except for only few that are subject to remedial action.
4	Moderately Satisfactory (MS)	Implementation of some of the eight components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management, with some components requiring remedial action.
3	Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU)	Implementation of some of the eight components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive, with most components requiring remedial action.
2	Unsatisfactory (U)	Implementation of most of the eight components is not leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.
1	Highly Unsatisfactory (HU)	Implementation of none of the eight components is leading to efficient and effective project implementation and adaptive management.

Table 3: Ratings for Sustainability: (one overall rating)		
4	Likely (L)	Negligible risks to sustainability, with key outcomes on track to be achieved by the project’s closure and expected to continue into the foreseeable future
3	Moderately Likely (ML)	Moderate risks, but expectations that at least some outcomes will be sustained due to the progress towards results on outcomes at the Midterm Review
2	Moderately Unlikely (MU)	Significant risk that key outcomes will not carry on after project closure, although some outputs and activities should carry on
1	Unlikely (U)	Severe risks that project outcomes as well as key outputs will not be sustained



Annexure 6

MTR Mission Itinerary

Date	Location	Activity/Meeting (with)	Responsible personnel	Staff and project beneficiaries	Site/Interventions
9 <sup>th</sup> May First half	Kigali	Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)	Sharad Agarwal Dr. H.S. Pabla Gitau Wamukui Samarth Agarwal Tanvi Jain Suchayan Mondal	PMU	-
9 <sup>th</sup> May Second half		National Fund for Environment and Climate Change (FONERWA)	Sharad Agarwal Dr. H.S. Pabla Gitau Wamukui Samarth Agarwal Tanvi Jain Suchayan Mondal SONGA Remy	Member of project steering committee.	-
10 <sup>th</sup> May First half	Kigali	Rwanda Governance Board (RGB)	Dr. H.S. Pabla Gitau Wamukui Tanvi Jain Suchayan Mondal SONGA Remy	Project FLR Mayaga project Focal Point	Community Capacity building
10 <sup>th</sup> May Second half		APEFA	Dr. H.S. Pabla Gitau Wamukui Tanvi Jain Suchayan Mondal SONGA Remy	APEFA Team	Community Capacity building
11 <sup>th</sup> May Full day	Kamonyi	Full day field visits to Kamonyi district, Mugina, Rugalika, Nyamiyaga and Nyarubaka sectors	Dr. H.S. Pabla Samarth Agarwal Gitau Wamukui Tanvi Jain Suchayan Mondal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District officials</li> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>	Nyamiyaga Sector 1. Complete agroforestry; 2. Afforestation woodlots and roadsides; 3. River buffer zone protection;

			Surveyors (4) SONGA Remy		4. Planted fruits 5. Livestock; 6. Improved cookstoves.
12 <sup>th</sup> May First half day	Muhanga	RAB	Dr. H.S. Pabla Samarth Agarwal Gitau Wamukui Tanvi Jain Suchayan Mondal Surveyors (4) SONGA Remy	Kamonyi and Ruhango RAB Station Manager	-
12 <sup>th</sup> May Second half Day	Kamonyi	Full day field visits to Kamonyi district, Mugina, Rugalika, Nyamiyaga and Nyarubaka sectors	Dr. H.S. Pabla Samarth Agarwal Gitau Wamukui Tanvi Jain Suchayan Mondal Surveyors (4) SONGA Remy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>	Mugina Sector 1. Complete agroforestry; 2. Afforestation woodlots and roadsides; 3. Planted fruits 4. Livestock; 5. Improved cookstoves; 6. Cooking gas.
15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> May	Nyanza	Full day field visits to Nyanza district.  Visit Muyira, and Ntyazo Sectors	<b>Team 1</b> Dr. H.S. Pabla Tanvi Jain K. Bonitah Agaba Emmanuel Bosco  (Team Stays at Nyanza on 15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District officials</li> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>	Muyira Sector 1. Complete agroforestry; 2. Afforestation roadsides; 3. Planted fruits Ntyazo Sector 1. Complete agroforestry; 2. Afforestation roadsides; 3. River buffer zone protection; 4. Planted fruits. 5. Livestock.
15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> May	Ruhango	Full day fields visit to Ruhango district.  Visit Ruhango and Mbuye Sectors	<b>Team 2</b> Gitau Wamukui Suchayan Mondal T. John Christine Mutesi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District officials</li> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>	Mbuye Sector 1. Complete agroforestry; 2. Afforestation roadsides; 3. River buffer zone protection; 4. Planted fruits

			Remy  (Team Stays at Nyanza on 15 <sup>th</sup> & 16 <sup>th</sup> )		5. Livestock Ruhango Sector 1. Complete agroforestry; 2. Afforestation roadsides; 3. Improved cookstoves; 4. Cooking gas.
17 <sup>th</sup> May Second half		Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA)	<b>Team 1</b> Dr. H.S. Pabla Tanvi Jain K. Bonitah Agaba Emmanuel Bosco  (Travel back to Kigali on 17 <sup>th</sup> Eve.)	FLR Mayaga Project focal Point and SPIU Coordinator.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Policy formulation and updates related to land and forestry activities</li> <li>Results of monitoring and evaluation activities related to the project</li> <li>Research findings on forestry related issues in the project area</li> <li>Efforts and results of conducting forestry awareness programs among communities</li> </ul>
17 <sup>th</sup> & 18 <sup>th</sup> May	Gisagara	Two-day visit/stay at Gisagara district –  Visit Gishubi and Ndora, Sectors	<b>Team 2</b> Gitau Wamukui Suchayan Mondal T. John Christine Mutesi Remy (Team Stays at Huye on 17 <sup>th</sup> and travel back to Kigali on 18 <sup>th</sup> Eve.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District officials</li> <li>Project beneficiaries</li> </ul>	<p>Ndora Sector</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Cooking gas;</li> <li>Livestock;</li> <li>Complete agroforestry.</li> <li>Afforestation roadsides;</li> </ol> <p>Gishubi Sector</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete agroforestry;</li> <li>Afforestation woodlots;</li> <li>Planted fruits</li> </ol>
18 <sup>th</sup> May		Preparation of presentation		Preparation of presentation	-
19 <sup>th</sup> May	Kigali	Presentation of preliminary findings to UNDP, REMA and other stakeholders Travel back to Mumbai/Delhi		Presentation of preliminary findings to UNDP, REMA and other stakeholders	-

## Annexure 7

## List of Persons Met and Interviewed

## Project Stakeholders:

Organization/ Authority	Persons Interviewed	Designation
REMA	Mr. Remy Songa	FLR Mayaga Project Coordinator
	Mr. MUGWANEZA Jean Bosco	Projects M&E Specialist
	Mr. NSENGIYUMYA Jackson	District Environment Officer and District Project Coordinator
	Mr. Augustin NSENGIYUMVA	District Environment Officer and District Project Coordinator
FONERWA	Mr. Florian MUGABO	Projects M&E Analysis
RGB	Mr. NKURIKIYE Andrée	M&E Specialist/CSO Project
	Mr. HABİYONIZEYE Yvonne	M&E Specialist/CSO Project
APEFA	Mr. Oscar Nzabonimpa	Executive Director
	Mr. Jackson Ndera	Project Co-ordinator
Kamonyi District Office	Mr. Niyongira Uzziel	Vice Mayor (Economic development)
	Mr. Emmanuel NIYOMUKIZA	Forest & Natural Resource Officer
	Mr. HABİYAKARE Sylvestre	Cash crop Officer
	Mr. NSENGIYUMVA Eric	Sector Agronomist Mugina Sector
	Mr. Nsengumuremyi Philbert	SARO MUGINA Sector
	Mr. Jackson NDERA	Project Coordinator APEFA
Ruhango District Office	Mr. Louis MBABAZI	Executive Secretary
	Mr. Emmanuel BYIRINGIRO	Director of Agriculture & Natural Resources
	Mr. NSENGIYUMVA Manzi Elie	Forest and Natural Resources Officer
Nyanza District Office	Mr. Nzungize Gustave	Director of Agriculture & Natural Resources
	Mr. Aimable NSENGIMANA	Agriculture & Natural Resources Officer
Gisagara District Office	Mr. RUTABURINGOGA Jerome	Mayor
	Mr. BANGANIRORA Renes	Acting Director of Agriculture & Natural Resources
	Mr. NIYNDAMYA Japhet	Forest and Natural Resource Officer
RFA	Mr. UWIMANA Vincent	FLR Focal Person
	Dr. Ivan Gasangwa	Division Manager

**Number of Beneficiaries Interviewed:**

Activities/ Beneficiary	Districts			
	Kamonyi District	Nyanza District	Ruhango District	Gisagara District
Cook Stoves	2	-	2	-
Woodlot	4	2	2	2
Buffer Zones	1	2	2	2
Livestock	2	2	6	5
Fruit Trees	-	1	4	1
Agro-forestry	1	2	3	-
LPG Gas	-	-	2	2
Youth Nursery	-	-	3	2
Climate Smart Agriculture (FFS School)	-	-	2	2
Forester	1	1	-	1
NGO worker	-	1	1	-

**Note:** The above is a sample size that was finalized with UNDP and REMA team for interviewing the Beneficiaries of the FLR Project







## Annexure 8

**List of Documents Reviewed and Key References**

- A. PIF
- B. UNDP Initiation Plan
- C. UNDP Project Document
- D. UNDP Social and Environmental Screening Procedure (SESP)
- E. Progress Reports and Work Plans
- F. Project Implementation Reports
- G. Quarterly progress reports and work plans of the various implementation task teams
- H. Audit reports
- I. Finalized GEF focal area Tracking Tools/Core Indicators at CEO endorsement and midterm SFM Tracking Tool, Land Degradation Tracking Tool, and the Climate Change Mitigation Tracking Tool.
- J. Oversight mission reports
- K. Minutes of the Forest Landscape Restoration in the Mayaga Region Board Meetings and other meetings (i.e., Project Appraisal Committee meetings)
- L. Project site location maps
- M. Project Management Documents
- N. Project Output Documents
- O. Financial and Administration guidelines used by Project Team

The following documents were also reviewed:

- P. All monitoring reports prepared by the project
- Q. Project operational guidelines, manuals, and systems
- R. UNDP country/countries programme document(s)
- S. Any additional documents, as relevant.

## Annexure 9

Table 2: Co-Financing Table

Source of Co-Finance	Name of the Co-Financer	Type of Co-financing	Co-financing amount confirmed at CEO Endorsement (US\$)	Actual Amount Contributed at stage of Midterm Review (US\$) as on June 31, 2023	Actual % of Expected Amount
				Total	
Funds used by Gisagara District to implement Other Interventions in the Project Intervention Areas that contribute to the FLR approaches.	GoR - Gisagara District	In kind	6,954,989	5,180,875	74%
Funds used by Nyanza District to implement Other Interventions in the Project Intervention Areas that contribute to the FLR approaches.	GoR - Nyanza District	In kind	3,867,597	2,294,330	59%
Funds used by Ruhango District to implement Other Interventions in the Project Intervention Areas that contribute to the FLR approaches.	GoR - Ruhango District	In kind	2,149,660	2,087,015	97%
Funds used by Kamonyi District to implement Other Interventions in the Project Intervention Areas that contribute to the FLR approaches.	GoR - Kamonyi District	In kind	5,959,238	2,294,331	39%
	GoR – Ministry of Environment	In kind	1,929,625	1,323,457	69%
	GoR – Rwanda Forestry Authority	In kind	1,097,967	796,178	73%
	GoR – Rwanda Environment Management Authority	In kind/ Grant	2,060,155	1,462,644	71%
	FONERWA	In kind	1,474,135	891,654	60%
	UNDP	Grants	1,000,000	1,074,578.11	107.4%
	GEF	Grants	6,213,538	5,251,363	85%
<b>Total</b>			<b>32,706,904</b>	<b>22,656,425.11</b>	<b>71.4%</b>

Annexure 10

Proposed Results Framework for the Project Based on MTR Findings and Recommendations

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-projectTarget	Recommended End of Project Targets
<p><b>Objective:</b> To secure biodiversity and carbon benefits while simultaneously strengthening the resilience of livelihoods, through forest landscape restoration and upscaling clean technologies in selected Districts of Southern Province</p>	<p><b>Indicator 1:</b> Number of new gender-responsive legal, regulatory, and institutional frameworks in place in the four districts for the conservation of forests and biodiversity (via FLR)</p>	<p>No FLR coordination mechanism in any of the four districts; by law, only forest exceeding 2 ha need a permit to cut trees; national laws on forests not well understood by local communities because none available in local languages;</p>	<p>4 thematic groups on FLR under the JADF have been established, one in each district of project interventions as FLR coordination committees. The thematic groups are gender balanced, and helped in plantation of new trees and forest, conservation of Biodiversity and forest among other roles. The thematic meeting was held quarterly, and they meet as stakeholder working groups in each district.</p>	<p>4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF;</p>	<p>4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF fully functional and exit strategy has secured funds for sustainability of at least four more years.</p>	<p>4 FLR coordination committees established under the JADF fully functional and exit strategy has secured funds for sustainability of at least four more years.</p>
				<p>Area of land requiring a permit to cut trees reduces to 1.5 ha</p>		<p>The indicator is no more applicable to the project as the government decision on this is already beyond the goal of the project - the Forest Law of 2013, requires license for harvesting the forest of above 0.5 ha.</p>
	<p><b>Mandatory indicator 2:</b> Number of people benefitting financially from FLR initiatives (fruit/tree</p>	<p>Various to be established during year one and reported in the first PIR (number of farmers engaged in</p>	<p>During this reporting period, as achievements of this first year of project implementation, additional (new) 93,634 people benefitted</p>	<p>179,050 additional</p>	<p>362,144 additional</p>	<p>362,144 additional</p>

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-projectTarget	Recommended End of Project Targets
	cropping and one cow per family initiative, improved cookstoves): - GEF Core Indicator 11	plantation farming under contract; number participating in FFS, number engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops, number benefiting from one cow per family and number using improved cookstoves;	financially from FLR initiatives and among them 55,000 people were provided with energy saving improved cookstoves (49% of them are female) from the project. 15,878 beneficiaries have been employed in forest landscape restoration in the Mayaga region while 13,227 people received grafted fruits trees from the project and 500 of them are engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crop and 9,529 people are participating in FFS.	At least 50 tree famers under contract;	At least 100 tree famers under contract	At least 100 tree famers under contract
At least 25,000 participating in FFS				At least 50,000 participating in FFS	At least 50,000 participating in FFS	
1,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops				5,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops	5,000 engaged in consolidated tree crop farming as cash crops	
3,000 benefiting from one cow per family				10,000 benefiting from one cow per family	10,000 benefiting from one cow per family	

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Recommended End of Project Targets
				150,000 using improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)	300,000 using 60,000 improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)	300,000 people using 60,000 improved cookstoves (48.3:51.7 male to female ratio on gender for all numbers)
	<b>Mandatory indicator 3:</b> Tons of carbon mitigated - GEF Core Indicator 6	To be determined in Year one, reported in the first PIR	The measure of the amount of tCO <sub>2</sub> e was not conducted in this reporting period.	At least 2,060,000 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	At least 4,700,825 tCO <sub>2</sub> e	Target to be revised based on updated data, while utilizing the recommended tools based on 2006 IPCC guidelines to accurately estimate the reduction of GHG emissions at the project level.
<b>Outcome 1:</b> Forest restoration plans with institutional and legislation frameworks guiding afforestation, natural resources management and agriculture, covering 263,270 ha in 4 districts	<b>Indicator 4:</b> Number of FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level	0	2 FLR plans guiding restoration at landscape level were designed and distributed among stakeholders. In total, 131,635 ha were restored by the project in Ruhango and Nyanza Districts.	2, covering at least 96,000 ha;	4, covering at least 263,270 ha;	4, covering at least 263,270 ha;
	<b>Indicator 5:</b> Definitions of SFM and FLR clarified in the National Forest Policy (2018)	SFM and FLR definitions clear at international level, not clear in the National Forest Policy	In this first year of the project implementation, this activity was not implemented. Nothing was done for this indicator yet.	Recommendations for policy amendment to clarify SFM and FLR definitions available in an addendum to the National Forest Policy	Addendum clarifying SFM and FLR definition part of the National Forest Policy (2018).	Addendum clarifying FLR definition part of the National Forest Policy (2018).



Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-project Target	Recommended End of Project Targets
<p><b>Outcome 2:</b> Individual and institutional capacities enhancement for planning and implementing gender sensitive forest landscape restoration strategies supported by knowledge management</p>	<p><b>Indicator 6:</b> Aggregated Capacity Score using UNDP Capacity Scoring system for MINILAF, Rwanda Water and Forestry Authority; MINAGRI; Agriculture and NRM departments of Gisagara, Nyanza, Ruhango and Kamonyi districts.</p>	<p>Aggregated score is 36.5 (systemic - 41.67; institutional - 31.25; individual - 36.46)</p>	<p>No target was set this year for this indicator; however, the trainings have started for project beneficiaries on improved techniques of tree and husbandry. The intensive trainings related to tree and land husbandry techniques and forests monitoring for staff from different institutions are planned</p>	<p>Aggregated score at least 45, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project</p>	<p>Aggregated score at least 57, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project</p>	<p>Aggregated score at least 57, increase can be attributed to the areas specific to the project</p>
	<p><b>Indicator 7:</b> Number of key project lessons and strategies for FLR, SLM/SFM, land consolidation and clean household and institutional energy documented, disseminated, and adopted at local and national levels</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>During this reporting period two news articles were put on the REMA website. Communications and outreach activities were organized on national and private media houses. The Project's feasibility study was completed. The baseline was updated, and an M&amp;E plan was designed. In this reporting period, the number of hectares to be restored in each intervention area were determined through an adequate participatory</p>	<p>Initial project results and lessons learned shared through website (one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 5 completed technical reports available online);</p>	<p>All project results and lessons learned shared through website with one news article per month – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 15 completed technical reports available online.</p>	<p>All project results and lessons learned shared through website with one news article per Quarter – at least one/year on gender issues; at least 10 completed technical reports available online.</p>

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-projectTarget	Recommended End of Project Targets
			and gender inclusive process.			
	<b>Indicator 8:</b> Funding mobilized for sustaining implementation of FLR plans post project	None	The local communities were mobilized to plant trees through community work, and in-kind contribution from the districts beneficiaries of the project was received by the project.	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize up to a million USD	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize enough funds for at least 4 additional years of FLR plans implementation	The project exit strategy completed, and initial fundraising mobilize enough funds for at least 4 additional years of FLR
<b>Outcome 3:</b> Implementation of FLR plans secures 555 ha of natural forests, puts 300 ha of forests under participatory forest management, establishes 1,000 ha of plantations under the New Forest Company through co-finance, increases productivity of agriculture and plantation forests on 25,000 ha and reduces wood consumption by at	<b>Indicator 9:</b> Area of High Conservation Value Forest loss avoided - GEF Core Indicator 4.1	354 ha of the 555 ha forest is currently Forest Reserve; there are no Participatory Forest Management agreements and levels of degradation of the whole 555 ha forest are high (to be confirmed during inception)	In this reporting period, community-level awareness campaigns for enhancement of management of 354 ha of Kibirizi-Muyira (a natural forest in the project's interventions areas) were organized. This awareness raising activities contributed to reducing the intensity of human activities in the natural forest.	Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest started;;	Restoration of the 555 ha of natural forest advanced:	Restoration of the 466.9 ha of natural forest advanced:
				Nomination file for the 354 ha Forest Reserve completed upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with business management plans (354 ha)	Restoration of the 466.9 ha of natural forest advanced: Nomination file for the 466.9 ha Forest Reserve submitted to Cabinet upgrading it to PA IUCN Category IV status, with	Nomination file for the 466.9 ha Forest Reserve submitted to Cabinet upgrading it to PA IUCN Category III status, with management plans (354 ha);

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-projectTarget	Recommended End of Project Targets
least 25%					management plans (354 ha);	
				At least 5 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation	At least 10 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation	At least 10 Participatory Forest Management agreements completed and under implementation
				Additional 10,800	Additional 26,300	Additional 26,300
				10,000 ha under FFS	25,000 ha under SLM/FFS	25,000 ha under SLM/FFS
	<b>Indicator 10:</b> Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems - GEF Core Indicator 4.3	Table 7 gives basic statistics of land under soil conservation and irrigation while Table 2 shows land under plantation. However, these statistics are not specific to the SLM/SFM interventions the project will undertake. These	The results for forest management in Mayaga, as evidenced from a recent concluded project baseline study (2021), the forest cover in Amayaga region in agro-ecosystems and buffer zones and hilltops is totaling 35,950ha, of which 34,343ha are forests plantation. In this reporting period, over			

Project Strategy	Indicator	Baseline Level	Level in 1 <sup>st</sup> PIR (self-reported)	Midterm Target	End-of-projectTarget	Recommended End of Project Targets
		statistics will be refined in year 1 and reported in the first PIR.	4,820ha of landscapes have been additionally put by the project under sustainable land management in production systems and for recovery of the ecosystems which were degraded by plantation of different tree species and grasses and with creation of ditches as erosion control measures.	500 ha of plantations	1,000 ha of plantations	1,000 ha of plantations
				100 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara	300 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara	300 ha hilltop forests replanted with indigenous species and cleared of Lantana camara
				At least 200 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces	1,000 ha consolidated land with commercial tree crops, at least 500 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces	1,000 ha consolidated land with commercial tree crops, at least 500 ha put under new or rehabilitated terraces
				At least 20% increase in average crop yields	At least 25% increase in average crop yields	At least 25% increase in average crop yields