

Sebeya Project - Embedding Water Resources Management in Rwanda (EWRM)

Background

Sebeya Catchment is shared between Rubavu, Rutsiro, Nyabihu and Ngororero districts. It has an area of 336 km² and is facing social and environmental challenges as it has some of the steepest slopes, highest mountains and a population density exceeding the national average at 400 people/km². The Sebeya Catchment Plan found that around 18,000 hectares are threatened by soil erosion.

These problems are exacerbated by climate change, unsustainable agricultural practices, inappropriate mining practices, limited economic opportunities and access to finance, alternative sources of livelihoods and access to the markets. This leaves communities heavily dependent on subsistence farming, which results in land degradation and loss of fertility. Sebeya Catchment is characterised by floods in Rubavu District and river siltation, which has negative impacts on water supply and energy production downstream.

To address these critical issues, The Rwanda Water Resources Board is implementing the *Landscape Restoration and Integrated Water Resources management in Sebeya and other Catchments*' project with the following components:

- Restore degraded lands in Sebeya and other catchments by radical and progressive terraces, agroforestry, afforestation, gullies rehabilitation and river bank protection among other interventions. The project will also implement flood control measures.
- Develop innovative financing mechanisms and value chains for improved livelihoods through ecological and economic benefits.
- Scale up catchment and micro catchment plans to Sebeya and other catchments including Nyabarongo, Nyabugogo and Muvumba.
- Implement knowledge management systems for landscape restoration and integrated water resources management.

This project is being implemented through a participatory community-based approach in three sub-catchments:

- Karambo: Kanama Sector (Rubavu District) and Nyabirasi Sector (Rutsiro District)
- Sebeya Upstream (Rutsiro, Rubavu and Ngororero districts)
- Sebeya Downstream (Rubavu and Nyabihu districts)

Activities Implemented this Fiscal Year

- Radical terraces: 260 ha
- Progressive terraces: 150 ha
- Trenches: 800 ha
- River bank protection: 184 km
- Afforestation: 50 ha
- Agroforestry: 320 ha
- Roadside tree: 7 km
- Gabion walls to mitigate Sebeya floods

2020/21 Planned Activities

- Landscape restoration activities
- Construction of lateral dams to store excess flood water
- Supportive measures for households that include the provision of rainwater tanks, cows, fruit trees, small animals and kitchen gardens

This project is being implemented by the community and landowners by using Village Land Use Action Plan (VLUAP) whereby the community sits together to identify issues related to soil erosion and propose actions that can be implemented to control.