

UNDP-UNEP Poverty and Environment Initiative (PEI)

Overall goal: *To contribute to poverty reduction and improved well-being of poor and vulnerable groups through mainstreaming of poverty-environment linkages into national development processes.*

Objectives at country level:

- *Inclusion of environmental sustainability as a central objective in national development strategies, such as poverty reduction strategy papers (PRSPs), MDG implementation plans or equivalent*
- *Increasing national budget allocations in support of pro-poor environmental outcomes*
- *Building the long-term capacity of the government to integrate poverty-environment concerns into the design and implementation of development plans*

Basic facts of the PEI in Rwanda

- The main purpose of the first phase of PEI–Rwanda (November 2005-May 2007) was to ensure integration of environment into Rwanda’s new PRSP, the Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy (EDPRS).
- The second and current phase (August 2007-December 2010) is articulated around Rwanda’s medium term needs, namely building capacity for sound environmental management at the local, district, and national level, in collaboration with other ongoing initiatives to enable the implementation of the EDPRS and its environmental commitments.
- The project is executed by Government of Rwanda through Ministry of Natural Resources and implemented by Rwanda Environment Management Authority in close collaboration with Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. It is a joint Government of Rwanda, UNDP Rwanda and PEI project.
- The main national partners are the Ministry of Natural Resources, the Rwanda Environment Management Authority, the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning, the Ministry of Local Government and Good Governance, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Infrastructure, Energy, Transport and Telecommunications and the Ministry of Commerce, Industry, Investment Promotion, Tourism and Cooperatives.
- The donors which funded phase one of PEI included the Government of Belgium and the Government of Norway (through UNEP) and UNDP-Rwanda. The Government of Ireland (through UNEP) is providing the vast majority of the funds for the second phase with some contributions from the Government of Rwanda and UNDP-Rwanda.
- The total budget is over USD 3 million: USD 610,000 (2005-2007) and USD 2,470,000 (2007-2009)

The context of mainstreaming in Rwanda

- Rwanda’s “Vision 2020” is the country’s overarching national planning and policy framework into which other strategies, plans, programmes and policies should fit. Developed in 1999, the Vision 2020 document recognises that the environment cannot be tackled in isolation. The document states that Rwanda will endeavour to “mainstream the environmental aspect in all policies and programmes of education, sensitisation and development and in all the processes of decision-making”.
- Rwanda’s first PRSP was finalised in November 2001 and endorsed by the World Bank and IMF in July 2002. In the development of PRSP 1, environment was considered a cross cutting issue but not an independent sector. However, it is widely agreed that Rwanda’s first PRSP did not adequately integrate environmental issues and consequently, the planning processes did not adequately take into account sustainable natural resource management.

PEI Country Fact Sheet

RWANDA

- In September 2007, the Rwandan Cabinet approved the EDPRS (the second PRSP), where environment is both recognized as a cross-cutting issue and an independent sector.
- PEI was strongly engaged in the elaboration of the EDPRS and played a crucial role in supporting the work of both the Environment and Land Use Management Sector Working Group and the Cross-cutting Issues Working Group.
- Rwanda is one of the eight 'One UN pilots'. Environment is one of five focus areas of the UNDAF, which can also be partially accredited to the advocacy work of PEI.

Main activities of PEI-Rwanda

- Development of environmental mainstreaming tools for the EDPRS process.
- Extensive "environment-for-development" media events (radio and TV programmes) to sustain the visibility of the mainstreaming agenda and raise public awareness about poverty and environment linkages.
- Increase awareness and more effective participation of stakeholders in environmental policy and planning processes.
- Increase stakeholder participation and trainings of local civil society groups.
- Building capacity through training workshops such as integrated ecosystem assessment, poverty-environment indicator development and on-the-job training and technical support.
- Building capacity at national and district level for government officials in understanding and analysing links between poverty and environment and integrate environment into development planning.
- Support to six key sectors in development of Sector Strategies, based on the EDPRS.
- Support district level planning in environment mainstreaming, including training in collection of environmental data and development of indicators aligned with the MDG 1+ 7.
- Capacity development and technical support to Ministry of Finance to improve environmental mainstreaming in budgets across sectors, developing financial instruments, conduct mainstreaming of environment in public expenditure reviews and conduct environmental fiscal reform.
- Support to the UNDAF formulation and actively participation in the One UN process.

What has been achieved to date?

- Capacity development of planners, local NGOs and CBOs in 30 districts about links between poverty and environment and integrate environment into development planning undertaken.
- Development of a knowledge base on poverty- environment linkages in Rwanda through e.g. an economic analysis of costs of environmental degradation, identification of poverty-environment-energy linkages, and a pilot integrated ecosystem assessment.
- Environment is mainstreamed in the EDPRS. The evidence and advocacy provided by PEI were instrumental in this accomplishment. Most sectors have taken on board environmental recommendations and planned actions.
- Linkages between environment and poverty are reflected in Sector Strategic Plans and priorities.
- A communication strategy was developed and is being implemented.
- Increased public awareness about poverty-environment linkages through productions for TV, radio and print media, as well as training of journalists.
- Strengthening of the environment sector through the EDPRS process with clear priorities developed.
- Technical support given to the elaboration of the Sector Strategic Plan for Environment and Natural Resources, which provides a strategic tool for environmental mainstreaming throughout various sectors.
- Guidelines for mainstreaming and checklists for all sectors have facilitated the integration of environment as a cross-cutting issue in sector planning.
- A number of District Development Plans were supported to mainstream environment.

- Improved skills among government personnel and local government officials on the use of tools for environmental mainstreaming (i.e. indicator development).
- Strategic collaboration with the Ministry of Finance to support environment as a cross-cutting issue in budget calls and improved budgeting for sustainability across sector ministries.
- Establishment of a cross-ministerial Task Team and a Stakeholder Consultative Group ensuring effective stakeholder consultation and sector engagement for environmental mainstreaming.
- Environment is one of five focus areas for the UNDAF, which PEI actively involved with the formulation of. PEI has also been fully engaged in the One UN process.

Lessons learned

- Involvement of key stakeholders from the very start of programme development ensures broad ownership and improves the efficiency and effectiveness of its implementation.
- It is crucial to clearly demonstrate the links between poverty and environment at the national level in a language familiar to planners and policymakers. Assessments such as economic analysis of environmental degradation and integrated ecosystem assessments are essential evidence-based advocacy tools in convincing policy-makers about the importance and benefits of sustainable natural resource management.
- It is necessary to provide sustained support over a longer period. PEI-Rwanda's continuous engagement in the EDPRS process ensures better mainstreaming results by closely monitoring the process and responding to specific needs from the other sectors pertinent to integration of environment.
- A key to success has been PEI's ability to link with, and insert themselves in, other larger policy processes, and to feed these processes with ideas, tools and opportunities.
- The production of tools such as mainstreaming guidelines, sector specific environmental checklists and poverty-environment indicators provides concrete guidance to the sectors and relevant ministries and enhances the mainstreaming process.

Key documents for PEI Rwanda

- [Guidelines for mainstreaming environment in the economic development and poverty reduction strategy, UNDP-UNEP PEI, Republic of Rwanda, 2007.](#)
- [Poverty-environment indicators and Strategy for Monitoring them within the framework of the EDPRS, Rwanda Environmental management Authority \(REMA\), 2007.](#)
- [Pilot integrated Ecosystem Assessment of Bugesera, UNDP-UNEP PEI, Republic of Rwanda, 2007.](#)
- [Economic Analysis of Natural Resource Management in Rwanda, UNDP, UNEP, Republic of Rwanda, 2006](#)
- [Environment and Poverty Reduction in Rwanda - An assessment, PEI Rwanda, 2006](#)
- [Mainstreaming of Environment in the EDPRS – Briefing note, PEI Rwanda, 2006](#)
- [Mainstreaming environment in energy Strategies to address poverty in Rwanda, PEI Rwanda, Sustainable Energy Africa, 2006](#)
- [Poverty-environment-energy linkages in Rwanda - Policy brief, UNEP, Sustainable Energy Africa, 2006](#)
- [Poverty and Environment Mapping - Poverty- Environment Indicators and Policy Options for Possible Intervention under the PRSP, Republic of Rwanda, UNDP, 2005](#)
- [Etude pilote pour une cartographie des relations entre Pauvreté et Environnement - Phase I, CGIS-UNR, UNDP, CEA-SURF, 2003](#)
- [The Government of Rwanda Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper, Republic of Rwanda, 2002](#)
- [Environmental Profile of Rwanda, European Commission, 2006](#)

- [Selected documents from the United Nations](#)

Way forward

- In the context of the State of the Environment, launch a dissemination programme to sensitize District Mayors and parliamentarians and development partners on poverty-environment links
- Continuous support and monitoring of the EDPRS implementation for environmental mainstreaming at both national and district level, including strengthening environmental data collection at district level.
- Promote financial instruments and increased investments in the area of environment, by providing research and training on topics such as environmental fiscal reform and public environmental expenditure review.
- Enhance integration of environment into the budget calls and processes and provide long-term technical support for environmental mainstreaming to the Ministry of Finance.
- Specific and targeted support to key sectors for environmental mainstreaming activities in sector programmes.
- Building capacity of local government authorities to integrate environment into district development plans, including support for communities to implement projects promoting environmental sustainability and poverty reduction.
- Contribution to common fund in supporting the Rwanda Environment Management Authority to engage the media for public awareness and poverty-environment mainstreaming
- Promote partnerships with sector ministries, but also NGOs, national academia and private sector to strengthen sustainability and national ownership.
- Actively participate in the re-activated Sector Working Group in support of the Environment and Natural Resource sector and the Sector Wide Approach process. PEI will be part of the Sector Working Group Secretariat and support the Environmental Thematic Group that UNDP and UNEP co-chair.