

Project number	39911121
Title	Miljö

Countries Burundi, India, DR Kongo,
Summary The purpose of this environmental care review is to provide better understanding of community and organisational based factors implicating attempts to mitigate or adapt to environmental challenges and then consider how PMU and partners can stimulate development of ecofriendly management frameworks.

The research conducted for this review is based on three different projects with different levels of environmental activities in different geographical contexts: The Agricultural and Environment Protection in Burundi, Training of Civil Society on Environment and Management of Natural Resources in Congo and People's Empowerment Project in India.

It appears, from an analysis of the different activities developed by the projects reviewed that all activities are relevant to the local and regional contexts as they derive from situation analysis and organisational experience in the field. In rural areas, environmental care embraces the close link between ecological situation and human activity, hence the link between environment protection and agriculture in the projects. In urban situation, environmental issues are more linked to overpopulation, space, habitat, sanitation and industrial pollution. Raising awareness for people to care about their immediate surroundings is important but big changes are beyond what small projects can do.

From the findings of the research, this review identifies seven key lessons to be learned:

- Organisations and practitioners willing to succeed in promoting environmental care should put beneficiaries at the centre of their work. Local community participation is key to successful environmental care activities.
- There is efficiency and bigger impact in promoting environmental care through existing local groups and associations and through formation of new groups rather than targeting individuals.
- Combining approaches or activities that promote livelihoods, economic gains and the environment helps to get stronger commitment of poor people.
- Combining tree planting and methods to reduce wood consumption such as the use of improved cooking stoves in the same geographical area delivers good environmental impact.
- Schools and churches are structures with high potential to foster environmental care.
- Support to environmental projects needs a long-term commitment in terms of funding and technical accompaniment so that the momentum created and success achieved at the beginning do not fade away when the project stops after a few years.
- There is room for partners to use more of advocacy to improve protection of the environment than what they currently do.

The report ends with a number of recommendations in section 3.2., for PMU and partners. These are suggestions based on the review findings which are formulated to stimulate reflections and practical steps that can help improve strategic orientation and operational design and implementation of projects that aim at upholding the commitment to increased environmental care.

Recommendations **Recommendations for PMU**

- Continue to envision partners, especially some key strategic partners, for environmental care, in the different regions where PMU supports projects. Once different regional offices of PMU become operational, this may create

further opportunity to influence partners through envisioning seminars and strategic reflections on the practice of environmental care in different contexts and with different kind of projects that can mainstream environmental issues.

- Find ways to further encourage, where it is relevant, partners to use the environmental lens or other relevant tools to assess the environmental impact of projects and ensure that environmental issues are taken into account in any project. Besides the workshops on environmental lens and the relevant questions already in use during the planning process, it can be good to add, in project reporting templates, a few questions on how partners have used or adapted the tool and how they monitor the environmental impacts identified using the tool. Another possibility can be to organize in regions, for environmental projects, specific 'Environmental Project Monitoring Seminars' where partners running such projects meet to review together results, impacts and challenges in relation to environmental care, using environmental lens and other tools suggested by PMU and partners themselves.
- Build capacity and support partners in conducting baselines that include relevant environmental data and information for the regions where they work so that they can be able to link, at any time, their projects to existing relevant data.
- Improve the Building Block 4 *Environment* framework to push a little bit partners to take further and improve management measures, policies and organisational routines that integrate considerations for environmental care. This can be done through adding a few key indicators at Civil Society level to see what policies, routines, and key project management decisions are taken in the environmental care mindset.
- Consider moving from the short-term project funding model to long-term programmatic funding model for environmental projects in order to sustain for a longer period environmental impacts and organisational commitment of partners in environmental care.
- Consider ways to raise funding for the Agricultural and Environment Protection Project of CEPBU in Burundi for a third phase in order to sustain the great results achieved by the project in the areas of environment and food security, to strengthen local ownership and sustainability of the activities, to increase church leadership capacity building for environmental care and link environmental care with disaster risk reduction in the Burundi context.

Recommendations for partners

- Finalise the organisational environmental policy which has been drafted, get it approved, and work to get it known and owned by staff and local churches.
- Include in environmental policies some basic principles that will increase staff's awareness on individual environmental footprint and on organisational environmental sustainability, such as rational use of water and electricity in the office, considerations for printing documents or not, handling of office waste, etc. Although the actions of a few staff can make a difference, organisations that make big environmental improvements tend to have the commitment of all staff. Staff therefore needs to be aware and motivated, and structures need to be in place to support and measure their efforts.
- Increase and diversify contacts for fundraising to pursue project

objectives in order to sustain for a longer period its remarkably positive results and impacts. For this, strategic contacts with external donors like PMU and others are very important and also contacts with sources of government funding and existing regional or national agricultural and environmental programmes.

- Even in the absence of external funding, maintain regular contacts and follow up visits to local development committees and local churches to encourage them for continuation and local ownership of the on-going activities from the project.
- In future environmental projects, establish clearly the link between some key project activities and management measures with the perspective for disaster risk reduction in the country, considering the current frequency of environmental disasters occurring in Burundi (landslides, floods, drought, etc.).
- When resources permit, focus future environmental initiatives and projects on scaling up capacity of church leaders in environmental care at national level, on increasing knowledge and changing behaviours of the youth on environmental issues, and increasing advocacy to get greater involvement of government authorities, local and provincial leaders, and members of parliament for the cause of environmental care in the country.
- Stimulate involvement of church relevant structures in the project's activities for local ownership and sustainability of the activities. Currently, the project is working in the framework of the university and relies very much on the commitment of a few people in the university leadership. Change or unavailability of these few people can negatively affect the continuation of the project despite partnership with local associations and a number of schools. Using the momentum created by this project, the church would better consider including environmental aspects in all other projects they are planning for the future.
- Considering the potential for success with project activities run through schools, it may be a good choice to focus on work through schools with the aim of increasing knowledge and changing behaviours of the youth on environmental issues. Some Environment Clubs in schools have potential to impact further the local communities around.
- Despite the project's emphasis on training of civil society actors on environmental matters and sustainable management of natural resources, it is advisable to put some leverage on advocacy to get greater involvement of government authorities, local and provincial leaders, and members of parliament for the cause of environmental care.
- CSOs may develop each a long-term environmental vision and capture these visions in environmental policies. By doing this, they will set examples for civil society organisations committed to environmental care in the region to develop their own environmental policies.
- Though environment is not the main focus of its work, the current move to promote environmental awareness among the beneficiaries through project staff and motivators is worth to be maintained and scaled up. More awareness can be built from the early planning stage of income-generating activities identified by Self-Help Groups by using simple reflections and questioning taken from the Environmental Lens tool.
- As the organisation has good contacts with government services and other

prominent civil society organisations, the use of networking and advocacy opportunities would be a good way to draw attention of other actors on major environmental issues affecting local communities in slums (clogged drains, stagnating water, garbage disposal, lack of public toilet, etc.) so that they can channel work and resources to contribute to solutions.

- In order to uphold the spirit of mainstreaming environmental care in the organisation and its projects, the organization may develop an organisational policy and include in it some components to change knowledge, attitudes and practices within the organisation, for example rational use of water and electricity in the office, considerations for printing documents or not, handling of office waste and other hints that help staff and the organisation to set example of responsible environmental behaviours.