



the Jane Goodall Institute

**The Green Lung of Uganda Forest Restoration Project
Implemented by the Jane Goodall Institute – Uganda**

**Funded by the Jane Goodall Institute – Austria in partnership with
the Austrian Government**

FINAL REPORT

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Table of Contents

| | |
|--|-----------|
| 1. BACKGROUND..... | 3 |
| 1.1 Introduction..... | 3 |
| 1.2 Project Context..... | 3 |
| 1.3 Project Objectives | 4 |
| 2. OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES..... | 4 |
| 2.1 Project launch meeting..... | 4 |
| 2.2 Forest Conservation & Restoration through planting of Native tree seedlings in degraded riparian forest areas..... | 5 |
| 2.2.1 Facilitate participatory location/mapping of sites for planting and regeneration | 6 |
| 2.2.2 Train target community in forest replanting and natural regeneration | 7 |
| 2.2.3 Provide native tree species (95,000 seedlings) and tools for forest planting/ replanting | 8 |
| 2.2.4 Monitor and provide extension for replanted areas | 8 |
| 2.3 Improve environmental knowledge, attitude, and understanding of sustainable forest management and practices through environmental education and engagement..... | 8 |
| 2.3.1 Conduct participatory appraisal to determine existing capacities and training needs for vulnerable communities on longer-term climatic and environmental change..... | 8 |
| 2.3.2 Develop an informal education and outreach program, to include targeted education and awareness materials related to local climate change issues | 9 |
| 2.3.3 Disseminate education and awareness materials in the targeted villages in cooperation with local institutions such as schools and local councils | 9 |
| 3 Project post evaluation | 12 |
| 3.1 Introduction and methodology..... | 12 |
| 3.2 Post evaluation findings..... | 12 |
| 3.2.1 Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices | 12 |
| 3.2.2 Health status of trees planted | 13 |
| 4 Conclusion, Challenges and Recommendations..... | 14 |
| 4.1 Conclusion | 14 |
| 4.2 Challenges..... | 14 |
| 4.3 Recommendations | 15 |

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The Green Lung Forest Restoration Project is a Six months project running from July 2016 to January 2017. The project is being implemented in six parishes within Hoima District in Western Uganda.

1.2 Project Context

The Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) is implementing the Green Lung Forest Restoration project with the purpose of enhancing the resilience of forest adjacent communities and protective ecosystems through community-led adaptation interventions focusing on riparian forest afforestation and livelihood diversification. This project is especially important due to the continuing conversion of forest to agriculture for both subsistence and small holder agriculture. Climate resilience will be enhanced by reducing the dependence on rain-fed farming practices whilst simultaneously reducing the rate of deforestation and kick-starting the regeneration of degraded forest areas through tree planting. This project mainly focuses on private and communal tropical natural forests that form important wildlife corridors between the Budongo and Bugoma Forest Reserves in the Hoima and Masindi Districts of Western Uganda. The Budongo – Bugoma Corridor (BBC) forests are home to critically important chimpanzee populations that live outside Uganda’s national parks and other protected areas.

The impact of climate change on human and economic development in the Albertine Rift areas of Uganda is mounting. The threat of climate change is considered real and one of the seven highest ranked threats to the Albertine Rift area which is expected to become hotter and drier over the next 20 years – increasing incidence of wild fires and reducing crop productivity. The effects of increasingly unpredictable rainfall and longer drought periods pose a serious threat to the livelihood of these communities; which largely depend on agriculture. In addition to the pressures exerted by climate change, development of community resilience is presently impeded by a range of non-climatic but related factors, particularly the massive degradation of riparian forests which has reduced cover that otherwise functions as a natural protective barrier to stream/river bank erosion which has resulted in siltation and clogging of streams and rivers; moderates climate and threatens the natural resource base and livelihood opportunities of these communities.

The Green Lung Forest Restoration project capitalizes on existing institutional structures and processes in the target area in addressing these challenges. Specifically, the Jane Goodall Institute (JGI) recently concluded 3-year Project “*Conserving Critical Chimpanzee Habitats in Western Uganda through a REDD+ Approach*” in the target area. This project established an enabling environment for advancing community-led conservation programs. JGI facilitated the formation of 15 Private Forest Owners’ Associations (PFOAs); supported forest owners in surveying and registering their land; facilitated the assignment of forest management rights, trained and equipped the forest owners in sustainable forest management practices, trained and equipped forest owners with the tools and skills to monitor forest biomass. Accordingly, the project will build on this existing capacity to advance forestry and livelihood related strategies, a need that has been expressed by the PFOA's.

This project is addressing the problems that contribute to forest degradation, specifically focusing on clearing for agriculture and unsustainable harvesting. Lack of alternative sources of income and inadequate awareness of importance of trees also contribute to degradation. In dealing with these problems, the project is also addressing underlying problems such as increased demand for forest products (i.e. poles, timber, for construction, charcoal production; firewood for domestic use), and is tackling the issue of incentives for community participation in conservation through investing in tangible livelihood/economic safety nets. Additionally, by implementing the activities proposed we will maintain moisture within the soil and help mitigate against predicted increase in droughts in the target area.

The project is focusing on restoring forest functions and improving ecological processes at a landscape level; addressing socio-economic and environmental dimensions; addressing root causes of degradation such as changes in land use; increasing forest resilience through enhanced connectivity and species diversity; and encompassing a mixture of locally appropriate approaches such as ecological corridors and forest regeneration.

1.3 Project Objectives

The objectives of the project are to;

- I. Improve environmental knowledge, attitude, and understanding of sustainable forest management and practices through environmental education
- II. Restore and regenerate degraded riparian forests through planting indigenous tree species.
- III. Increase understanding of climate change issues in relation to forestry and livelihoods

2. OVERVIEW OF IMPLEMENTED ACTIVITIES

The proposed activities have been implemented between July 2016 and November 2016. These activities include; conducting a project launch meeting with all the various stakeholders in Hoima District, carrying out a baseline survey with 264 households within the project area to find out community members' views on conservation practices, attitudes and environmental knowledge. The project targeted households in villages adjacent to the degraded riverine forests and forest reserves in six parishes of Budaka, Munteme, Kibanjwa, Ruguse, Kabwoya and Kidoma in Hoima District, distributing and planting over 101,700 indigenous tree seedlings in both community and private riparian degraded forests. This was followed with mapping of all the replanted areas by forest monitors, carrying out community education on climate change and its impacts on communities, assessment of community livelihood needs and their proposed alternatives. The implemented activities under this project are discussed below.

2.1 Project launch meeting

To kick-start the project a project launch workshop was held at Kings Avenue conference hall on 19th August 2016 in Hoima town. The meeting, that was attended by 54 stakeholders (14.9% Female), aimed at introducing the Green Lung Holistic forest restoration Project goals, objectives and the anticipated benefits to the community. The meeting also intended to identify community members with nursery beds which could supply indigenous tree seedlings for the project reforestation exercise. It also sought stakeholder opinions about the project and its implementation plan. Stakeholders observed that the March/April rain season is longer and hence

better for tree planting. However if trees were to be planted during the second October/November rain season, then the planting had to be undertaken as early as possible during season; preferably during the first week of October.

Table 1: Number of participants at the Project Launch

| No. | Institution | Attendance | | Total |
|-----|--------------|------------|-----------|-----------|
| | | Male | Female | |
| 1 | PFOAs | 36 | 05 | 41 |
| 2 | JGI | 06 | | 06 |
| 3 | HDLG | | 02 | 02 |
| 4 | NFA | 02 | | 02 |
| 5 | Other NGOs | 02 | | 02 |
| 6 | Media | 01 | | 01 |
| | Total | 47 | 07 | 54 |

2.2 Forest Conservation & Restoration through planting of Native tree seedlings in degraded riparian forest areas

As part of the campaign to restore degraded riparian forests in the project area, a total number of 101,700 assorted indigenous tree seedlings (Table 2 below) were planted in degraded private and community forests by a total of 270 farmers.

Table 2: No. of seedling beneficiaries per parish

| No. | Parish | Female | Male | Total |
|-----|--------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| 1 | Budaka | 05 | 32 | 37 |
| 2 | Munteme | 15 | 38 | 53 |
| 3 | Kabwoya | 12 | 37 | 49 |
| 4 | Kibanjwa | 08 | 19 | 27 |
| 5 | Kidoma | 19 | 41 | 60 |
| 6 | Ruguse | 06 | 38 | 44 |
| | Total | 65 | 205 | 270 |

Farmers were advised on the spacing of seedlings and which type of soils were to be planted with specific tree seedlings for example, *Mitrigyna stipulosa* does particularly well in in waterlogged soils characteristic of riparian forests. Thus, the project team distributed 14,400 assorted tree seedlings to Budaka Parish, 18,700 assorted tree seedlings to Ruguse Parish, 20,200 assorted tree seedlings to Kabwoya Parish, 19,800 assorted seedlings to Munteme Parish, 19,200 assorted tree seedlings to Kidoma Parish; and 9,400 assorted tree seedlings to Kibanjwa Parish. In total, the following tree species were planted in their respective numbers, *Maesopsis eminii* (28,100), *Milicia excelsa* (600), *Terminalia spp.* (10,000), *Mitrigyna stipulosa* (39,500), *Mahogany spp.* (10,000), *Funtumia africana* (2,000), *Albizia spp.* (2,000), *Trichilia dregeana* (2,000), *Baikiaea insignis* (6,000); and *Chrysophyllum albidum* (1,500). The average survival rate was 78% of the planted seedlings and those that survived are continuing to grow healthy. The numbers of seedling beneficiaries per Parish is summarized in Table 3 below; and Figure 1 shows a healthy sprouting *Mitrigyna stipulosa* stem cutting planted in the riverine area.

Table 3: No. of seedlings supplied per parish

| No. | Parish | Village | No. of seedlings |
|-----|--------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1 | Budaka | 03 | 14,400 |
| 2 | Munteme | 09 | 19,800 |
| 3 | Kabwoya | 20 | 20,200 |
| 4 | Kibanjwa | 08 | 9,400 |
| 5 | Kidoma | 11 | 19,200 |
| 6 | Ruguse | 15 | 18,700 |
| | Total | 66 | 101,700 |



Figure 1: A sprouting Mitriyna stipulosa stem cutting planted in the riverine area

2.2.1 Facilitate participatory location/mapping of sites for planting and regeneration

Location of degraded sites was done with the assistance of PFO Monitors while conducting the project baseline survey. This exercise also collected information of recommended indigenous tree species required by farmers for planting projected on the total acreage of at least 800 ha of forest corridor to be intermittently replanted. Mapping of the planted sites was done using android google supported tablets and geo-spatial data collected by PFO and parish forest

preceding section.

2.2.3 Provide native tree species (95,000 seedlings) and tools for forest planting/ replanting

As part of the campaign to restore degraded riparian forests in the project area, a total number of 101,700 assorted indigenous tree seedlings (6.5% above target) were planted in degraded private and community forests. In total, the following tree species were planted: *Maesopsis eminii* (28,100), *Milicia excelsa* (600), *Terminalia spp* (10,000), *Mitragyna stipulosa* (39,500), *Mahogany spp* (10,000), *Funtumia spp* (2,000), *Albizia spp* (2,000), *Trichilia dregeana* (2,000), *Baikiaea insignis* (6,000), and *Chrysophyllum albidum* (1500). However, of all the planted seedlings, the average survival rate was 78% and the trees are growing healthily. Farmers were advised to plant seedlings at a spacing of 10 m x 10 m to 15 m x 15 m. Spacing was generally dependent on soil type, seedling type, growth form and degree of open plantable area. For example, *Mitragyna stipulosa* stem cuttings according to their various site suitability for planting. However, tools for forest planting were not provided as the budget supported only direct seedling procurement and not tree nursery activities.

2.2.4 Monitor and provide extension for replanted areas

Monitoring for tree planting and progress on growth was done by the forest monitors from across all six parishes. Technical assistance in form of extension was also provided in tree management and other silvicultural practices in order to raise healthy trees especially given that the silvicultural practices of indigenous tree species is not common knowledge to many farmers.

2.3 Improve environmental knowledge, attitude, and understanding of sustainable forest management and practices through environmental education and engagement

This activity involved parish meetings with private forest owners, forest monitors, local leaders and educational institutions to discuss climate change issues. Communities were also educated about the benefits of sustainable forest conservation and dangers of climate change. Specific activities under this objective are as indicated in the following sections:

2.3.1 Conduct participatory appraisal to determine existing capacities and training needs for vulnerable communities on longer-term climatic and environmental change

Before project kick off, a baseline survey was conducted from 22nd – 30th July 2016 to provide insights into the community's level of knowledge, awareness and best practices for environmental conservation and sustainable agriculture in the six parishes. The specific objectives of the baseline survey were to assess: the level of environmental knowledge and consciousness, community attitudes towards the environment, level of awareness about environmental issues and private forest conservation challenges in project area. The respondents for the survey were 74.6% male and 25.4% female in composition.

Survey results from the baseline showed that, the knowledge level of environmental conservation issues among respondents was high at (88.7%). This is probably because of JGI's past REDD+ project which sensitized communities on climate change and carbon trade. Such trainings equipped community members with the basic information on forest conservation. Majority of the respondents (90.5%) got their fuel wood from privately owned forests while 87.9% of the household respondents acknowledged that there was rapid ongoing decreasing vegetation cover within the project area. This explains why the decrease in the community tree vegetation can be

partly attributed to high consumption of firewood within the project area as observed in the statistics. Also 98.1% of respondents had observed changing weather patterns in their communities overtime. All this information was very useful during the project implementation.

2.3.2 Develop an informal education and outreach program, to include targeted education and awareness materials related to local climate change issues

JGI Uganda has a comprehensive environmental education program, both formal and informal as well as outreach. It is through these programs that communities were reached to discuss sustainable forest conservation and climate change. Existing awareness materials on forest conservation and climate change have been used during the community outreach education and awareness meetings. At least 4,000 posters with messages on climate change and forest conservation have been printed and disseminated to the community in the project area. These materials were developed in English and Runyoro, a local dialect for better understanding of the messages by all groups of the target audience. Farmers, local and religious leaders and students were the main beneficiaries of these awareness materials.



Figure 3: A young girl displaying a poster on forest conservation with a message “Gamba Busaho Kutema Ebibira” which is in Runyoro, a local dialect literally meaning that “Say No to Deforestation”.

2.3.3 Disseminate education and awareness materials in the targeted villages in cooperation with local institutions such as schools and local councils

This activity started with the training of all Private Forest Owners (PFOs) and Forest Monitors in sustainable forest conservation and climate change. The one day training focused on climate change causes, impacts, adaptation and mitigation and the role of forest conservation in addressing the climate change challenge. These PFOs and forest monitors provided good support

and community mobilization during the parish sensitization meetings. Climate change and forest conservation awareness meetings were attended by 567 people (44.4% female) representing 567 households. With each household having an average size of six (6) people, then approximately 3,402 community members have been reached with climate change and forest conservation messages. The awareness meetings aimed at increasing community understanding of climate change and the benefits of forest conservation. Table 4 gives a summary of community participation in the sensitization meetings.



Figure 4: Rev. Musimenta Fred (Right) of Kidoma Parish after receiving materials for distribution to the church community

Table 4: Number of community members participating in interactive meetings

| Parish | Number of Participants | | Total |
|--------------|------------------------|--------------------|------------|
| | Male | Female | |
| Kidoma | 63 | 46 | 109 |
| Budaka | 48 | 32 | 80 |
| Kabwoya | 40 | 31 | 71 |
| Ruguse | 51 | 45 | 96 |
| Munteme | 54 | 47 | 101 |
| Kibanjwa | 59 | 51 | 110 |
| Total | 315 (55.6%) | 252 (44.4%) | 567 |

According to the baseline survey result on climate change awareness and knowledge level, 40% of the community members clearly explained what climate change is. With regard to climate change impacts, people realized that they have been suffering from reduced crop yields due to

prolonged droughts and irregular rainfall. Other climate change impacts already realized include; drying water sources, soil infertility, strong winds, hailstorms, lightening and famine.



Figure 5: Climate Change and Awareness sensitization meeting



Figure 6: Sustainable forest conservation and climate change at St. Josephs Vocational Training Centre Munteme

2.4 Monitoring the effectiveness of awareness programs

The trained PFOs and forest monitors are continuing to sensitize the community as well as monitoring their attitudes, behaviors and forest conservation practices. The JGI Uganda field staff will also occasionally monitor community groups to see if there is a change in attitudes and practices.

3 Project post evaluation

3.1 Introduction and methodology

A post evaluation was conducted to assess community knowledge on climate change and forest conservation as well as establishing the status of the planted trees in the project area. For community knowledge, attitudes and practices, data were collected using a structured questionnaire from 93 households who have participated in tree planting. These individuals also participated in Focus Group Discussions (FGDs).

For tree growth, data were collected from 30 sites randomly selected from the six Parishes that form the project area. Both quantitative and qualitative data on the participants' experiences, tree growth and survival rates, project's results and its potential for future growth and development were collected. The evaluation team categorized the 30 sites into two groups; Farmland reforestation and Forest rehabilitation sites. Farmland reforestation consisted of reforesting land that had previously been cleared and used for crop growing such as maize, potatoes, rice, beans, millet, or used for pasture or other agricultural activities. These sites are typically planted in clearly visible rows of trees with a consistent spacing between trees and rows. Riparian forest rehabilitation sites were assessed and trees had been planted in the gaps created in existing riverine forests by illegal timber cutting, charcoal burning, and other causes. Important information was obtained on tree seedling height, species of seedlings planted, current condition of seedlings, and number of seedlings still surviving and factors which contributed to seedling loss.

3.2 Post evaluation findings

3.2.1 Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices

A comparison of the baseline and post evaluation data was done to establish changes in community knowledge, attitudes and practices towards forest conservation and adaptation to climate change. Results show an increase in knowledge level of forest conservation issues from 88.7% of the baseline data to 97.2% after project implementation as revealed by the post evaluation findings. The 53.2% community with positive attitude towards forest conservation established during the baseline increased to 87.2% after a series of community engagement and sensitization. Generally, community members are now confident that their forests are coming back because majority (87.2%) are concerned about the deforestation rate in the area and think they can do something to reverse the trend.

3.2.2 Health status of trees planted

At least 101,700 assorted indigenous tree seedlings were planted by 270 farmers in degraded private and community forests. It was thus necessary to assess the condition of the planted trees and number that is still surviving amidst the irregular rains and prolonged dry spells in some parishes. The evaluation team made assessments on the growth conditions of the planted seedlings and results are as shown in table

Table 5: Status of seedlings surviving

| Status | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Struggling | 9 | 30.0 |
| Fairly healthy | 13 | 43.3 |
| Healthy seedlings | 8 | 26.7 |
| Total | 30 | 100.0 |

Table 5 shows that 26.7% of the seedlings appeared very healthy and growing well, while 43.3% were fairly healthy and capable of surviving the January-February dry spell. These seedlings whose health state is good were planted close to riverine forests thus receiving shade and water during the severe dry season. Results also show that 30% of the seedlings were struggling as a result of heat stress generated by the intensive sunshine experienced in the project area. The current average survival rate of the planted seedlings is estimated at 70%, thus of the 101,700 planted seedlings, 71,190 are more likely to reach maturity, which is such a good number for forest restoration and regeneration.



Figure 7: The Executive Director JGI Uganda Dr. Panta Kasoma (Right), having a look at some of the planted trees during his visit to the project site for tree growth monitoring in Budaka Parish

Table 6: Number of seedlings distributed by parish and their survival rates

| Parish | Village | No. of seedlings | Survival rate |
|----------|---------|------------------|---------------|
| Budaka | 3 | 14,400 | 60% |
| Ruguse | 15 | 18,700 | 80% |
| Kabwoya | 20 | 20,200 | 70% |
| Munteme | 9 | 19,800 | 70% |
| Kidoma | 11 | 19,200 | 70% |
| Kibanjwa | 8 | 9,400 | 50% |

4 Conclusion, Challenges and Recommendations

4.1 Conclusion

The project is considered successful, with all planned activities fully implemented. It has stimulated the interest of community members in planting indigenous tree species having learnt about their ecological value during the climate change awareness village meetings conducted in the project area. Whereas there is a high demand for tree seedlings in the project area, the project needs also to address some key conservation challenges like poverty which is the main driver of poor natural resource use which often accelerates climate change.

4.2 Challenges

The project duration of only six months has been too short to effectively mobilize communities to take up interventions. Most of the tree nursery owners raise only the popularly known fast growing exotic tree species as opposed to the indigenous ones suitable for corridor regeneration. Identifying farmers capable of raising these indigenous tree seedlings within the project area for supplying required quantities would be necessary but given the project period this was not attainable. To achieve the target, procurement of seedlings had to redirect focus on species other than those in the project document. These had to be obtained from both within and without the project area with a lot of inconvenience and operational costs. Weather changes also affected the tree planting exercise in two parishes of Budaka and Kibanjwa where they experienced an extended dry spell that led to drying up of some of the planted tree seedlings. For example, Budaka had 60% and Kibanjwa had 50% seedling survival rates which are below the overall project average of 70%.

Another challenge is some farmers' preference of exotic tree species over the indigenous tree species because of their relatively fast growth which enables them to satisfy their short-term needs for fuel wood, poles and other structural timber. However, the demand for tree seedlings was overwhelmingly higher than projected and this has to be met with future planting activities

Other challenges identified by farmers include

- The prolonged dry spell experienced in the dry season which has affected 30% of the planted tree seedlings.

- Farmers also attributed seedling losses to poor quality of seedlings and age which affected performance of some tree species.
- The lack of enough farm tools to help in tree planting exercise also was mentioned as a big challenge experienced by farmers in the project area.
- Farmers complained that seedlings were delivered in a wrong planting season with limited rains.
- Some farmers complained of disease attacks and pests that damaged their seedlings.
- Some farmers moved long distances to pick seedlings from the community collection centers which consumed a lot of time and labor.

4.3 Recommendations

Recommendation 1: Protracted trainings need to continue in the area of energy saving stoves and tree planting having identified that there is still a big demand for tree seedlings in the project area;

Recommendation 2: Communities need to be supported with alternative livelihood options that help to safeguard over-reliance on the forest for their survival. These could entail supporting them through improved agriculture technology including but not limited to provision of improved livestock rearing at the forest edge, improved crop seeds; and low-impact forest enterprises like apiculture. This would support efforts aimed at improving household incomes;

Recommendation 3: Communities should be trained in tree nursery bed operations and management so that they are in position to raise their own seedlings and plant at the right time.

Recommendation 4: JGI Roots and Shoots environmental education program should be introduced in all the schools in the project area.

Recommendation 5: Tree seedlings should be planted in the first rainy season of March and April to avoid cases of severe drought which is usually experienced in the project area during the late months of November up to February.

Recommendation 1: Communities should be supported to be more resilient to climate change with seasonal crops with a short lifecycle such as horticultural crops and vegetables.

Project Summary

| Planned Activities | Expected Outcomes | Targets | Actual Output | Reason for Variance | Means of verification | Impact Achieved |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Project launch with local governments and communities | Increased understanding and acceptance of the project by the community | At least 50 various stakeholders (PFOs, local leaders, etc.) attend project launch | At least 54 stakeholders participated in the project launch. | No major variation from the target. | Project launch report | Project accepted by the community who actively participated in implementation. |
| 2. KAP Pre-evaluation | Increased understanding by the project team of the gaps in knowledge and attitudes towards forest conservation | Pre-evaluation conducted in 15 villages in the six parishes | Pre-evaluation conducted in 15 villages in the six parishes with 164 respondents | No variation | Baseline report | Baseline provided basic information for project implementation |
| 3. Native tree seedlings planted in degraded riparian forest areas | Degraded riparian forests regenerated through planting indigenous tree species | At least 95,000 assorted seedlings of five (5) indigenous spp. distributed and planted on at least 112.5 ha of degraded site | 101,700 assorted indigenous tree seedlings were planted by 270 farmers in degraded private and community forests | Seedlings were locally sourced at a slightly cheaper rate than expected. This increased the quantity. | Project site visits, map, GPS coordinates and photos | Degraded forest area replanted with indigenous tree species |
| 4. Dissemination of climate change and forest conservation information and awareness materials | Increased understanding of climate change issues in relation to forestry | At least 300 copies of various awareness materials printed and disseminated | At least 4,000 awareness posters on climate change printed and distributed | No variation | Copies of awareness materials | Communities feel they are knowledgeable of climate change issues |
| 5. Community Sensitization and Awareness | Improved environmental knowledge, attitude, and understanding of sustainable forest management and practices through environmental education | Sensitization meeting conducted to at least 1,200 community members (200 households) across the six (6) targeted parishes using forest conservation messages | At least 567 household heads sensitized, reaching out to at least 3,402 community members indirectly with climate change and forest conservation messages | More households reached because of good mobilization and community sensitization. | Site visits and interaction with Private Forest Owners and Forest Monitors & Photos | There is a significant positive change in community knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) towards forest conservation. |
| 6. KAP Post-evaluation | Changes in KAP evaluated at project end | Post-evaluation of KAP conducted in 15 villages in the six parishes | Post-evaluation of KAP conducted in 16 villages in 3 parishes | At least three (3) parishes were representative enough to conduct a detailed post-evaluation | Post-evaluation report | Established changes in KAP |