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# TOPAFRICANEWS GREEN MAGAZINE for Rwanda

**Issue No 2**

**July, 2021**

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Dear reader of TOPAFRICA NEWS Green Magazine,

We are pleased to present you this green magazine which is regularly prepared by a group of TOPAFRICANEWS journalists who work on a day-to-day basis to provide you with accurate information in the field of the environmental sector in Rwanda.

We launched this magazine in early 2021 but the COVID 19 epidemic hit us so hard that we immediately stopped producing it.

By launching his magazine, we aim for three things:



**Mr. DUSABEMUNGU Ange de la Victoire, MD**

The first is to continue to help Rwandans and friends of Rwanda to know the information and activities that the country and its partners are doing in the field of the environmental sector.

The second goal is to be a catalyst for change in the production of a quality and focused Magazine that reports accurate information from this sector. Our third goal is to generate income that will continue to enable us to achieve our goals as a media.

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## Climate Leaders' Summit:

# Minister Mujawamariya shared Rwanda's Efforts in Climate Change and Resilience



**Rwanda's Minister of Environment Dr. Mujawamariya Jeanne d'Arc** shared Rwanda's efforts in climate change adaptation and resilience.

In April, 2021 President Joe Biden of the United States convened the virtual Leaders' Summit on Climate to ensure close coordination on addressing the climate crisis with key players in the international community at the highest levels of government. During the summit various leaders from across the globe delivered their countries commitment to join the fight to address problems that the world continues to inherit from the Climate Change.

While she was addressing participants virtually, Rwanda's Minister of Environment Dr. Mujawamariya Jeanne d'Arc reminded that "On Christmas Day in 2019, Rwanda experienced a

terrible rain storm. The heavy rain flooded roads, destroyed bridges, and demolished houses and crops. Tragically, 12 people lost their lives. " She added that "Just two weeks earlier, the government had made the difficult but necessary decision to relocate people living in wetlands, especially in the capital city, Kigali."

"What happened on Christmas Day could have been much worse without the government's decisive action. Hundreds of lives were saved." She said.

Minister Mujawamariya revealed that the challenge Rwanda now faces is building resilient livelihoods for those citizens, while also rehabilitating ecosystems. "That's why we created the Rwanda Green Fund – a financing vehicle and catalyst for green investments that respond to the country's needs." She added

The fund has mobilised approximately 200 million dollars, created 140,000 green jobs and protected and rehabilitated 30,000 hectares of watersheds and water bodies.

According to other statistics, the Government leadership and the fund's investments have inspired more than 40 green villages country-wide. Also Minister Mujawamariya noted that the introduction of electric motorbikes and new ecotourism sites, among others will contribute to the health of people, environment and the economy.

She concluded her remarks adding that "We are far too interconnected and interdependent to ignore the climate crisis we face – both as individual nations and as an international community."

## Rwanda aims to have 20% of all buses transition to electric by 2030

Rwanda aims to have 20% of all buses transition to Electric by 2030, TOPAFRICANEWS has learnt from reliable source. The Government of Rwanda has announced a prioritization of the transition to e-mobility for all vehicle types.

In order to encourage the private sector to introduce different models of electric vehicles, the Rwanda Development Board initiated several incentives including a preferential corporate income tax rate of 15%, reduced electricity tariff at the industrial level, and in some cases, rent free land available for the installation of charging infrastructure. The estimated cost of

transitioning to e-mobility and the adoption of electric vehicles in Rwanda is 900 million USD. However, transitioning to electric motorcycles alone would save the Rwandan economy 23 billion RWF (22 million USD) in fuel imports per year.

According to Michelle De Freese, Senior Green Growth Officer, GGGI Rwanda “The Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) Rwanda Country Programme has been providing support to the Government of Rwanda to introduce electric buses – first

within the City of Kigali, and eventually to other urban centers in the country.”

CO2 emissions from road transport account for 13% of the total emissions in Rwanda and are expected to continue to rise. Although buses comprise only 15% of the total vehicles in Rwanda, they constitute approximately 40% of the total emissions from the transport sector.

The average age of buses in Rwanda is 9 years resulting in lower fuel efficiency (9.2 L/100Km) and higher emissions (220 gCO2/km).



Michelle De Freese, Senior Green Growth Officer, GGGI Rwanda

“In addition, the import of used buses and minibuses has resulted in an increase in various forms of air pollution, especially particulate matter which contributes to non-communicable diseases. As a result, vehicular traffic is now the main source of air pollution in cities in Rwanda.” Michelle De Freese says in a statement sent to TOPAFRICANEWS.

As a result of these measures, Rwanda aims to have 20% of all buses transition to electric by 2030, which will result in



an estimated reduction of 72,000 tCO2eq.

To enable the introduction of electric buses in the City of Kigali, GGGI conducted an assessment of electric bus charging infrastructure. The assessment was carried out in collaboration with the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Rwanda

Utilities Regulatory Authority (RURA), and the Rwanda Energy Group (REG) with data on operations and maintenance

provided by Kigali Bus Services (KBS). The report includes recommendations on charging infrastructure types, vehicle models, and charging locations. The report also provides a comparison of the total cost of ownership (TCO) of installing and operating electric buses compared to diesel buses.

As part of the technical assistance being provided to support the adoption of e-buses, GGGI supported 13

Government of Rwanda officials to complete training in electric bus system modeling and optimization. The course equipped trainees with lectures, software to run simulations, and the theory to model energy use scenarios based on disruptions.

The training included modules on network planning, charging strategies, battery lifecycle estimations, total cost of ownership analysis, and route-specific energy demands for different bus and charging types.

The course software (EVOPT) also allows for an analysis of route energy requirements using different bus models and battery sizes. For transport operators licensed the City of Kigali, this type of

analysis is especially important given the steep, hilly topography dominating the majority of the city. The next phase of the project will be to mobilize the resources and green investment necessary to enable the transition to electric buses first in the City of Kigali, and eventually in other parts of the country.

The project will also facilitate a Training of Trainers to introduce the electric bus system and optimization modeling software to the private sector through the technical staff within the bus models and battery sizes. For transport operators licensed within the City of Kigali,

The aim of the training will be to increase technical capacity beyond the government officials to fleet operators that will be able to model the energy and cost requirements to make data-driven, evidence-based decisions on the acquirement of different bus models, battery types, and investment in associated charging infrastructure.

The project aims to facilitate the transition to electric buses through a combination of technical assistance; capacity building; outreach and awareness; and resource mobilization to support both the Government of Rwanda and the private sector to introduce electric buses in Rwanda.

## China stands firm to implement the Kigali Amendment-Official



China Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian

China Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Zhao Lijian has announced during a regular Press Conference on June 22, 2021 that China will continue to earnestly implement the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol and advance global climate and environmental governance.

Mr. Zhao was responding to a CCTV journalist who was asking for more information on China's acceptance of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. Mr. Zhao says "The Kigali Amendment was adopted in October 2016 in Kigali, Rwanda, which decides to phase down hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) under the Montreal Protocol, thus opening a new chapter in the history of the coordinated response to ozone layer depletion and climate change."

He adds that "China has always taken an active and constructive part in the global ozone layer governance and the Montreal Protocol process, and played an important role in the conclusion of the Kigali Amendment."

He explains that China has taken concrete steps to implement the Montreal Protocol and eliminated over 280,000 tons of ozone-depleting substances, accounting for more than half of the total amount eliminated by developing countries. "China has also cracked down on illegal production and fulfilled its obligations under the Protocol. China will continue to earnestly implement the Protocol and advance global climate and environmental governance." Mr. Zhao confirmed this during the Press conference.

In April this year, President Xi Jinping made the solemn pledge that China decided to accept the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer. On 17 June 2021, the Permanent Mission of China to the United Nations deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations the instrument of acceptance of the Kigali Amendment to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer.

In accordance with relevant provisions, the amendment will come into force for China on September 15, 2021.

# Rwanda's NDCs achievable despite huge amount needed, Officials from MoE and IUCN confirm



*Rwanda was the first African country to submit a tougher climate target to the UN promising to cut emissions at least by 16% in 2030 with the use of 11 billion dollars in regards to the implementation.*

Rwanda's Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) are achievable despite \$ 11 billion needed to cut down emissions by at least 16% by 2030. This was revealed last week during a TV session aired on Rwanda Television specifically in the Programme called "The Square".

NDCs are national climate plans highlighting climate actions, including climate related targets, policies and measures governments aim to implement in response to climate change and as a contribution to global climate action. Central to the NDCs is the concept of national determination.

Rwanda was the first African country to submit a tougher climate target to the UN promising to cut emissions at least by 16% in 2030 with the use of 11 billion dollars in regards to the implementation.

Speaking on how feasible it is, Mr. Marshall Banamwana, Biodiversity

Management Specialist at the Ministry of Environment said "As you know \$ 11 billion is a huge amount, it is an ambitious goal and it is over the next 10 years, but if I can put it into two parts: There is part which we call unconditional contribution which looks at the domestic and mobilization from the country towards what the country will do for the next 10 years. It is almost half of that amount. If we, do it as planned it will reduce up to 16% of emissions within the 38% which Rwanda enters to reduce for the next 10 years, "

"And we have another part which we call a conditional contribution which looks at the international financing contribution and that one takes up to 20% out of 38 %. So, as you mentioned it is an ambitious goal which looks at various sectors namely agriculture, transport, waste

management, forestry, land management, water and there are a number of which break down in the short-term, long-term and the near future." Mr. Banamwana added

"So, as you know the NDC was submitted last year, and upon submission the resource mobilisation starts immediately and we have now, through Ministry and all implementing agencies, what we call resources mobilisation strategy and we also have other activities which will help us even to track and monitor, of course, the mobilisation and the implementation of activities that are planned in the NDCs." He said

IUCN as a partner implementer of Rwanda's NDC finds it to be an ambitious target that Rwanda will achieve jointly

with partners. Charles Karangwa, IUCN's Country Representative said "we are an ambitious country and we are witnesses of what is possible, the last 25 years what we achieved no one could believe we can achieve and therefore I strongly believe that setting the bar higher makes us that ambitious and it's feasible."

*"We can achieve our NDCs and personally from my experience and the work I do today, I have no doubt that we can cut our emissions by 16% by 2030 and even become a net zero carbon by 2050."*



Charles Karangwa,  
IUCN's Country Representative

"Of course, it takes a joint effort, there is domestic financing which is important. I just want to quote the recent report published by the UN Environment programme which highlighted that "if the entire globe wants to actually achieve the target of the Paris agreement, we need to triple the investment in climate reduction activities, most specifically in nature-based solutions. And I guess it is the same for Rwanda from domestic finance, but I want just to highlight also that apart from domestic finance there are also where other international development partners are coming and that is also part of our role as IUCN in Rwanda to support the Government of Rwanda to mobilise resources mostly focusing on conditional part both for adaptation and mitigation." Mr. Karangwa explained

Rwanda's Nationally Determined Contribution is built on data-driven analyses of the main contributors to the country's greenhouse gas

emissions.

The Government of Rwanda is committed to taking urgent action to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

In order to fully implement the mitigation and adaptation measures contained in this NDC, Rwanda will require finance, capacity building and technology transfer.

The total estimated cost for Rwanda's identified NDC mitigation measures through 2030 is estimated at around 5.7 billion USD, and over 5.3 billion USD for adaptation priorities, representing a combined funding requirement of around 11 billion USD.

For both mitigation and adaptation combined, unconditional measures account for around 40% of the total estimated funding requirements, and conditional measures around 60%.

## AFR100: Mrs. Zoubeda justifies why young people should be given an active role in Forests restoration programs



Zoubeda Uwase, is an Environmental Activist, data analyst and advocate for sustainable youth in agriculture

By Justin Kayiranga

Zoubeda Faïda Uwase, a young girl from Rwanda has clearly explained to participants at the fifth African Forest Landscape Restoration Meeting why African youth should be given opportunity to play an active role in afforestation and other environmental conservation programs that are being implanted with the African continent or in the countries in which they live.

Zoubeda Uwase, is an Environmental Activist, data analyst and advocate for sustainable youth in agriculture. She practices conservation farming and is the founder and CEO of Inkindi Modern farmers, a youth-led business that grows and supplies tree nurseries for sustainable land restoration, environmental

rehabilitation and greening programs.

Speaking at the meeting which takes place in Kigali from 25th to 28th May 2021, Mrs. Zoubeda said “As young people we really need to take part and be involved in the implementation just to achieve sustainable development goals.”

“We are the young people that can play a role in the protection of Environment.” Assured the participants among them the Minister of Environment in Rwanda as well as officials from the African Union Development Agency, development partners, head of environmental agencies among others.

She reminded that Young people constitute a large part of the world’s population and young people will have to live longer with the consequences of the current environmental decisions than were their elders.

She explained how Forest Landscape Restoration connects with agriculture adding that “250 million hectares of farmland is degraded in Africa costing the continent \$ 6 billion per year.”

“Restoring Landscape means economic opportunity not only benefits the nation but also promotes social economic conditions, improves the livelihood and the wellbeing of the people.” Mrs. Zoubeda noted

She continues by emphasizing that “Youth in Africa must be equipped with the knowledge, skills and investment to develop innovative solutions that combat hunger and poverty.

We need to implement some areas of intervention, enhancing food security by working with the youth, we must have the young engagement to promote local coops and serve efficiently at household

level, protecting and conserving the environment through the promotion of reforestation and planting fruit trees.”

“As the moderator has said, I am the co-founder of the Save environment Initiative. After seeing the challenges that we had, I mobilized my colleagues to do our part and pray a role in protecting the environment and we started from Tree Nurseries that will combat with the environment and fight the climate change while improving the food security where we discussed about that at the national level that we need to introduce the nursery trees at the sector level.” Explains Zoubeda

She reminded that Youth in Environment protection not only creates direct impacts on changing the youth behavior and attitudes but also possibly influences their parents and relatives to take also their part for the healthier Environment and green spaces in Africa.

“Youth are the backbone of the Nation, they can change future society because in Agriculture we have more opportunities and the challenges but also it is where we can do Agri-ecology, climate smart agriculture to have our country, Africa in general to improve the food security and be a continent with a zero hunger.” She noted





**Mamadou Moussa Diakhite, Team leader of AUDA-NEPAD and Executive Secretary of the AFR100 Secretariat**

Rwanda has set to restore 2 million and have made progress hoping in 2023 will be restoring one and half million hectares with the youth involvement.

From various messages delivered at the AFR100 conference in Kigali, Speakers focused mainly on the importance of Forests in tackling the effects of climate change.

It was also pointed out that the problem of deforestation continues to be felt in various countries and therefore measures should be

taken to achieve the goal of restoring 100 million hectares of forests.

The conference which discussed forests in Africa and their role in tackling climate change, might be the first international event held in Rwanda since the COVID19 epidemic.

During this conference, the Minister of Environment of Rwanda also called on the participants to keep in their thoughts the people of Goma and Rubavu Residents who continue to be affected by the

effects of the eruption of Nyiragongo Volcano.

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## **WED: Meet Charles Karangwa of IUCN to learn more about Forest Landscape Restoration Program for Rwanda and the region**



**Charles Karangwa, an experienced environmentalist who has dedicated his life to nature conserva-**

The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN Rwanda) has joined Rwanda and the rest of the World to celebrate World Environment Day (WED) on June 5, under the theme “Ecosystem Restoration”.

IUCN is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its more than 1,400 Member organisations and the input of more than 18,000 experts. This diversity and vast expertise makes IUCN the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.

The fact that IUCN has large network makes possible for it to have presence in many countries globally where it focuses on biodiversity, climate change, ecosystem management, water

conservation, forest landscape restoration among many others.

In Eastern and Southern Africa regional, IUCN has presence in more than 21 countries which include Rwanda hosting the Forest Landscapes and Livelihood programme (FLL).

In 2011, Rwanda joined “the Bonn Challenge”, a global effort to bring 150 million hectares of the world’s deforested and degraded land into restoration by 2020 and 350 million hectares by 2030. As part of this initiative, Rwanda pledged to achieve a countrywide reversal of natural resources degradation with 2 million hectares to be restored by year 2030.

According to policy brief FLR investment Rwanda, achieving the forest landscape restoration will generate an estimated US\$

628 million per year in net benefits from watershed protection, improved crop yields and forest products, and will sequester up to 0.19 gigatons of carbon dioxide equivalent annually.

A study conducted by Ministry of Environment in collaboration with the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and the World Resources Institute (WRI) on forest landscape restoration opportunity assessment in Rwanda concluded that at least 1.5 million ha are available for new restoration initiatives across the country through a number of activities ranging from agroforestry and silviculture to the establishment of protective forests on steep ridgetops and riparian/wetlands buffer zones as well as restoration of degraded areas within Protected Areas (PAs) and their buffer zones

In an effort to understand more about forest landscape restoration (FLR) TOPAFRICANEWS spoke

to Charles Karangwa, an experienced environmentalist who has dedicated his life to nature conservation.

International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN, as Regional Lead – Forests, Landscapes and Livelihoods Programme, but also as Country Representative for IUCN in Rwanda

Charles Karangwa works for the



**Successful restoration generates a wide range of benefits—not only forest quantity but also enhancing food security, improved air and water quality, climate change resilience, job creations**

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Charles Karangwa works for the International Union for Conservation of Nature, IUCN, as Regional Lead – Forests, Landscapes and Livelihoods Programme, but also as Country Representative for IUCN in

Rwanda

### **What do we mean when we say “Forests and Landscape restoration”?**

Forest landscape restoration is the continuing process of regaining ecological functionality as well as enhancing human well-being across deforested or degraded forest landscapes. It is not about planting the trees. It is restoring all the functionalities and the ecosystem services that nature could provide, such as carbon sequestration, biodiversity, water quality and other ecological systems.

### **Rwanda is one of the countries that are proud of their investments in caring and protecting the environment, especially in afforestation. Are Rwanda’s programs in the FLR helpful to the IUCN when preparing similar projects in other countries? How?**

Of course! We are learning from what we are doing. The programs in Rwanda inform programs in other countries. That’s why actually we are part of this bigger

program, for example we are scaling up from learning from what we have been doing in Rwanda to build the program in Malawi, Madagascar, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Uganda, in Tanzania and all is building on exactly what has been done in Rwanda.

**Africa is one of the most vulnerable areas where deforestation and misuse of land is an issue of concern, how does the IUCN, as an organization with experience in this sector, help countries better understand the strategies to deal with such an issue mentioned above? Can you give us some examples where applied?**

Of course! IUCN does not teach countries because countries know probably better than IUCN. But what we are doing is supporting countries by providing our technical support and as you should know landscape restoration requires some technical underpinning conditions, understanding the biophysical conditions, understanding the ecological conditions, understanding the biodiversity within the landscapes and of course understanding the social economic factors that influence land degradation.

So, one thing IUCN is doing in different countries supporting for example, after a country has made a commitment, let's say in Zambia just made a commitment of restoring 2 million hectares, what we do is supporting Zambia to do a detailed studies to understand what does the two million hectares mean, where is that land, what type of restoration is needed, so that's all technical packaging.

Then the second, once you know that, you help the country to mobilise resources. We are very much invested in mobilising financial resources to implement the landscape restoration. And then finally, we are doing quite a lot of monitoring of landscape restoration activities.

We have developed the tools together with other partners through the initiative called "Restoration Barometer" that helps countries to actually track progress of their commitments. And of course we also deploy quite technical advisory services to countries to be able to implement their commitments.

**When you look at the efforts that IUCN is putting into Forests and Landscape**

**Restoration programs, especially in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region, how much of that effort? Can we sit and say this is enough?**

It is never enough, it will never be enough, the demand is always huge than the supply especially when it comes to landscape restoration. So, What IUCN is doing is of course to prioritise, we always learn what we call prioritisation matrix depending on where the needs are most. But I think the other thing we need to do is to call for other technical partners as well to support countries where IUCN is not present.

**What is your comment about the recent IUCN Report, which focused on the role of conflicts in nature and environment destruction?**

Yeah of course, I think conflicts play a very big role in environmental degradation and damage, we have too many examples in the region when you hear all the conflicts that happen in the protected areas, they damage nature. They are all related to issues around poaching, there are always issues related to illegal mining, and conflicts actually accelerate natural resources degradation.

**What is your message as world marks world Environment Day 2021?**

As the world marks World Environment Day, let us join our efforts in restoring our landscapes, along with other vulnerable natural resources, but also recognizing the role of local communities. They know much about lands and nature by extension. We should listen to them, plan with them and assist them technically in implementing forest landscape restoration activities.

(Interview was conducted by Justin Kayiranga, Prepared and edited by Ange de la Victoire DUSABEMUNGU)

# The Kigali Green City project has not been halted-Minister Mujawamariya



Rwanda's Minister of Environment Dr. Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya

## By DUSABEMUNGU Ange de la Victoire

Some residents of Kinyinya Hill where Green City Kigali will be built, as previously told, have started to speculate that the project will not take place with some of them citing the fact that there are new individual houses that are being constructed in the Green City's demarcated area and that makes them think the project has been halted or shifted to somewhere else.

However, Rwanda's Minister of Environment Dr. Jeanne d'Arc Mujawamariya has, on Friday, 28th May 2021, told TOPAFRICANEWS reporter that the Kigali Green City project has not stopped adding that practical activities on the site are about to begin.

Minister Mujawamariya said "The Green City Kigali project has not

stopped, and construction works are about to begin."

"There were some technical problems but I think everything is now in the right direction, the detailed design has been done, today they are working on a master plan that will show how the city will look like." She explains

"Green City Kigali project didn't stop and there will be other Green Cities projects in other parts of the country." Minister Mujawamariya emphasised while also mentioning that funding to kick-start construction activities is available.

According to previous information, the first phase of Kigali Green City will occupy 18 hectares of the plot formerly

owned by Rwanda Social Security Board. In total, the whole project of Kigali Green City will occupy 600 hectares on Kinyinya Hill.

In the first phase, at least 1,749 housing units on 18 hectares will be constructed in the next five years at an estimated cost of \$103.8million (Rwf97.7billion) out of the \$1.5 billion needed in the whole first phase.

It is expected that 10% of the houses in Kigali Green City will be distributed free of charge to families ranked in category 1 and 2 of Ubudehe. (Category 1: Families who do not own a house and can hardly afford basic needs. Category 2: Those who have a dwelling of their own or are able to rent one but rarely get full time jobs.)

# Environment Club seeks to extend conservation campaign to local communities in Gikomero

By Ange de la Victoire  
DUSABEMUNGU

As the world continues to encounter the effects of climate change, some residents of the Gikomero sector in Gasabo District confirm that they themselves feel the consequences and therefore play a significant role in tackling the crisis.

Uwizeyimana Pierre, in charge of feeding livestock at Don Bosco Muhazi Center said “When we talk about climate change, we as responsible of feeding livestock understand it very well. There are times when we expect rain to fall in March and fall back in February and that’s how we start to experience consequences. The grass dries up and we are unable to feed livestock, and again people plant crops and find it dry which leads to the decline of yields.”

Kabukuru Deogratias works as a farmer in Gikomero Sector. He says that at the moment, in addition to the effects of climate change in different ways, the population growth continues to be a leading cause to the damaging environment.

He said the population increase results in land use pressure.

“For example, a parent owned one hectare of land and probably had four children. Now four children have grown up needing to divide the land. Since the divided land is not enough for farming, people start to overuse it. Once upon a time we used to use our land in a manner that favors crop rotation system. Now it is not possible because of the fact that the small



portion we have cannot be spared for crop rotation. We always cultivate the same land without pause and that leads to the loss of soil originality which diminishes yields” Kabukuru added.

“First and foremost, people need to be educated on how to use land wisely and to be guided on how to conserve it,” he said.

Climate change issues are one of the world’s biggest concerns due to the continuing impact on human health and the environment.

Chantal Musabyimana is a member of the Don Bosco Muhazi Environmental Protection Club.

On her side, she explains, “When we look at our families for instance, personally I see that the crop harvest has reduced compared to the past when they were easily getting organic fertilizers. To fertilize the land enough, they could put in manure but because the weather has changed, they can’t get that fertilizer easily.”

Not only that, Musabyimana cites the example of the past saying that

“Rwandans used to grow crops that were beneficial to other organisms, yet due to the toxicity of the soil or the chemicals used, there are other organisms that are dying from the effects of chemicals used in modern agriculture.”

She added “Some decades ago, in many places of Rwanda they used to cultivate coffee plantations. And through the plantations bees came to find honey from coffee flowers, but because of the use of pesticides sprayed on coffee trees to fight diseases for example, bees die instantly because the place where they extracted the honey is not natural.”

Ndahayo Jean Cluade, Head of the environmental club at Don Bosco Technical and Vocational Education Training Center Muhazi which is located in Gikomero Sector confirms that as a Club they have the ability to tackle the effects of climate change through conservation of environment.

“We have been in the club for two years and we are doing a variety of activities including protecting the



Ndahayo Jean Cluade,  
Head of the environmental club  
at Don Bosco Technical and Vocational  
Education Training Center Muhazi

trees in the center, planting new trees, removing the waste that can damage Lake Muhazi, campaigning and advocating for the environment and so on,” he said.

He added that “as club members if we have the means we can start a nursery trees from which we can get trees and distributes them to local communities on Gikomero hill. Of course fruits trees are most favorable here and in that case we can fight hunger and malnutrition among the people here.”

## Gicumbi: Radical terraces saved farmers from erosion-related losses



Rwankunda Celestin, one of the farmers, says they used to cultivate with manure but during the rainy season it takes it because of the steep soil

**By Justin Kayiranga**

One of the key components of the Green Gicumbi project is to help the people to promote watershed protection and climate resilient agriculture by helping farmers get radical terraces especially for those who cultivate in high slope areas.

Mukarange sector of Gicumbi district, is one of those areas where

terraces have been set up on a surface of 50 hectares.

Farmers who were using this area before the project, say that these terraces helped them to improve their agriculture activities and saved them from the losses they encountered due to soil erosion that was affecting their farmlands.

Rwankunda Celestin, one of the

farmers, says they used to cultivate with manure but during the rainy season it takes it because of the steep soil but later after getting the terraces they now cultivate and get a satisfactory yield.

He said: “We used to cultivate and apply fertilizers but because of the steep slope, when it was raining, whether it is the fertilizer or whatever we planted, the erosion



Farmers says terraces will improve the productivity per hectare

had to wash them away. We could not harvest anything.”

“But since we got these terraces we no longer face any loss or soil erosion.”

Not only Celestin who sees a positive impact of these terraces, but also Uwahoro Angelique, another farmer from Mukarange sector, said that with the use of terraces, she is expecting a double of the produce

“Before cultivating on terraces, I didn’t get a produce of more than 300 Kilograms per hectare but now I see that I will harvest at least 600 Kgs per hectare.” Angelique stated.

In order to help these farmers to make profitable farming, the Green Gicumbi project is currently building a drying site and a warehouse where these farmers will store their harvest.

Emile Nsengumuremyi who is in charge of Muvumba catchment management in the project explained that: Apart from improving their

food security, we also want to expose them on the market. So the warehouse will serve in storing their yield so that they will not have difficulties getting the seeds for the next planting season and it will also enable them to cope with market rates as their produce will be stored in a good place”

The 50ha terraces are part of project’s achievements in just 18 months since its launch where more than 800ha of terraces have been established in different areas of Gicumbi district.

## **GREEN GICUMBI: More than 400Ha of forests restored in 18 months after Green Project Launch**

According to figures released by Rwanda Green Fund (FONERWA), which is also responsible for implementing the project, it shows that after 18 months since the project was launched, much has been achieved including radical terraces established on 400 ha, progressive terraces established on 410 ha, 17,320 green jobs created, 400 ha of degraded forests rehabilitated and 140 forest owners trained among many other achievements...

Rwiri village in Byumba sector, is one of the places where forests are being rehabilitated. Citizens in this village, especially those who had old forests, were trained and voluntarily agreed to partner with the Green Gicumbi project in the restoration.

Kagenza Jean Marie Vianney, the project coordinator, told Top Africa News that, due to these reforms, they are expecting a 5 times increase of m<sup>3</sup> of forest harvest in a few years.



A farmer in Gicumbi District cutting bad herbs from forest area



Ndayambaje Felix, the Mayor of Gicumbi district, commends the positive impact brought by this project not only in environment protection but also in social welfare of Gicumbi residents as some of them are getting employed through the project.

He said “We are expecting around 150 thousand of residents to benefit from this project and by now within 18 months since the kick off of the project, more than 18 thousand of residents (at least 1000 residents per month) have already benefited from this project and their lives are changing day by day”

He said: “Often the people used to harvest their forests prematurely and it resulted in low harvests.”

“At the beginning of the project, we found that they could harvest between 30m<sup>3</sup> and 50m<sup>3</sup> per hectare, but now with these forests that have been planted, they will get at least 150m<sup>3</sup> per hectare.”

Some residents, who have agreed to release their forests to be rehabilitated, say that the project is making a huge difference to their lives as after being trained, they have been given jobs to take care of their forests and getting paid.

Habanabakize Francois is one of these beneficiaries, in his testimony, he says that on the hill where these forests are being rehabilitated, they were struggling to grow trees due to the fact that there has been soil erosion that caused landslides.

But after the starting of the project, they were taught how to



Kagenza Jean Marie Vianney, the project coordinator

trace channel flooding and nowadays their trees are growing faster. “Before, erosion had caused severe damages, and we were unable to grow trees here as the water which was flowing from the city center, came and destroyed them. But through Green Gicumbi, they traced these drainage channels and now we no longer suffer from soil erosion.” Says Habanabakize.

This project, strengthening climate resilience of rural communities in Northern Rwanda, mainly focuses on reducing vulnerability to climate change by enhancing the adaptive capacity of the targeted groups in the project intervention area as well as reducing their exposure to climate risks.

Once it is implemented and achieved, this could add to Rwanda’s Bonn Challenge commitment to restore 2 million ha of degraded forests and landscape.

## Rwanda opens Tree Seed Centres to boost supply of high-quality seeds



The Project was funded by the Nordic Development Fund through the World Bank, and is being implemented by REMA, RFA and Rubavu, Rutsiro, Nyabihu and Ngororero districts

New tree seed centres launch in Gatsibo and Huye districts.

Forest conservation and agroforestry to benefit from higher quality seeds  
Tree seed centres build on Rwanda's reforestation efforts, with forests now covering 30.4% of the country.

The Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) and the Rwanda Forestry Authority (RFA) have today launched two Tree Seed Centres in Gatsibo and Huye districts to increase the availability of high-quality seeds.

The centres have been developed through the Improving Efficiency and Sustainability of Charcoal and Woodfuel Value Chains Project, which is funded by the Nordic Development Fund through the World Bank, and is being implemented by REMA, RFA and Rubavu, Rutsiro, Nyabihu and Ngororero districts.

This unique collaboration is

promoting improved woodlot management, efficient charcoal production, alternative energy and, importantly, improved seed quality.

The Tree Seed Centres are a one-stop-shop for tree seed supply activities, such as establishing new seed sources, tree improvement, genetic conservation, as well as seed collection, processing and distribution.

The centres will build on Rwanda's reforestation successes, which have resulted in the country achieving its goal of 30% forest coverage by 2020. Today, Rwanda has 30.4% forest coverage – equivalent to 724,695 hectares – and is also undertaking border-to-border landscape restoration under the Bonn Challenge.

“Although we have achieved this goal, we still need to increase forest cover to mitigate the

impacts of climate change, promote healthy soils and rivers, and protect communities from landslides. To do so, we need high-quality seeds and the new tree seed centres we are launching today are a big part of the solution,” said Juliet Kabera, Director General, Rwanda Environment Management Authority.

The Tree Seed Centres will provide diverse, high-quality tree reproductive materials that are adapted to the country's different agro-ecological regions. The aim is to enhance the economic and ecological functioning of forest and agroforestry plantations and increase forest cover and productivity.

“Forestry will continue to occupy an important strategic position in Rwanda, as a major contributor to livelihoods, a provider of critical ecosystem services and a driver of national socio-economic development,” said Jean Pierre Mugabo, Director General, Rwanda

Forestry Authority.

“The new tree seed centres will support Rwanda to increase forest coverage and improve the quality of our forests, a win-win for people and biodiversity,” Mugabo added.

World Bank Country Manager in Rwanda, Rolande Pryce, was impressed by the project outcomes to date and pledged ongoing partnership for Rwanda’s restoration and conservation efforts.

“The World Bank is a long-term partner in this venture. The LAFREC and NDF projects are essentially two relatively small grants, but we have been able to make a significant amount of progress and have really substantial outcomes. In my view, it creates a platform for other things that we can do together,” she said.

The Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Environment, Patrick Karera, said that the construction and rehabilitation of both Tree Seed Centres is part of Rwanda’s National Strategy for Transformation, which prioritises the good management of natural resources.

“Whatever we are doing is to make sure that we avail the seeds for our citizens and uplift our community and go higher with all the ambitions that we have. We appreciate the World Bank’s support for facilitating this NDF Project, and we look forward to continuous collaboration,” he said.

About the Improving Efficiency and Sustainability of Charcoal and Woodfuel Value Chains Project:

The Improving Efficiency and Sustainability of Charcoal and



Woodfuel Value Chains Project is a three-year initiative implemented by the Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) with the support of the Nordic Development Fund through the World Bank. REMA implements the project in collaboration with the Rwanda Forestry Authority and Rutsiro, Rubavu, Nyabihu and Ngororero districts.

The project aims to improve the efficiency and sustainability of woodfuel value chains in the north west of Rwanda through improved woodlot management and seed quality, efficient charcoal production and the promotion of alternative energy sources.

The initiative has supported the creation of a Cookstove Testing Laboratory at the Rwanda Standards Board through a US \$370,000 investment. The lab provides testing and certification for locally manufactured cookstoves, calculates emissions and offers other services related to renewable energy testing.

To date, the project has achieved the following results:

Maintenance of rehabilitated seed stands on 60.4 hectares at 17 sites countrywide.

Established a 14 hectare tree seed stand in Karongi District (Gakuta).

Established a new 8 hectare seed stand in Nyagatare District (Kirebe).

Established cloning hedges on 0.5 hectare at the Arboretum in Huye District.

More than 600 cooperative members from 19 cooperatives have been trained on efficient charcoal production and biomass processing and provided with equipment for green charcoal making. A charcoal traceability system to trace charcoal movement from woodlots to the end user has been developed and can be accessed at [f2dprojects.com](https://f2dprojects.com)



Ministry of Environment



GREEN CLIMATE FUND



# 400 ha

Radical terraces established

# 370 ha

Progressive terraces established

# 40

Variable Speed Drives installed at Mulindi Tea Factory to reduce the energy use

# 6,700

Cookstoves with a high standard distributed to Beneficiaries

Visit our page [www.fonerwa.org/greengicumbi/](http://www.fonerwa.org/greengicumbi/) to read more. Supported by the Green Climate Fund (GCF)

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