



**Executive Summary of the  
Mid-Term Review of FAO-GEF Project**

**FAO Project ID - GCP /BDI/037/LDF  
GEF Project ID - 8010**

**Natural Landscapes Rehabilitation and Climate Change  
Adaptation in the Region of Mumirwa in Bujumbura and  
Mayor of Bujumbura through a Farmer Field School  
Approach**

**Final Report**

**MTR conducted on 3 August 2022**

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

**Bujumbura BURUNDI – DECEMBER 2022**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

<b>Project's title:</b>	<b>Natural landscapes rehabilitation and Climate Change Adaptation in the provinces of Bujumbura and the Mayor of Bujumbura through a Farmer Field School Approach</b>		
<b>Project's symbol:</b>	GCP/BDI/037/LDF		
<b>Agency project's ID :</b>	631094	GEF project ID	8010
<b>Mid-Term Review Deliverables:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Deliverable 1: Inception report</li> <li>- Deliverable 2: Initial findings and conclusions</li> <li>- Deliverable 3: Draft report</li> <li>- Deliverable 4: Final report</li> </ul>		
<b>Recipient Country:</b>	Burundi		
<b>Region :</b>	Africa		
<b>GEF Focal area:</b>	Climate Change Adaptation		
<b>Development objective:</b>	To improve the resilience of agro-sylvo-pastoralist communities, and in particular of the population of Bujumbura and Bujumbura Mayor, to the effects of climate variability and climate change.		
<b>Expected results:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outcome 1.1: Strengthened capacity to implement climate change adaptation priorities of the PNCC and the SNPACC at communal, provincial and national level.</li> <li>• Outcome 2.1: Improved resilience of agro-ecosystems and populations through enhanced capacity to implement CCA/CSA</li> <li>• Outcome 2.2: Climate risks are mitigated through decision support tools and sustainable landscape management</li> <li>• Outcome 3.1: Communities deploy a diversified set of resilient livelihood strategies in the project areas</li> <li>• Outcome 4.1: Project implementation based on results-based management and application of project lessons learned in future operations facilitated</li> </ul>		
<b>Implementing Agency :</b>	FAO		

<b>Executing Partners :</b>	- Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock (DGA, DGE, DGMVA, BPEAE Bujumbura, IGEBU, OBPE & ISABU)
<b>Evaluation team members:</b>	- Drissa SOULAMA, International Consultant, Team Leader - Adrien NITUNZE, National Consultant, Team Member
<b>Acknowledgements :</b>	The Mid-term Review team thanks FAO Burundi and other executing partners Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock (DGA, DGE, DGMVAE, BPEAE Bujumbura, IGEBU, OBPE & ISABU) at central and regional levels for having set conducive conditions for the mid-term evaluation team's work. Our thanks also go to regional authorities and other stakeholders for hosting us in the course of the process. We would like to thank all the partners and the project's beneficiaries who participated in various interviews.

## ii.1. Project timelines

<b>Project title</b>	<b>Natural landscapes rehabilitation and adaptation to Climate Change in the provinces of Bujumbura and in the Mayor of Bujumbura through a Farmer Field School Approach</b>			
<b>Basic Project Data</b>		<b>Timelines</b>		
<b>Agency's project ID :</b>	631094	Approval of Concept note	April 20, 2017	
<b>Region :</b>	Africa	Project approval	August 15, 2018	
<b>Country :</b>	Burundi	Effective date of implementation	Expected EOD	01-01-2019
			Effective EOD	18-12-2019
<b>GEF Focal area:</b>	Climate Change Adaptation	Inception workshop date	December 18, 2019	
GEF-6 Climate Change Adaptation Strategy Strategic Objectives (LDCF/SCCF projects):	CCA 1: Reduce the vulnerability of people through livelihoods, physical resources and natural systems that are resilient to the adverse effects of climate change  CCA 2: Build institutional and technical capacities for an effective adaptation to climate change	Government-FAO agreement	May 2, 2019	
		Staff recruitment dates	Coordinator	13-12-2019
			FFS Expert	01-04-2020
				01-03-2021
CV Expert	01-10-2020			
M&E Expert				

<b>Implementing Agency :</b>	FAO	Mid-term review date	From July 15 to September 15, 2022
<b>Executing partners participating to the project's management :</b>	- Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock (DGA, DGE, DGMVA, BPEAE Bujumbura, IGEBU, OBPE & ISABU)	Project Expected NTE :	31-12-2022
<b>Project funding</b>			
<b>GEF LDCF Grant Amount</b>	<b>5,877,397</b>		
<b>Co-financing Partner</b>	<b>Planned co-financing</b>	<b>Materialized at MTR (USD)</b>	
MINEAGRIE	7,265,141		
PNSADR-IM	6,166,859	-	
PRDAIGL	4,068,000	-	
<b>Total Co-financing</b>	<b>17,500,000</b>	-	

### **i.1. Introduction**

Based on the technical experience of several other projects funded by the GEF and IFAD, and thanks to GEF LDC funding - in collaboration with the Government of Burundi - FAO has formulated the Project "Rehabilitation of Natural Landscapes and adaptation to Climate Change in the provinces of Bujumbura and the Mayor of Bujumbura through a Farmers' Field School Approach". The Global Environment Facility (GEF) LDC funds the project with a Grant amount of USD 5,877,397 and an expected co-funding amounting to USD 17,500,000. With an initial 48 month-period of implementation, the Project is executed by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations in Burundi (UN/FAO) in partnership with the Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock (MINEAGRIE). The Project's area of intervention includes 15 hills belonging to 4 communes of the Bujumbura province (Kabezi, Kanyosha, Mutambu and Nyabiraba), and 3 communes of Bujumbura Mayorship (Muha, Mukaza and Ntahangwa).

The project's development objective is to improve the resilience of agro-sylvo-pastoralist communities, and in particular of the population of Bujumbura and Bujumbura Mayor, to the effects of climate variability and climate change.

The project's overall objective is to address the root causes of landscape degradation consecutive to climate change and unsustainable land use through the rehabilitation of degraded lands and adaptation of integrated agricultural management systems and natural resources to climate change in the provinces of Bujumbura and Bujumbura Mayor. The 4

components of project are: (i) Strengthening institutional and technical capacity for mainstreaming climate change adaptation into policies, strategies and plans (ii) Enhancing climate-resilience of agro-ecosystems, (iii) Improving the livelihoods of communities by Boosting and diversifying rural value chains and (iv) Project monitoring and dissemination of its results.

## **i.2. Main Findings**

According to review and analysis it carried out, The Mid-term Review found that the implementing partner and executing partners have made multiple efforts to align the project's interventions with expected results.

After a delayed project launching due to late recruitment of project teams, the beginning of the project's implementation had slowed down by the COVID 19 pandemic. It is only halfway through that the project begins the full operation phase, which is very critical for carrying out the activities and delivering the expected results. **Notwithstanding these difficulties, it is expected that most of the project's results could be delivered with an eighteen months extension.**

### **Finding 1. Relevance**

The project design was grounded on several previous achievements of the cooperation between the National Counterpart, FAO and GEF. Selected activities are part of FAO and its partners' long experience, developed with GEF support. The project occupies an excellent niche (i) for having consolidated the achievements of past climate change adaptation initiatives keyed from the FFS approach; (ii) synergy and complementarity with ongoing related initiatives for which innovative approaches developed by the project (such as the ecosystem-based approach, the integrated natural resource management approach and the agro-biodiversity approach) constitute an added value.

Nevertheless, the project's theory of change was too ambitious in setting boundaries to the targets of expected changes: 300 FFS are too many to operationalize for a 4-year project. Hence, there is a need to reconsider this target, lower figure. A total of 150 operationalized FFS are already very reasonable given the innovative approaches set to support communities and producers' organizations.

### **Finding 2. Effectiveness**

**Farmer Field Schools have emerged at the level of the two provinces (Component 2; Result 2.1; Output 2.1.2; Output 2.1.3):**

- 300 FFS groups already created and distributed in two sets of 150 FFS each and operating in 15 hills (10 FFS/hill) ;

- Three agricultural seasons already covered by the FFS: season A (September 2021-January 2022), season B (February-June 2022) and season C (July-August 2022) for vegetable farming;
- 4 supervisors and 75 facilitators of FFS groups trained and equipped in techniques and practices for adaptation to climate change and in integrated natural resources management;
- 30 FFS groups from the Bujumbura Mayor were trained on techniques of bean and vegetable seed production, either on the spot and/or around crops. They are provided with inputs/seeds and various supplies (10,750 kg of bio fortified bean seeds and 65 kg of vegetable seeds);
- Many trainings were organized for FFS group members at the grassroots level on technical topics and adaptation to climate change: at least one training session per week, per FFS and per facilitator in order to sharpen skills on best farming practices.

**Strategies for the development and strengthening of identified value chains and mapping of stakeholders in the maize, bean and cassava value chains has been established (Component 3.; Result 3.1; Output 3.1.1)**

- A conceptual model for the structuring of the sectors has been established: pre-cooperatives counting 10 FFS, each having a 3 member-Board (Chair, Secretary and Treasurer), a General Assembly, an Executive committee of 6- person Executive Committee and a three-person Monitoring committee. Both bodies have a renewable three-year term in office.
- Twenty-four (24) pilot activities were identified in a participatory way at the rate of 6 activities per municipality (storage sheds, mill-processing units, fungiculture, beekeeping, restocking of pig herds and improved wood saving cooking stoves).
- 14,575 kg of quality maize seeds were distributed to beneficiaries in the provinces of Bujumbura and Bujumbura Mayor during agricultural Seasons 2021 A and 2022 A. 20,000 kg of bean seeds were distributed in the Season 2022 B and 315 kg of vegetable seeds were also distributed in the agricultural season 2022 C, to boost value chains through production improvement and diversification.

**The knowledge based on natural resources management has been boosted to build capacity for implementing the CCA priorities of the PNCC and SNPACC at the local, regional and national levels (Component 1, Result 1.1 Output 1.1)**

- Mapping of land use and land allocation changes in the province of Bujumbura carried out through the use of an integrated landscape approach (the Collect Earth tool and SAIKU analysis) ;
- Rehabilitation of 2,389 ha of degraded landscapes including 2,107 ha of smallholders and 282 ha of communal woodlots and 102 km of riverbanks.

**A performance measurement framework defining roles, responsibilities, indicators and frequency of data compilation for assessment of project's performance is initiated (Component 4. Result 4.1, Output 4.1.1)**

- A M&E matrix has been drafted and is to be finalized, the ToR have been prepared to carry out the CPLCC study;
- Sessions of the Steering Committee are regularly held, to particularly assess the project's progress reports (PPR and PIR).

**Finding 3. Efficiency**

At less than six months from the end of the project (time when the MTR was launched), the level of physical project implementation was barely 25% and the level of expense and budgetary commitment barely reached 32%. The challenge is related to the time for mobilization of the project's management staff: establishment of the team has been delayed of more than two years.

The responsiveness of the formulation chain, the processing and approval of procurement requests and contracting project's services is lacking: the process for recruiting international consultants for training on ACC and FFS continues for already 2 years.

**Finding 4. Factors Affecting Performance**

The Project management unit has not been reinforced in accordance with the positions provided in the project document (Value Chains Expert in October 2020, FFS Expert in April 2021 (just for 3 months and 17 days), the full-time FFS Expert started activity on September 1, 2022. Until then, the positions of Monitoring & Evaluation Expert and Administrative and Financial Manager are not filled. Delayed recruitment of national staff and not yet provided staff positions at mid-term followed the COVID 19 pandemic and its related control measures, which have made the procedures more complex and prolonged the timeframes for recruiting international experts. Partnership agreements or service contracts are slow to materialize at the levels provided for in the project document. The support expected from FAO (BH, LTO and FLO) and the Government of Burundi was not significant with regards to above mentioned factors and the shortcomings noticed at the level of the project's management team. Basic monitoring and evaluation tools and mechanisms have partially been activated. All of these internal and external constraints have slowed down the project's implementation. The recovery plan drawn up with the participation of the supervision team in Rome is a good dynamics of the partners and the project team in that direction.

In terms of stakeholder involvement, grassroots stakeholders considered as second-rate partners must further be taken into account. Levers of their involvement must imperatively be activated (contracts with the BPEAE, agreement with UNIPROBA taking the Batwa community into consideration, organization and regular holding of Local Dialogue Frameworks involving grassroots communities).

### **Findings 5. Cross-cutting priorities, environmental and social safeguards (ESS)**

The project targeted vulnerable groups (women, young people) through activities and approaches targeting gender balance and equity. Gender equality is best addressed, particularly: (i) through a monitoring and evaluation matrix or 1/5 of the 35 output and outcome indicators listed, i.e. seven (7) are gender sensitive; (ii) but also in the implementation whereby the level of involvement of women, particularly for FFS activities, is estimated at 40%, whereas the target was 30%. On the contrary, mainstreaming the indigenous Batwa community, taken as a marginalized socio-ethnic group in the country and on the project sites, has not been applied despite the FPIC through UNIPROBA, which allowed their participation in the launching workshop.

Through the innovative approaches promoted (AESA, ABE, GIRN, Agro biodiversity), the level of knowledge or appropriation by FFS representatives under the impetus of the project is estimated at 25%, it appears that the project has a highly developed environmental and integrated move hinging around the FFS approach.

### **Findings 6: Sustainability**

The innovations offered to producers are laid out in the AESA approach, operationalization of which follows a logic of participatory experiment and learning. Furthermore, the institutional anchoring provided by the project is a guarantee for sustainability and reaching achievements. With MINEAGRIE's strong overall supervision, the project is well integrated into the Government's mechanisms for planning and implementing FFS and climate change approaches. In addition, the entities participating in the CDP from the representatives playing the role of the project's coordinating agent in their respective organizations. CLDs represent a good logic for anchoring the project at the grassroots level through local coordination centers.

### **ii.4. Conclusion**

At this stage, assessing quantitative results would darken the significant measures taken to catch up the delay. In addition, the measures taken by the various stakeholders with regard to their responsibilities inspire an effective progress, showing potential successful areas. Thus, referring to monitoring reports, and observations from discussions with stakeholders, implementation has been initiated at each project component's level.

### **Conclusion 1: The Relevance of the project is Highly Satisfactory (HS)**

The project is perfectly aligned to national priorities and national issues of climate change adaptation, it is, in this respect, coherent and relevant. The GCP/BDI/037/LDF project identification was complete and exhaustive. The activities included in the project always remain relevant, and their implementation is inclusive as it bringing together direct beneficiaries (through the FFS approach) and Governmental institutions (through the Steering Committee and the municipal and provincial administration).



### **Conclusion 2: The Effectiveness is not satisfactory (U)**

The project's implementation shows a very low rate of activity delivery (28-30%). This situation is explained by the fact that the launching of the project had delayed of nearly two years; this was worsened by COVID 19 pandemic and related control measures. The project team's resilience capacity was not on the level of curbing challenges. With regards to the series of constraints for implementation of the project, the coordination would have drawn inspiration from the experience of a similar ongoing project, the GCP/BDI/040/GFF, also being implemented by FAO.

### **Conclusion 3: Efficiency during implementation is critical and not satisfactory (U):**

Less than 42% of effective budgetary contributions was used in the course of the first three years of the project implementation. 58% of the budget must be used for the remaining time allocated for implementation (less than six months). Over the same remaining period, 55% of already started project's activities will have to be completed, knowing that 33% of the activities have even not yet started. The levers for expediting the procurement process and the management of purchase orders for a set of materials have to be found in the quality of purchase requests formulated by the project's coordination.

### **Conclusion 4. Factors affecting performance (MS):**

Mobilization of the project implementation teams resulted in delayed recruitment of national staff with staff positions, which, certainly, were provided during the mid-term review but faced instability. This situation is justified by unexpected departures and cases of illness among national project staff members. In addition, the COVID 19 pandemic and the related control have undermined the procedures and prolonged the recruitment schedules for international experts. Partnership agreements or service contracts delay to be concretized at the levels provided in the project document; contracts with OBPE, ISABU, UNIPROBA must be drawn up. Institutional communication skills need to be sharpened to address the need for stakeholder engagement.

The levels of supply requests approval at FAO Burundi and FAO Headquarters in Rome are facing administrative blockades at the origin immeasurable delays in the acquisition of inputs and other materials needed for the project's activities. However, a deep problem lies in the quality of supply requests of time-related dimension.

### **Conclusion 5: Cross-cutting priorities, environmental and social safeguards (ESS) have been satisfactorily taken into account in the project (S):**

The project offers good environmental and social (ESS) guarantees with regard to the prevalence of environmental technologies transferred or in the process of being adopted under supervision of the project; it is estimated at an average of 25%. Women have a level of representativeness estimated at 40% in FFS activities. The mid-term review team encourages the project's partners to continue in this direction.

## Conclusion 6: Project sustainability is Moderately Likely (ML)

The socio-economic appropriation, particularly on FFS sites level, has on the one hand, been well prepared owing to involvement of the grassroots populations. On the other hand, the partnerships and procedures contracted with the MINEAGRIE in line with the initial engagements in the project document have not yet been activated; this will constitute a burden for institutional sustainability.

### I.3. Recommendations

In light of observed results, it is important to plan for the rest of the project:

- **An 18-month extension to allow the project deliver most of expected services as well as their capitalization and retrocession to the partners of results appropriation.**
- **This extension requires executing partners to work upstream on the recommendations listed in the table below.**

Rec n	Recommendation	Responsible
	<b>Relevance and strategic importance</b>	
A1	Adopt a more detailed formulation of the results of the logical framework by referring to the proposal made in the annex C of the MTR Report.	PCU, PTF, PSC
A2	Reinforce activation and valuing of tools for demonstrating evidence on the project's achievements (Procurement plan, Dashboards, Review of the implementation process, etc.)	PCU with the support of PTF and PSC
A3	Boost the involvement of women in the project activities in the commune of Ntakangwa.	PCU with PTF support
A5	Schedule a training of producers for safe use of pesticides as an alternative measure and as part of a project activity	PCU with the support of PTF
	<b>Effectiveness</b>	
B1	Ensure mobilization of the necessary supplementary technical and managerial skills and capacities (M&E and full-time administrative assistant) to improve the effectiveness of the project's implementation.	FAOBI
B2	Expedite recruitment of additional staff (Consultants and Support Experts) for technical and financial implementation of ongoing activities and those not yet initiated in terms of the time spent on the	FAO BI

	project.	
	<b>Efficiency</b>	
C1	Improve the performance of the formulation, scheduling and procurement approval chain to implement planned tasks on time	PCU, FAOBI, PTF
	<b>Factors affecting performance</b>	
D1	Empower the steering committee for the mobilization of planned co-financing and due mainly by the Government of Burundi through MINEAGRIE projects	FAOBI & MINEAGRIE
D2	Speed up the contracting and execution of planned project services and boosting the monitoring of pending contracts and agreements with executing partners (OBPE, ISABU, etc.) and grassroots organization (UNIPROBA)	PCU, MINEAGRIE & FAOBI
D3	Complete the process of recruiting a technical assistant to support the project's coordination.	FAOBI
D4	Ensure that the project personnel has adequate skills, in line with the project implementation needs, through project staff performance monitoring tools that guide management's decisions to re-orient or dismiss staff.	FAOBI
D5	Facilitate and lead a sustained managerial synergy between the team of experts of the GCP/BDI/037/LDF project and those of experts of the GCP/BDI/040/GFF project which recorded similar challenges	FAOBI, UC FEM FAO
	<b>Measures to extend the project objectives and/or scaling up their results</b>	
E1	Extend the project NTE for a period of 18 months	FAO-GEF CU

## ii.6. MTR Rating Grid

<b>1 Monitoring &amp; Evaluation</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>2. GEF Agency (FAOBI)</b>	<b>Rating</b>
Design of monitoring and evaluation at entry point	3(S)	Quality of implementation	2(S)

Implementation of monitoring and evaluation plan	2(MS)	Quality of implementation of implementation agency	2(S)
Overall quality of monitoring and evaluation	2(MS)	Overall quality of activity implementation	2(S)
<b>3 Evaluation of results</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>4 Sustainability<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>Rating</b>
Relevance	4(HS)	Financial resources	2(ML)
Effectiveness	1(U)	Socio politics	2(ML)
Efficiency	1(U)	Institutional framework and governance	2(ML)
Overall rating of the project's achievement	2(MS)	Environmental	4(L)
		Overall probability of sustainability:	2(ML)

GEF Rating Scale: (HS): Highly Satisfactory; (S): Satisfactory (MS): Moderately Satisfactory; Moderately Unsatisfactory (MU); (U): Unsatisfactory; (HU) Highly Unsatisfactory.

GEF Rating Scale for Sustainability: Likely (L); Moderately likely (ML); Moderately unlikely (MU); Unlikely (U); Unable to assess (UA)

Grading scale: 4 Highly satisfactory 3 Satisfactory 2 Moderately Satisfactory 1 Unsatisfactory.

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<sup>1</sup> At mid-term review, the conditions for a real sustainability analysis were not met. Nevertheless, annotations have been proposed on the basis of the summary findings