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NEWSLETTER

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WATER EXPERTS CONDUCT TRAINING ON LANDSLIDES AND SLOPE STABILITY ANALYSIS IN RWANDA



Training's participants during learning sessions at RWB's headquarters | Image: Remy Niyingize

30th January 2022: Water experts from public institutions gathered in Rwanda for a five-day capacity-building training on landslides and slope stability analysis.

This training was hosted by the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) in collaboration with the University of Parma (UNIPR) in Italy as part of the Enrhed Erasmus project and took place from January 23rd to 27th, 2023.

Its aim was to increase knowledge of hydrogeological hazards while also scaling up the capability of tackling slope stability problems.

The Government of Rwanda through RWB continues to develop many projects to address problems affecting the country's water resources, with erosion and landslides among the most critical to deal with.

EVENT BACKGROUND

This training followed the one-week 'Summer School 2022' on 'Landslide Analysis

Analysis and Slope Stability in Rwanda' held last year by IPRC Musanze in collaboration with the University of Parma (UNIPR) and the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB).

This educational course, which took place from July 12th to 14th, 2022, included theoretical lessons and practical exercises for 60 water engineers using appropriate numerical codes designed specifically for slope stability analyses.



When IPRC Musanze hosted the last 2022 Summer School | Images: IPRC Musanze

"We are facing more threats than ever before from increased climate change and variability, with heavy and intense rainfall triggering floods and landslides more frequently, leaving us unprepared in some areas,"

"Flood and landslide-prone areas occupy a big share of the national territory, posing a threat to human security and the country's prosperity," remarked Dr. Emmanuel Rukundo, RWB's DG.

As a result of the training, RWB and Rwanda Polytechnic signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) regarding the establishment of a substantive collaboration to build knowledge, skills and capacity within the water sector.

[More photos of the one-week 'Summer School' held in July 2022.](#)

RUBAVU RESIDENTS AT EASE AS SEBEYA RIVER FLOODS ALLEVIATED



Flood retaining walls have been constructed along the Sebeya river in Kanama and Nyundo Sectors, Rubavu District | Image: Remy Niyingize

24th January 2023: Combating the Sebeya river floods that used to wash away people's properties and claim lives in Kanama and Nyundo Sectors in Rubavu District has been one of the achievements of the Embedding Integrated Water Resources Management Programme in Rwanda (EWRM) - Sebeya Landscape Restoration Pilot Project (SLRPP) since 2019.

In order to prevent these floods from overflowing during the rainy season, mitigation and protection structures were built along the Sebeya river in Kanama and Nyundo Sectors. These include Sebeya lateral dyke, Sebeya retention dam, Gisunyu-Karambo retaining wall,

and Bukeri diversion channel.

According to Espérance Mukarukundo, a resident of Nyundo Sector, flood control infrastructures have significantly reduced the havoc caused by the river's floods.

"Floods have long destroyed our properties and killed people. Today, we are grateful to the Sebeya project for completely saving our lives, as we can now go about our daily activities in our places safely thanks to flood control infrastructures. We're relaxed." Mukarukundo witnesses.



The newly constructed Sebeya lateral dyke in Nyundo Sector | Image: Remy Niyingize

Beneficiaries of the Sebeya project had the opportunity to share their testimonies about how the project improved their livelihoods during a media tour organized by the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) from 17th to 19th January 2022 in Nyabihu, Rubavu, and Rutsiro Districts.

The tour was also joined by the Director General of the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB), Dr. Emmanuel Rukundo, and the Programme Manager of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in Rwanda as well as the Vice_Mayor in charge Socio-Economic Development of Rubavu District, Deogratias Nzabonimpa on on 18th January 2023 in Rubavu.

The journalists who took part visited the flood mitigation infrastructures, soil erosion control activities, and other supporting measures such as the Girinka Programme and rainwater harvesting initiatives.

Speaking to the media shortly after visiting the ongoing construction works of the Sebeya retention dam in Kanama Sector of Rubavu District, Dr. Emmanuel Rukundo announced that the flooding problems caused by the Sebeya river have almost been solved.

"The flood control infrastructures have almost solved the flooding issue, and residents are now safe. However, we still have a few activities left to do, such as planting trees and expanding terraces where they are not yet available," Dr. Rukundo explained.

Deogratias Nzabonimpa, the Vice Mayor for Socio-Economic Development in Rubavu District, added that these initiatives are very critical for the country.



Bukeri diversion channel in Kanama Sector | Image: Remy Niyingize

"The district already has a maintenance plan for the implemented activities to avoid any possible damages. Local authorities will continue to maintain the Sebeya river while also relocating citizens living in life-threatening zones," Nzabonimpa stated.



Construction of the Sebeya retention dam is currently underway | Photo: Remy Niyingize

Furthermore, Albert Schenk, the IUCN Rwanda Programme Manager, observes the positive impacts that this project has brought to the community and the results are excellent, and thus its expansion to other parts of Rwanda could be more impactful in improving the quality of life.

The Embedding Integrated Water Resources Management Programme in Rwanda (EWRM) – Sebeya Landscape Restoration Pilot Project (SLRPP) spans Nyabihu, Rubavu, Rutsiro and Ngororero District in Western Province.

With the funds from the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in Kigali, this project is implemented by the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) in partnership with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN), Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) and Rwanda Rural Rehabilitation Initiative (RWARRI).

[Find more photos of the Sebeya Project](#) | [Also click here to see the media tour's photos](#)

HOW RADICAL TERRACES BOOST FOOD SECURITY IN WESTERN PROVINCE

Butera Musafiri is overjoyed that the Sebeya project has created terraces on his three-hectare farmland | Image: Remy Niyingize



21st March 2023: After almost an hour's ride from Rubavu town to Bigogwe sector, I chanced on green pastures and radical terraces in this mountainous region of Nyabihu district.

The region, once a death zone due to high erosion and landslides that claimed the lives of many people, has green hills especially in Arusha Cell. Many things have changed in the recent past, as residents testified.

Around Arusha, everyone seems busy; people are loading sacks of potatoes getting the yield ready to be transported to Kigali or other secondary cities.

Trucks coming in and later transporting milk are also seen.

People in Western Province, one of Rwanda's mountainous regions, testify to having changed livelihood and got a lot of benefits from radical

terraces established in their farmlands.

Musafiri Butera and Innocent Bimenyimana are one of the residents of Bigogwe Sector who have been farmers for over 20 years. They are good tour guides in their home region too.

Their homeland was once part of Gishwati forest.

"I and many other people at first did not welcome this terracing initiative. We tried to reject it seeing our land becoming very small. I'm one of the people who were against terraces," said Butera who owns two hectares on which he grows irish potatoes and grass for his cows.



Terraces created in Bigogwe Sector, Nyabihu District | Image: Remy Niyingize

"The land is now protected and production has increased almost three times," he added, with a grin.

According to farmers in the region, it's estimated that one terraced hectare now produces at least 20 to 30 tons of irish potatoes, up from eight to 10 tonnes prior to the terracing programs under the Embedding Integrated Water Resources Management in Rwanda-Sebeya Landscape Restoration Pilot Project.

It's the same story for residents of Rutsiro and Rubavu districts who also claim to be benefiting from radical terracing as one the ways for ending food insecurity

as well as getting ample fodder for their cows.

According to the Mayor of Nyabihu District, Antoinette Mukandayisenga, about 141 hectares of land was terraced under the Embedded Integration Water Resources Management in Rwanda-Sebeya Project

She said radical terraces improved the livelihood of the population.

Food production tripled, she noted, thanks to the Sebeya project.

"Landslides used to wash away our fertile soil and lives of people were claimed as a result of heavy rain and farmers would be discouraged. Radical terracing and progressive terraces have addressed such problems," she said



Terraces created in Nyabirasi Sector, Rutsiro District | Image: Remy Niyingize

Official data from Nyabihu district indicate that potato production increased from 8-12 to 18-24 tons per hectare. Terracing has been a solution to many regions in Western Province with both radical and progressive terraces used to end landslides.

According to an official report, around 18,000 hectares of land are still threatened by soil erosion in Nyabihu, Rubavu and Rutsiro districts. Presently, over 1,500 hectares are restored for radical terraces and 836 hectares for progressive terraces.

MEDIA TOUR: BENEFICIARIES EXPRESS GRATITUDE TOWARDS THE SEBEYA PROJECT FOR TRANSFORMING THEIR LIVELIHOODS



Journalists in Nyabihu District interact with project beneficiaries | Image: Remy Niyingize

19th January 2023: Beneficiaries of the Embedding Integrated Water Resources Management in Rwanda (EWMR) – Sebeya Landscape Restoration Pilot Project (SLRPP) expressed their gratitude for various activities that have been implemented over a four-year period to transform their livelihoods.

This was through the project’s media tour , which was curated by the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and took place from 17th to 19th January 2023 in Nyabihu, Rubavu, and Rutsiro Districts.

It was a critical moment for the beneficiaries to pay heed to their testimonies about the changes brought about by their respective regions.

The goal of the EWMR – SLP Project is “to improve catchment management, contributing to increased resilience of communities and landscapes to the impacts of climate change

and other drivers”.

Central to the project is the Participatory Community Approach (PCA) that empowers local communities to identify, prioritize, and co-implement landscape restoration and integrated water resources management interventions through the development of Village Land Use Action Plans (VLUAPs).

BENEFICIARIES SPEAK OUT

Musafiri Butera, a farmer and one of the beneficiaries of the project from Bigogwe Sector in Nyabihu District, is overjoyed that terraces have been created on his farmland and have proven to be beneficial.

“ My family and I are grateful to the Sebeya project for constructing terraces in our three-hectare farmland. The landscape restoration initiatives have extremely helped us prevent soil erosion and increase our agricultural yields.”

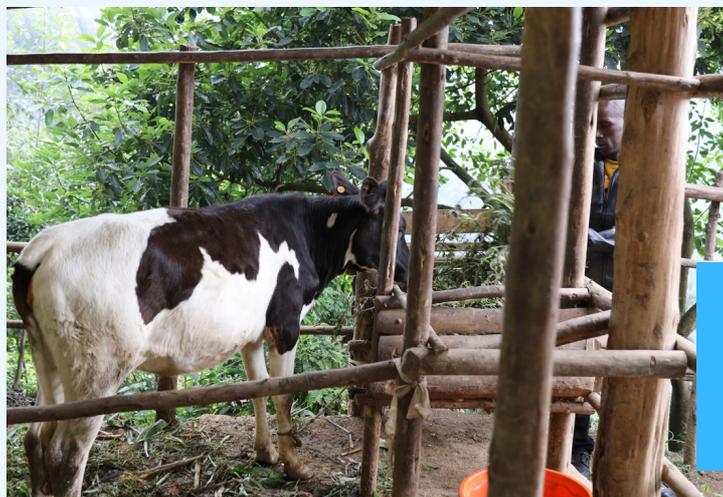
" The Sebeya project has thoroughly saved our lives. Now, we can safely run our daily activities in Kanama and Nyundo Sectors thanks to flood control infrastructures that have been built to protect us from Sebeya river floods, which used to destroy a number of properties and claim lives of people," Mukarukundo testifies.

Félicien Twagirayezu from Nyabirasi Sector in Rutsiro District has shared how the Girinka program is not only a source of milk, but also a significant aid in combating soil erosion for his family.

" Aside from milk, the cow provided to my family through the Girinka Program assisted us in obtaining manure to fertilized our soil. This has also been a huge help in combating soil erosion, which used to economically affect us. Furthermore, the quality of our crops has improved." he says.

PROJECT'S ACHIEVEMENTS

Since 2019, the EWMR – SLRPP in the Sebeya catchment at Rubavu, Rutsiro, Nyabihu and Ngororero districts implemented various activities such as flood mitigation structures, terraces, afforestation, agroforestry, as well as supporting measures including cows, small livestock, rainwater harvesting, cooking stoves to households and schools,



kitchen gardens and Community Environment Conservation Fund (CECF) through Village Saving and Loan Associations, among others as detailed below:

1. Degraded land restoring activities:

- Radical terraces on 1,559.73 hectares
- Progressive terraces on 836.37 hectares
- Trenches in forests on 2,818.13 hectares
- Afforestation on 215.68 hectares
- Agroforestry on 730.90 hectares

2. Flood-curbing infrastructures in Kanama and Nyundo Sectors, in Rubavu District to protect local citizens against Sebeya river floods:

- Sebeya lateral dyke
- Bukeri diversion channel
- Flood retention walls
- Ongoing Sebeya retention dam

3. Supporting measures among residents:

- 860 cows to the households through the Girinka Program
- 621 Rainwater Harvesting (RWH) tanks to households
- 35 RWH tanks to schools
- 2,182 small livestock
- 154 kitchen gardens
- 3,249 Improved Cooking Stoves (ICS)
- 12 ICS to Schools
- 331 Village Saving and Loans Associations (VSLAs) established, with over 6,000 members of which 58% were women

Find more photos of the Sebeya Project | Also click here to see the media tour's photos

The Girinka program is part of the Sebeya Project, which provides farmers with soil fertilizers as well as milk | Image: Remy Niyingize

RWB AND IUCN PARTNER TOWARDS ADDRESSING WATER QUALITY MONITORING

RWB's DG Dr. Emmanuel Rukundo joined water monitoring experts during practical training | Image: Remy Niyingize



5th January 2022: The water monitoring experts from the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) were trained on the use of water quality monitoring equipment from 28th to 30th December 2022.

RWB acquired this equipment through the Technical Assistance (TA) offered by the International Union for Nature Conservation (IUCN) to the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Programme supported by the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

“This will help RWB to perform field measurements for different water pollution parameters such as physical-chemical indicators, heavy metals, and priority substances biological parameters for both surface and groundwater” explained Remy Norbert Duhuze, RWB’s Water Monitoring and Quality Control Division Manager.

BACKGROUND

In different areas of Rwanda, the water quality deteriorates due to different causes like urbanization, agriculture, mining, as well as



Experts keeping an eye on the learning session | Image: Remy Niyingize



The trainer with the water monitoring equipment | Image: Remy Niyingize

as well as non-point source pollution.

This has been an important issue for the country to improve the monitoring system both for the quantitative management of limited water sources and qualitative management such as water pollution prevention.

Hence, the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) will carry out the water quality monitoring campaign that will facilitate to elaborate the Annual Status Report that will be availed to the public through Rwanda Water Portal.

This campaign will also result into overcoming the

challenges related the water quality monitoring issues.

With to aim to improve the country's water quality, the water quality monitoring system needs to be strengthened through regular water quality monitoring in identified sampling sites.

RWB has initially collaborated with IUCN to seek the service provider to collect and analyse water samples from 50 sampling sites spread on Rwandan water bodies selected in relation to the existing water quality monitoring network and national water resources management master plan.

[Click here to view the training photos](#)

RWB HANDS OVER MUHAZI CATCHMENT RESTORATION ACTIVITIES TO RWAMAGANA DISTRICT



The handover ceremony was attended RWB's team led by the Deputy Director General, Evariste Nsabimana, and the District's team led by the Mayor, Radjab Mbonyumuvunyi | Image: Remy Niyingize

4th January 2023: In line with restoring Muhazi catchment, the Rwanda Water Water Resources Board (RWB) through the Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) Programme implemented the project titled 'Muhazi Catchment Restoration, Batch 1, 2 and 3' in Fumbwe and Musha sectors in Rwamagana District in Eastern Province.

This project's activities lasted from December

2019 to June 2022. They include afforestation, rehabilitation of progressive terraces and agroforestry, gully protection, tree planting along the roads, Rusine river's bufferzone protection, check dams, among other things.

On Wednesday, December 28, 2022, RWB handed over those activities to Rwamagana District during a ceremony attended RWB's team

by the Deputy Director General, Evariste Nsabimana, and the District's team led by the Mayor, Radjab Mbonyumuvunyi.

“The district will always commit to ensuring the protection of all executed restoration activities as they will benefit our local citizens’ sustainable development in various ways,” Mayor Radjaab Nshimyumukiza.

According to the RWB's Deputy Director General, Evariste Nsabimana, the project contributed to the effective management of water resources while also equitably improving livelihoods in the district's Nyabugogo catchment and Muhazi sub-catchment.

Muhazi Catchment Restoration is part of the Integrated Water Resources Management Programme (IWRM) implemented by the Government of Rwanda, and funded by the Kingdom of the Netherlands.

The IWRM Investment Fund (IIF) aims to facilitate the Government of Rwanda investments in structural and non-structural projects for the management of water resources, which are linked to the identified projects in the Four Demonstration Catchment Areas (DCAs).

ALL MEDIA STORIES IN JANUARY

- Sebeya River no longer threat to community - Water board (The New Times, 28 January 2023) [Read more](#)
- IUCN Rwanda Program Manager speaks on the impacts of Sebeya project and the future of the Sebeya Catchment (Top Africa News, 26 January 2023) [Read more](#)
- Rwanda-Projet Sebeya: Les désastres maîtrisés (Le Canape on 24 Janvier 2023): [Read more](#)
- Ibiza byabaye amateka: Akanyamuneza ku basenyewaga n'umugezi wa Sebeya (Igihe kuwa 21 Mutarama 2023) [Soma inkuru](#)
- How radical terraces boost food security in Western Province (The New Times, 21 March 2023) [Read more](#)
- Nyuma yo gutunganya icyogogo cya Sebeya, abahaturiye barahamya ko nta myuzure ikiharangwa (Isango radio TV kuwa 20 Mutarama 2023) [Soma inkuru](#)
- Sebeya Project Beneficiaries call for the Project Extension to eradicate soil erosion and poverty (Top Africa News, 20 January 2023) [Read more](#)
- Abagenerwabikorwa b'Umushinga wa Sebeya barishimira iterambere umaze kubagezaho (RTV kuwa 20 Mutarama 2023) [Umva inkuru](#)
- Officials Say Sebeya River Flooding Problem Is Almost Solved (Top Africa News, 19 January 2023) [Read more](#)
- Sebeya Project's economic and social Impacts after 4 years (Top Africa News on 18 January 2023) [Read more](#)
- Contribution to Rwanda's Development Agenda: Space Technology & Water Resources Management Nexus (Rwanda TV on 11 January 2023): [Listen to the conversation](#)

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