

Burundi

Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology

ROAM COUNTRY BRIEF

The results of a restoration opportunities assessment make a strong case for proactively investing in building a resilient landscape with sustainable land management and forest landscape restoration (FLR) practices.

Why FLR

Burundi is one of the world's poorest countries. Many people are rural small-scale farmers who depend heavily on natural resources for food security and livelihoods. The country's natural resources are heavily degraded, with one-third of the land very highly or highly degraded. This is due to post-conflict fragility, high population density, erosion and unsustainable agricultural practices, as well as vulnerable land due to steep slopes and shallow soils.

To address these challenges, the World Bank began working with the government of Burundi to develop a Landscape Restoration and Resilience Project. IUCN was brought into this partnership to apply the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) at the sub-national level, identify the location and extent of degradation, and prioritise areas for restoring degraded and deforested landscapes.

The Burundi Subnational Forest Landscape Restoration Assessment (SNFLRA) focussed on six Provinces – Bubanza, Bujumbura Rural and Kayanza in the Western region, and Cankuzo, Muyinga and Ruyigi in the Eastern region. The assessment was implemented by IUCN in close collaboration with the Ministry of Water, Environment, and Land Management and Urbanism (MEEATU) (now renamed as Ministry of the Environment, Agriculture and Livestock). The SNFLRA was supported by the World Bank and in part by the [KNOWFOR](#) programme, funded by the UK Government.

How to restore

Spatial analyses were carried out to identify the extent and location of the degradation and to develop suitable FLR interventions.

QUICK FACTS

- **Burundi pledged to restore 2 million ha by 2020 as contribution to AFR 100 and the Bonn Challenge.**
- **Government of Burundi created the national FLR programme to coordinate, monitor and report on FLR related initiatives.**

The following FLR interventions were selected, according to the characteristics of each landscape and the potential to reverse the trend of land and biodiversity degradation:

- **Agroforestry (AF):** Includes farming with trees on contours, or perimeter fencing with trees, multi-story cropping, intercropping and home gardens.
- **Reforestation:** To rehabilitate degraded forests through the replacement of unproductive forests.
- **Progressive terraces:** Involves digging trenches with grass-stabilised banks, or simply planting grass strips and vegetative barriers across slopes to reduce runoff, soil erosion, and improve soil quality and moisture retention.
- **Radical terraces:** Designed to reduce soil loss through enhanced retention and infiltration of runoffs, facilitate permanent agriculture on steep slopes, and promote land consolidation and intensive land use.
- **Soil bioengineering:** Using living plant materials to construct structures that perform an engineering function (slope stabilisation and soil conservation).
- **Stabilisation of stream banks and gullies:** Commonly used to stabilise river and gully banks and prevent erosion, landslides and floods.

- **Ecological agriculture:** Involves multi-species cover crops with the introduction of oil palms in agricultural systems to increase soil cover and income generation.
- **Rehabilitation of quarries:** Rehabilitating quarries through the planting of trees and shrubs.
- **Rainwater harvesting and use:** Water collection and storage, mainly used in rural areas.

Gender assessment

A gender analysis was conducted to better understand and shed light on the gender-differentiated practices and knowledge of women and men in relation to natural resources management. The inclusion of gender considerations in FLR helped to capture the specific knowledge and practices, skills and experiences of women, as well as the different roles, rights and responsibilities between men and women in the forestry and agricultural sectors. These were taken into account during the development of the gender responsive Landscape Restoration and Resilience project in Burundi.

Key findings

The ROAM process built a strong institutional collaboration framework. Currently, different government institutions are ready to work on land degradation issues. The ROAM analysis conducted in six provinces is instrumental in developing restoration projects and guiding FLR implementation for the World Bank's US\$ 30 million investment in the [Burundi Landscape Restoration and Resilience Project](#).

However, for this to be effective at the national level, there is a need to expand ROAM to the provinces which were not covered by the subnational ROAM. This will facilitate the implementation of Burundi's Bonn Challenge commitment to restore 2 million ha of degraded and deforested landscapes by 2030. The SNFLRA is expected to contribute to the implementation of other key national and international commitments, such as the Land Degradation Neutrality goals (LDN), the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement and multiple Sustainable Development Goals related to zero hunger, climate mitigation and adaptation, gender equity and poverty alleviation, among others.

Next steps

The landscape restoration efforts in Burundi must address multifaceted problems related to rural poverty and food security, climate change, as well as sustainable land use at the community level. Deforested and degraded landscapes must be actively restored to ensure long-term sustainability of rural resilient development.

To increase efficiency of its agrarian economy, Burundi also needs to improve weather forecasting and climate services to help farmers better manage water and agriculture related infrastructure, inform climate-smart planning approaches and enhance agricultural productivity.

Measures to prevent further deforestation must also be considered. Active protection of the remaining forest is essential, particularly in and around protected areas.

Key recommendations

- Extend the ROAM application to identify restoration opportunities at the national level.
- Link climate and development financial mechanisms, such as Green Climate Fund, GEF and REDD+ funding to FLR implementation.
- Promote women's empowerment, notably access to, and control of, natural and economic resources, such as loans, lands, extension and capacity-building services.
- Local public administrative authorities and provincial, commune and colline technical experts need capacity development on FLR in order to ensure that they actively contribute to the implementation of the project and utilise the ROAM analysis as a reference document to guide, scale and monitor FLR implementation in priority areas.



Resources:
InfoFLR.org
iucn.org/forests

 INFOFLR
 by IUCN