

Building on Community interventions to adapt to climate change in Rwanda

Rwanda, among other East African countries, faces growing challenges of climate change impacts which are characterized by rainfall variability, landslides, drought, and floods in the region for the last decades with negative consequences on crop production and livelihoods in the rural communities.

Most of the communities do not know how to cope with the changes in climates due to lack of knowledge or understanding of the rain pattern changes which affected negatively the livelihood.

Nile Basin Discourse Forum in Rwanda carried out a six months project (September 2009 to March 2010) in order to enhance **Building capacity and raising awareness for a sensitive community to climate change adaptation and mitigation in Rwanda**. The purpose of the project was to “build capacity of local Civil society Organizations on climate change adaptation and provide adequate information by producing and disseminating awareness materials on climate change adaptation”.

Project Outcomes

RNDF disseminated printed climate change awareness materials and documents on best practices of climate change adaptation and vulnerability reduction in the community through CSOs. These materials included mainly, newsletters, brochures, posters, documentary on TVR, talkshows in three radio stations. RNDF also conducted workshops and organized meetings with stakeholders in which 46 CSOs and 37 Journalists were trained. A film was shared in all the provincial workshops, twice on TVR where REMA DG, PS of Ministry of Environment and Lands as well as various interviewees from different sectors shared a lot of information.

A strategic planning was organized in all the 5 provinces (North, South, East, West and Kigali City) and 200 people participated in the meeting

The main achievements of this project included;

- The adoption of the community action plan on adapting to climate change by the representatives of the villages in the 5 targeted provinces of Rwanda.
- A comprehensive report on best practices to climate change adaptation and mitigation for grassroot communities was produced and approved by the stakeholders. The community has

currently prioritized erosion control and basin management which have a positive impact on crop production, water resources management and environmental health in most affected areas such as Northern, Eastern and Western Provinces.



Lessons learnt

During this project, it was recognized that:

- The community were applying the best practices are already but not conceptualized as climate change project strategies
 - The lack of knowledge and information on climate change is generalized among most practioners
- The level of consultation with all active stakeholders in planning was low; especially local administrative authorities, CBOs, NGOs, academic institutions, grassroot communities, etc
 - The time provided for the trainings and workshops was short and funds allocated were small to enable NBD to measure effectively the outcomes and outputs.