

## Transboundary Agro-Ecosystems Management Project for the Kagera River Basin

The Kagera Transboundary Agro-ecosystem management project is a regional project comprising four East African countries - Burundi, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda - that share the Kagera river basin.

The agro-ecosystems in the Kagera basin are facing increasing pressure as a result of rapid population growth and agricultural and livestock intensification characterized by progressive reduction in farm sizes and unsustainable land use and management practices.

The global objective of the project is to adopt an integrated ecosystems approach for the management of land resources in the Kagera Basin that will generate local, national and global benefits including: restoration of degraded lands, carbon sequestration and climate change adaptation, agrobiodiversity conservation and sustainable use, protection of international waters and improved agricultural production, leading to increased food security and improved rural livelihoods.

## KAGERA TAMP – NEWS FROM THE BASIN

### Editorial

Dear Reader,

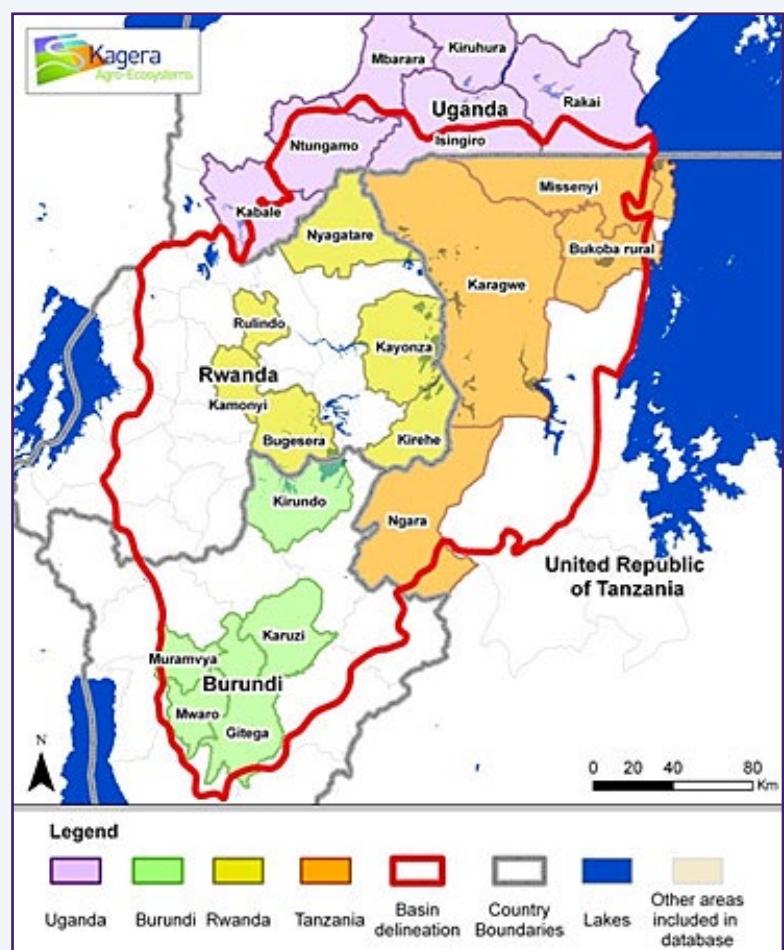
We are pleased to present the second edition of the KAGERA TAMP newsletter to inform you of the good progress the project has made in its second year of life to implement Sustainable land management (SLM) on the ground and establish effective transboundary and regional collaboration among partner countries. The project team has been fully engaged in developing the intervention strategy with partners.

The first Regional Workshop and PSC meeting (Kigali, March 2011), provided recommendations on institutional and policy issues and partnership, including transboundary/regional collaboration. In August 2011, a regional technical workshop in Kabale, Uganda, attended by national partners from the 4 countries, also by CARE-Kenya and INBAR, China, contributed to developing a coherent strategy for improved land planning for sustainable land resources and agro-ecosystems management at farm, community, sub-watershed and district levels with a view to generating a range of benefits in terms of local livelihoods and global environmental benefits. Key issues were: How to ensure multi-sector and stakeholder approaches; How to improve land tenure security; and How to ensure value addition for the range of land users/producers - subsistence and commercial farmers, herders, foresters and fishers - through PES (water, carbon, biodiversity) and better organization of producers.

We welcome feedback from our esteemed readers and look forward to continued partnership with service providers and stakeholders for the next stage of Kagera TAMP implementation

to demonstrate and promote adoption of SLM technologies in the pilot catchments and community territories. This will be achieved through intensifying and strengthening FFS activities and networking, leveraging joint activities and co-funding support from national and district levels and partners, putting in place incentive mechanisms to support SLM and generate a range of ecosystem services. Impacts towards our project targets will also be monitored and assessed, notably: improved production, sustainable use of agricultural biodiversity, carbon sequestration, reduced land degradation and enhanced water management, as well as improved food security and livelihoods.

*"We believe that with concerted efforts from all project stakeholders and partners we will reach the desired goals"*



Kagera basin and TAMP project areas

# Field Training on LADA local level land degradation and SLM assessment

Two 6-day field based training sessions were conducted in February 2012 with some 12 resource persons from each country on the LADA local level land degradation and SLM assessment and its use in the Kagera TAMP project for catchment and community baseline development, for informing project activities and impact monitoring. The practical training was held in a catchment near Kigali for Burundi and Rwanda teams and a catchment near Bukoba for Tanzania and Uganda teams. The 50 participants (40 male and 10 female) included technical experts at national level, district technical staff and project facilitators covering a range of disciplines - soil, water, forest, crop, livestock, socio-economics, etc. VI-Agroforestry (known as **SCC-Vi** in Tanzania and Uganda and **Vi-Life** in Rwanda) - an important partner for agroforestry, carbon monitoring and PES - participated actively in the training. The training started with an overview by the Rwanda and Tanzania national project managers of Land Degradation Problems

and Sustainable Land Management Practices in the selected 21 districts based on results of the mapping and assessment at river basin level and the field diagnosis and selection of catchments with partners on the ground. An overview of the LADA Local level assessment, its purpose, analytical frameworks and tools was given by two FAO trainers with field sessions to apply the tools to assess soil, vegetation, water resources, status and trends and livelihoods. The final day of the training was spent on analysis and reporting of the assessment findings to form a baseline for project monitoring and impact assessment at catchment/community level and as the basis for developing a SLM action plan for the catchment with the community and partners. The evaluation of the training was very positive and encouraging. NPMs/RPC are requested to provide feedback on further experiences in using LADA -WOCAT tools for catchment land degradation and SLM assessment.



Participants undergoing LADA Local level Assessment Practical Training in Rwanda



Quadrat for assessing soil or plant cover (%) used in LADA/SLM training

## SLM activities in the catchment sites

In **Tanzania**, field SLM activities were started in some catchments but affected by shortage of rains. Remarkable progress in Bukoba and Missenyi districts were achieved while some other districts obtained fewer results. Late and poorly distributed rains have been a setback to SLM activities affecting the survival rate of planted tree seedlings and also crop performance. In **Rwanda**, SLM field activities were started in Kamonyi and Rulindo districts. Initial field SLM activities were based on PRA results and the community action plan focused on the following activities: construction of bench terraces in Karambo and Nyarurembo sites; construction of anti-erosion ditches in all sites in 3 micro-catchments; grass strip planting on existing terraces. In **Burundi**, several SLM field activities were carried out on 500Ha in 6 micro-catchments with project support. It is clear that more efforts are needed for soil moisture management and water harvesting to cope with erratic rains.



Bench terraces newly stabilized with grass in Karambo catchment (Rulindo district, Rwanda)



Contour ditches and grass strips at Gasharu catchment (Kamonyi, Rwanda)



Raised nursery bed of indigenous trees for re-habilitation of a drying water source through tree planting. (Kihanga Karagwe, Tanzania)

# Knowledge sharing and outreach



Land and Water days (Rome, 7-11 May 2012)



Communication is an important part of the project reaching policy makers and the public

*"Project managers will seek ways to communicate effectively with policy makers and with land users/communities on progress and generate policy support and interest on the ground to scale up successes".*

Salvator Ndabirorere and Fidelis Kaihura, the NPMs for Burundi and Tanzania respectively, participated in the Land & Water Days at FAO headquarters in Rome in May 2012. This was a full week of technical discussions and experience sharing convened by FAO, IFAD and WFP and aimed at improving the quality and impacts of field interventions. Professionals from HQ and from regional / country offices who are involved in field projects related to land and water management, together with their technical partners intervened interactively and many methods and tools, experiences, publications and posters were shared. Salvator and Fidelis indicated that "it was a wonderful opportunity to share experiences with many different experts working worldwide to improve land and water issues". They left Rome with "an accumulation of knowledge, contacts and strategies to help improve field implementation of the Kagera TAMP project".

## Call for interns in the region

The Kagera project welcomes the opportunity to support MSc studies and internships on various SLM dimensions as part of studies/ early work experiences and will cover travel costs and professional support.

## UN World Water Day in the Kagera River Basin

This year UN World Water Day was celebrated across the globe on March 22, 2012, including in the Kagera basin.

In celebration of this annual UN-wide event, FAO Kagera staff in Burundi participated by providing and planting seedlings (*Grevillia robusta*) and other anti-erosion devices in the Lake Cohoha floodplain (located in the Kagera basin). The World Water Day in Burundi was celebrated in Kirundo given that the province has been hit badly by drought in the last years. Government officers participated in this day event as well as the Minister of Water and Environment and Minister of Interior.



The Burundian Minister of Water and Environment planting seedlings



*Grevillia robusta* seedlings ready for planting



Water and food security in Burundi

# Training in SLM and Implementation of FFS in Uganda and Tanzania

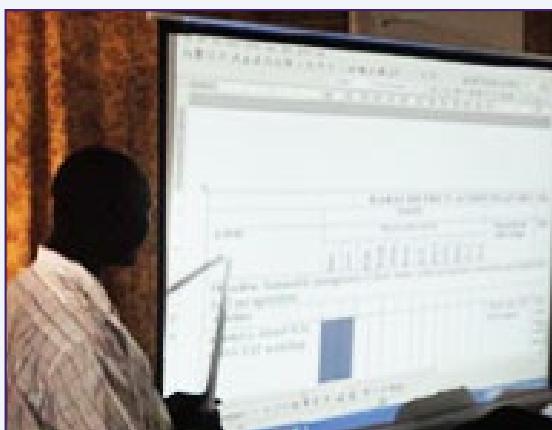
In late 2011, two training of trainers (ToT) sessions were held in Mbarara, Uganda and in Bukoba, Tanzania for Kagera TAMP field facilitators. The goal was to train Kagera field staff on Sustainable Land Management (SLM) and the implementation of Farmer Field Schools (FFS) in the Kagera basin. The main objective included increasing the capacity of stakeholders and their knowledge for the promotion of integrated agro-ecosystem management in the Kagera basin.

The training methodology combined a two-pronged learning approach including: i) theoretical training in class; and ii) hands-on practical training in the field. Theoretical

training provided concepts and principles of SLM and the FFS methodology through presentations and constructive feedback and discussions. Group dynamics were also kept in mind, with the use of ice-breaker games to foster more inclusive participation of the trainees. A training needs assessment was also used in the Bukoba ToT at the outset, as a demand-driven process, to better target the needs and knowledge gaps of the participants for the training session. Outputs of the training included: the development of action plans at district and catchment levels for project intervention over the next year and the development of a monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing project impacts and outcomes.



Class session with collected field samples for discussion, Bukoba



Development of action plans, Uganda



Hands-on learning session on use of "Line level" tool, Uganda

## Farmer field school activities

The farmer field school activities are ongoing in the four countries. In **Tanzania** the FFS master trainer (Julianus Thomas) conducted a field visit and documented planned activities on each micro-catchment. All four districts received FFS implementation funds for inputs, transport for site facilitators and District facilitators. In March 2012, the NPM carried out a follow up visit to all four districts to assess the set up and implementation of FFS and community activities. In **Uganda**, 27 FFS with 756 members have been established in 12 micro-catchments. Work plans have been developed

with the farmers and are being implemented. Basic concepts of soil and water conservation have been incorporated into their learning tools. Each FFS will implement its own SLM practices for improved crop-livestock-tree productivity. The SLM messages have been translated into songs, recitations and dance. In **Burundi**, 23 FFS have already started up with 780 group members. In February, the project assisted the FFS groups in starting study plots: purchase of training materials/ stationery, facilitator allowances and sundry materials for field studies, distribution to FFS groups of improved seed (Irish potato, wheat and beans) and 10 tons of mineral fertilizers contributed by the FAO emergency program as co-funding. FFS facilitators organized and conducted a training course on various production themes for all 780 FFS members (54% are women and 46% men) in all communes under project

intervention. In **Rwanda** FFS groups were established in the selected sites but field activities are planned to start in the next quarter after signing Letters of agreement with partners.

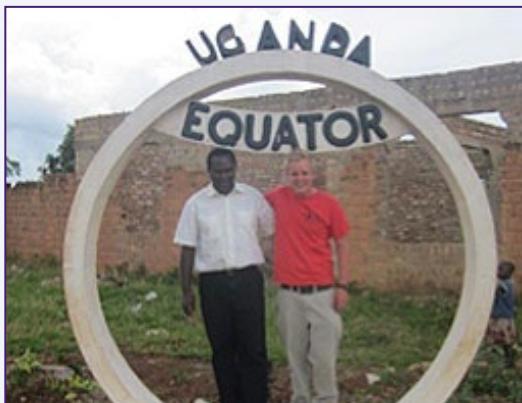


FFS group taking plant performance data for a maize field with grass mulch and farmyard manure for soil fertility and moisture conservation (Karagwe district, Tanzania)



FFS group learning on soil productivity and crop yield improvement during a study visit to a progressive farmer demonstrating good soil management for banana production (Bukoba district, Tanzania)

# Study in Uganda on Factors affecting SLM Adoption (MSc. Thesis)



Wilson Bamwerinde and Jonathan Keeling

Jonathan Keeling wrote to FAO and asked if he could do the study for his MSc. thesis on Sustainable Development at the University of Exeter, through an FAO project. He was fortunate as we were just thinking about how we could assess the factors that affect SLM adoption in the Kagera region. Jonathan stayed for several months in Kabale under the supervision of Wilson Bamwerinde, developed a questionnaire and partnered with Africa 2000 Network to interview farmers working on SLM and watershed management in Kabale and Mbarara districts.

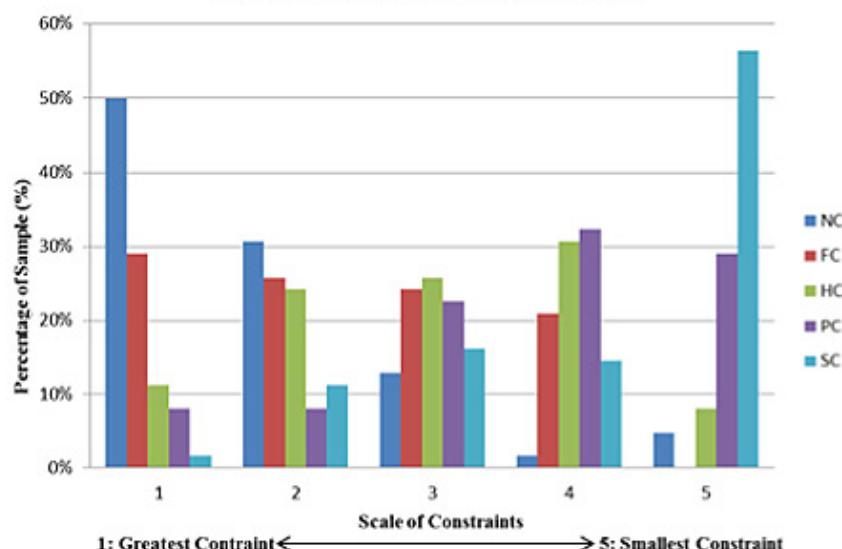
His resulting thesis "**Analysis of the constraints and opportunities in SW Uganda for the adoption of a range of sustainable land management practices using multi-level stakeholder analysis**" is posted on the Kagera project website. Jonathan expressed "*sincere gratitude to Wilson and his family, friends and colleagues who supervised my stay in Uganda and made it an invaluable experience*" and which contributed to his successful conclusion of his Masters' degree in 2011. Recommendations from his study include:

- Maintain parish specific extension and teaching and increase training on disease and pests as the greatest constraint facing farmers' adoption of improved agricultural practices in Kabale & Mbarara districts.
- Conduct further research on climate change impacts and offer farmers increased knowledge on future climate variability, how to measure risk and gauge adaptation options.
- Increase FFS and farmer-to-farmer interaction to produce a larger network of "trainers of trainers".
- Adapt the location of demonstration areas to include areas in all target sub-counties and districts.
- Introduce innovative extension approaches to maintain interest and involvement of farmers and extension workers. e.g. flyers, radio shows, TV screenings, church services, etc.
- Promote focus groups across stakeholder levels to develop innovative and cost effective ways of enhancing adoption.
- Increase bye-law enforcement from local (LC1) and sub-county levels.
- Increase training of technocrats and policy makers on agricultural techniques and accounts management and raise awareness of government officials at national level of the impact of such training both socially and economically.
- Introduce a stricter screening process for the technical roles of agricultural advisory staff (some had no agricultural background and thus were not equipped for the role).
- Increase opportunities for academia, industry & government to create linkages and share knowledge on contemporary SLM practices and experiences.

**The greatest constraint at this level is the high consumption of alcohol by men. Quote from an agricultural advisory officer "Obviously, alcohol is a big problem. (In Uganda) you don't need a license (to sell) and we must be a lot stricter, like in Rwanda where they will imprison you for sure if you drink at this time...there the law is very tough and it works well but here our bye-laws are not taken seriously".**

One of the aims of the study was to make the research/ interview process adaptable to other areas in the Kagara Basin. Technocrats and policy makers with whom Jonathan discussed agreed on the value of conducting comparative studies in the other 3 countries so as to generate suggestions for policy and technical implementation for increasing SLM.

Constraints to Adoption - Mbarara District



Valuable statistical analysis was carried out.

This graph shows the spread of constraints to SLM adoption in Mbarara district as ranked by farmers.

Ranked constraints based on the average response from the sample (greatest to lowest across > and down)

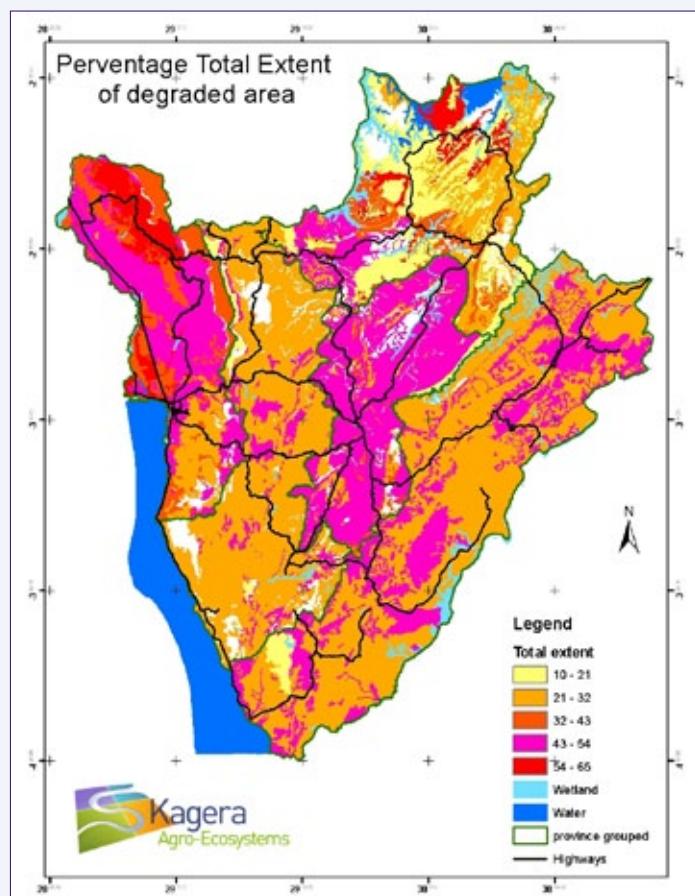
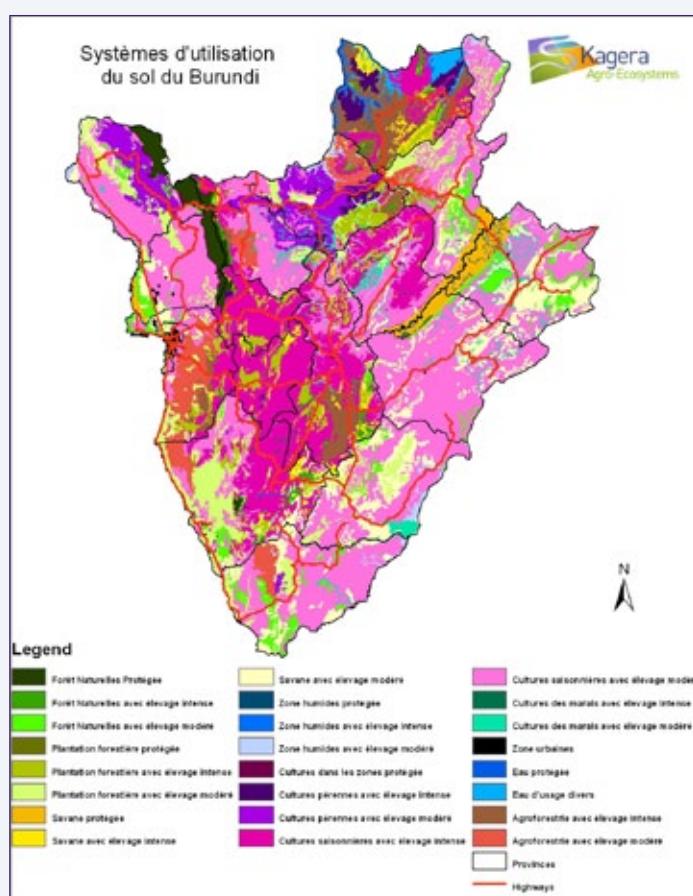
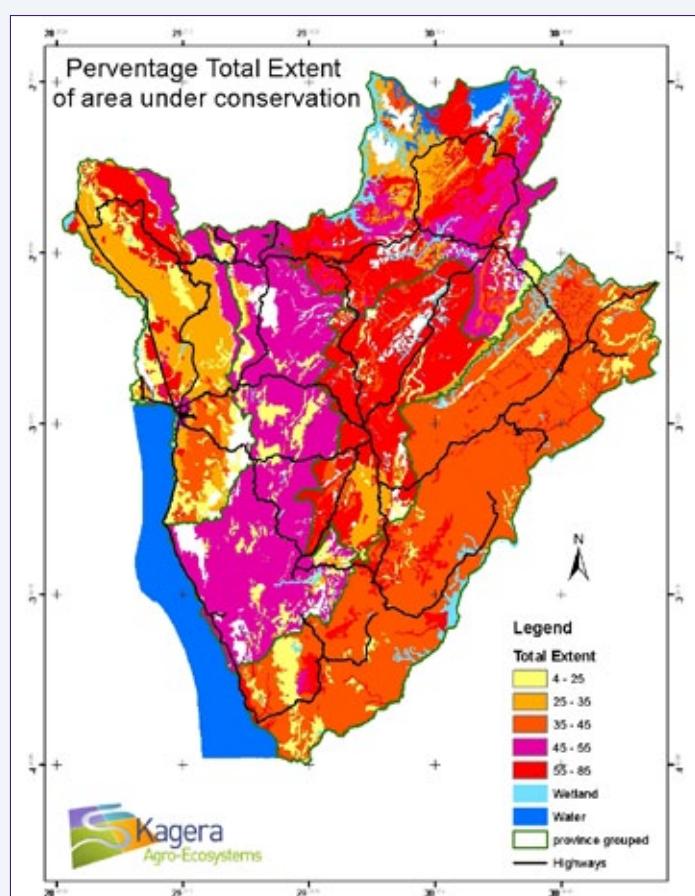
- **Natural:** Pests > Climate > Land infertility > Slope > Soil > Age
- **Financial:** Revenue > Credit > Labour
- **Human:** Over cultivation > Water > Transport > Knowledge > Size > Distance > Extension
- **Physical:** Seed > Fertilizer > Equipment
- **Social:** Security > Neighbours' Animals > Neighbour co-operation > Culture

## **Validation of the Land Use System (LUS) and LD and SLM maps**

The prioritization of TAMP field activities is supported by the identification of hotspots (pressures) in terms of land degradation and bright spots (successes) in terms of sustainable land management.

The LD and SLM maps were developed using the Land degradation assessment in drylands method adapted for the use at the Kagera river basin scale. The first step was to define the units of assessment by creating the Land Use Systems (LUS) maps. The next step used the LADA-WOCAT questionnaire (QM) for mapping LD and SLM measures. In **Tanzania**, validation of the Land use systems (LUS), Land degradation (LD) and Sustainable Land Management (SLM) maps was carried out by two consultants. Field work has been completed and preliminary results were presented at the LADA/SLM assessment training in Tanzania. Final outputs were shared with stakeholders in a one day workshop in April. In **Rwanda**, a four day workshop

on improving and validation of LUS and LD and SLM maps was organized in Musanze in March 2012. Prior to this workshop a multidisciplinary team of 11 experts was identified and selected to participate in the map improvement and validation workshop. A national consultant was also recruited to support regional consultant that was responsible for improving the maps. The LUS Map was reviewed and corrections made based on the land database obtained from the Department of Land and Mapping, Rwanda Natural Resources Authority (RNRA). The LUS Map was endorsed after making correction through GIS manipulation and on the basis of review by the multidisciplinary team. In **Burundi**, the validation of LUS, LD and SLM maps was conducted in April 2012.



Conservation map (top left), land use system map (top right) and degradation map (draft maps). GIS consultant explaining to the reconnaissance team how to use the maps to select project implementation sites in Burundi (photo)

# Micro-catchment characterization and mapping

In **Tanzania**, site characterization and mapping is progressing well in four micro-catchments in the target districts including Butulage, Minziro/Kigazi, Kihanga/Katera and Rusumo. In **Rwanda**, participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and micro-catchment characterization was conducted in two upstream districts of Kamonyi and Rulindo. FAO contracted Vi-Life program (NGO based in Kigali) for support which has so far completed the Participatory Diagnostic Analysis/PRA, Mapping, Collection of Socio-Economic baseline data, Land Use Planning and development of Community Management Action Plans in the micro-catchments of Nyarurembo, Ryamanywa and Karambo in Kayumbu Sector of Kamonyi district. In **Uganda**, six districts were visited to identify key watersheds using topographic maps and assessing the relevance and linkage to the Kagera river. Micro-catchments

were then selected from the set of catchments proposed by a team of experts from the districts and local councils.

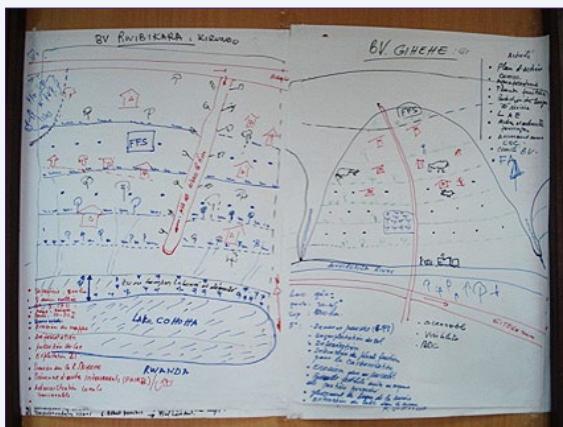
In **Burundi** biophysical assessment was conducted by ISABU using the LADA tools, including assessment of vegetation cover, soil texture, structure, soil color, basic hydrological analysis, signs of soil degradation, soil types, soil sample collection from all selected micro-catchments and backed up by laboratory soil analysis. Based on findings, the project has begun field activities in the catchment sites of Nyakibari (Kayokwe district) and Magamba (Nyabihanga district) in Mwaro province Gihehe (Giheta district) in Gitega province; Rusi (Shombo district) in Karusi province; Rwibikara (Busoni district) in Kirundo province and Kibogoye in Muramvya province.



Community sensitization (Karambo site in Rulindo district, Rwanda)



Nyakibari site under biophysical assessment (Mwaro province, Burundi)



Hands-on learning session on use of "Line level" tool (Uganda)

The selection of the micro-catchments and communities by the NPMs were based on a set of 9 criteria agreed upon by the project:

1. Opportunities to contribute to at least 1 of the 4 project outcomes (transboundary cooperation for SLM, enabling policy and planning, capacity building for SLM adoption and scaling up, and SLM implementation) and to target indicators;
2. Presence of other relevant projects and partners for synergy and scaling up;
3. Degree and type of degradation and causes in specific land use systems and impacts of land degradation on ecosystem services;
4. Relevant district/provincial priorities and plans;
5. SLM measures on the ground with options for improving efficiency and scaling up;
6. Probability of success - good relationship with community
7. Readily accessible and visible for policy makers and farmers (market, main road);
8. In accordance with national plans, strategies and priorities;
9. Agreed upon by a range of stakeholders.

# Development of the Monitoring and Evaluation Plan

The Kagera TAMP Monitoring and Evaluation Plan has been developed by the project M&E specialist in close collaboration with the Regional Project Coordinator (RPC), and the four National Project Managers (NPMs) during participatory work sessions in Kigali and Bukoba in September 2011.

The project's approach to SLM implementation is through catchment/community SLM demonstration site, and through Farmers Field Schools (FFS). The FFS process is central to the community learning-by-doing process on how to integrate SLM practices at farm-household level. FFS will be implemented in each communities to provide new knowledge and capacities to farmers on sustainable land and water management, and it is expected that participating farmers will adopt the improved practices on parts of their lands. Moreover, in each catchment SLM demonstration sites, agreed upon by the community and technical partners, will be established to further promote the adoption of

SLM practices by many more farmers and neighboring communities. All four countries have set up a strategy and approach to implement the SLM field activities through district facilitators, extension officers, service providers, and FFS facilitators.

Each catchment is being characterized as part of the baseline through a land and water resources assessment (LADA local assessment). The catchment/community baseline is done through participatory rural appraisal, transect walk, visual scoring/field observations, field measurements, and household interviews to collect data on soil, water, vegetation and livelihoods. The baseline will also capture information on the current regulations and bye-laws related to natural resources access and management at catchment/community level and on existing barriers and constraints to SLM adoption, and will identify the vulnerable groups within the area.

SLM Interventions	Each Country	Kagera River Basin
Micro catchments	10 -12	46
Community/SLM action plans	17	68
FFS groups	34	136
FFS farmers	850 - 1020	3 400 - 4080
Improved pasture/rangeland	4 areas 2,000 ha	15 areas 7,500 ha
Improved wetlands, buffer zones	2-3 areas 1,500 ha	10 areas 6,000 ha
Improved river banks	250km	1000 km
SLM practices implemented and adopted	11,250 ha	45,000 ha of land
Sediment loads and water quality monitored	1 catchment	4 catchments
Incentive mechanisms in place to support adoption of SLM	8-9 communities	34 communities



Kagera team developing the monitoring and evaluation plan (Rwanda and Tanzania, September 2011)

## "Riding the Kagera Tamp Boat" to sustainable land management

As the Uganda FAO Representative and his team was moving downhill in Rurongo Village in Isingiro district one of the six districts in Uganda Kagera Transboundary Management Project (TAMP), the damage done to the Kagera River was visible down the valley. The water is as brown as mud and its boundaries are shrinking. It is the most remote headstream of the Nile River and largest tributary of Lake Victoria, rising in Burundi near the northern tip of Lake Tanganyika and flowing through Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda.

The communities in Rurongo village are so fond of the river that majorly contributes to their livelihood but are disappointed that their own unsustainable soil and land management practices are responsible for its deteriorating state. These have led to soil erosion, inadequate water retention to sustain crops and pastures during dry periods, increased runoff and siltation of river and its tributaries. That is why a group of farmers under Rurongo Community Based Association have moved to improve their practices in order to restore the river to its original state.

*"We are riding in the Kagera TAMP boat from a place of soil degradation to a place where we practice sustainable land management practices. We have loaded the boat with tree seedlings that we are going to plant", they sing.*

In the framework of the Kagera TAMP project, communities that reside along the river or streams that pour into it have been mobilized and are undergoing participatory training in practices that will reduce soil degradation and rejuvenate soil fertility. The project also provided 1,500 fruit tree seedlings that have been planted along the streams and the river and tree seedling nurseries are being put in place to raise seedlings for replacing the vegetation formally destroyed to fight tsetse flies after independence in 1962.

In Kabale district, 100 farmers in Kagarama, Bahingi and Kweterana Farmer Field Schools are undergoing training in sustainable land management practices such as digging of trenches, planting of calliandra and Napier grass, rehabilitation of gullies and establishment of tree nurseries to provide tree planting materials. So far, 13,000 seedlings have been planted.

According to the Project Manager, Dr. Wilson Bamwerinde, these efforts will help to restore degraded lands, conserve agro-biodiversity, protect the water resources and improve agricultural production leading to increased food security and improved rural livelihoods. The project has also trained district technical staff from Kabale, Ntungamo, Kiruhura, Mbarara, Isingiro and Rakai districts in watershed management and planning, farmer field school methodology, identification of suitable sustainable management practices to reverse land degradation in rangelands and selected farming systems using Farmer Field School methodology.



Farmers crossing the Kagera river



Farmer field school in Rurongo in Isingiro district with the FAO country Rep.

## Coming in the next September issue:

- Updates from Burundi: Alternatives to Fuelwood in Household
- Payments for environmental services and Carbon Sequestration of SLM Practices on Farm
- Impact assessment and indicators

# Contact the Kagera team ...

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Rwanda - Kigali

### **\*Position under recruitment\***

Theobald Mashina - National Project Manager in Rwanda has resigned. A new project manager for Rwanda is being recruited at the moment (see Kagera website for the job announcement). The Kagera team would like to thank Theo for his endeavor to support Kagera TAMP and wish him all success for his new job.

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## Calendar 2011 / 2012

### **Kagera activities 2011**

#### **29-31 Aug**

Kagera TAMP Regional Technical workshop on Land planning, tenure & management

#### **September**

Review of the M&E system with 4 NPMs and RPC, and development of an M&E plan

#### **4-19 Nov.**

Training of Trainers' (ToT) course on SLM and FFS, (Misenyi District, Tanzania)

#### **4-17 Dec.**

Training of Trainers' (ToT) course on SLM and FFS (Mbarara, Uganda)

### **Activities 2012**

#### **13-18 Feb**

LADA local assessment training (Kigali, Rwanda)

#### **20-25 Feb**

LADA local assessment training (Bukoba, Tanzania)

#### **27-28 Feb**

Review and planning meeting (Kigali, Rwanda)

#### **7-10 March**

LUS & QM maps validation (Musanze, Rwanda)

#### **22 March**

UN World Water Day

#### **7-11 May**

Land & Water Days

#### **24 au 25 Mai**

Field visit by national and regional steering committee in Burundi

#### **1 -29 June**

RPC & LTU mission for review of project progress (Tanzania & Uganda)

#### **14-16 June**

National Project Steering Committee Meeting Uganda (Mbarara)

#### **17-23 June**

FFS training workshop (Mbarara, Uganda)

## Kagera TAMP Project Website

Please refer to the project website for more information, updates and details:

[www.fao.org/nr/kagera/en/](http://www.fao.org/nr/kagera/en/)