

COURSE REPORT

Forest Landscape Restoration and the Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology - Uganda

February 26 - March 16, 2018

A blended course organized by:
Environmental Leadership & Training Initiative (ELTI)
International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)
New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and TerrAfrica



Group photo of course participants, facilitators, and organizers. Photo credit: NEPAD.

Background:

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) provides an opportunity to transform large areas of degraded and deforested land into landscapes that produce numerous ecological, economic, and social benefits. Many countries have made commitments to restore millions of hectares of degraded and deforested land under the Bonn Challenge, which is an international effort to restore 150 million hectares around the globe by 2020 and 350 million by 2030. Achieving these commitments, however, requires that decision-makers address the diverse ecological, socio-political, and economic factors that impact restoration efforts at different scales.

The Restoration Opportunities Assessment Methodology (ROAM) provides a framework to analyze, identify, and prioritize restoration opportunities in order to develop a suite of landscape restoration strategies for particular contexts. By situating ROAM within a broader framework of information on tropical forest and landscape ecology, socio-political and economic processes related to restoration, and landscape restoration strategies, individuals involved with FLR policy, planning, and implementation can develop the foundation needed to achieve a range of objectives, such as economic growth, food security, biodiversity conservation, and carbon sequestration.

ELTI is an initiative of the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental studies supported by Arcadia, a charitable fund of Peter Baldwin and Lisbet Rausing (www.arcadiahfund.org.uk). IUCN is a membership Union composed of both government and civil society organisations. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its 1,300 Member organisations and the input of some 15,000 experts. IUCN is the global authority on the status of the natural world and the measures needed to safeguard it.



Participants completing an interactive exercise on identifying restoration opportunity areas.

This training course aimed to develop the capacity of staff members from government and other key agencies to implement ROAM. This objective is particularly important for countries striving to meet Bonn Challenge targets by 2030, as implementing ROAM can help governments generate appropriate information for improved decision-making on FLR implementation. In 2014, Uganda committed to restore 2.5 million hectares of land under the Bonn Challenge.

Course Objectives:

The specific objectives of this course were to:

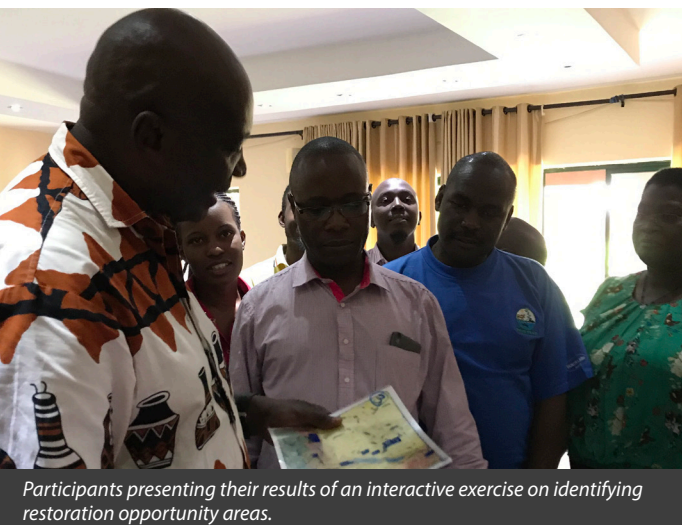
1. Present key principles of tropical forest ecology, disturbance, social and governance factors, and landscape restoration actions;
2. Support participants to develop a Theory of Change that will generate sustained multiple benefits of FLR in the context of Uganda by implementing a situation analysis of landscape degradation and the drivers of degradation and deforestation;
3. Provide participants with the knowledge to evaluate and compare an array of forest landscape restoration methodologies and understand how biophysical and socio-economic conditions of a landscape influence decision-making about which strategies to utilize;
4. Develop a shared understanding of landscape restoration opportunities and the value of multifunctional landscapes amongst participants, to help increase resource allocation to landscape restoration programs and increase engagement of key policy-makers from different sectors;
5. Present ROAM as a robust and adaptable framework to analyze and develop FLR strategies, plans, and supporting policies;
6. Provide opportunities for participants to engage in critical discussion, share expertise, and connect with other practitioners engaged in landscape restoration and ROAM-related activities in their country; and
7. Discuss and help develop capacity to contribute to the realization of Uganda's commitment to the Bonn Challenge and the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100).



Site of field visit in Mukono District.



Presentation by Stephen Muwya of the Uganda Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries.



Participants presenting their results of an interactive exercise on identifying restoration opportunity areas.

Format:

The training course comprised two primary components:

1. A **Two-week online primer** presented key information on social and ecological fundamentals and landscape restoration strategies. The primer included pre-recorded lectures, interactive text-based presentations, case studies, an introductory live discussion session, and assignments in which participants were asked to relate themes to their own local context.

2. A **Four-day in-person training course** was held at the Nile Village Hotel in Jinja, Uganda and included a comprehensive and interactive program on FLR and ROAM. The course incorporated a range of teaching approaches, including key presentations on theory and application of FLR and ROAM, interactive exercises, field visits, and peer-to-peer exchange.

The in-person course included the following presentations and activities:

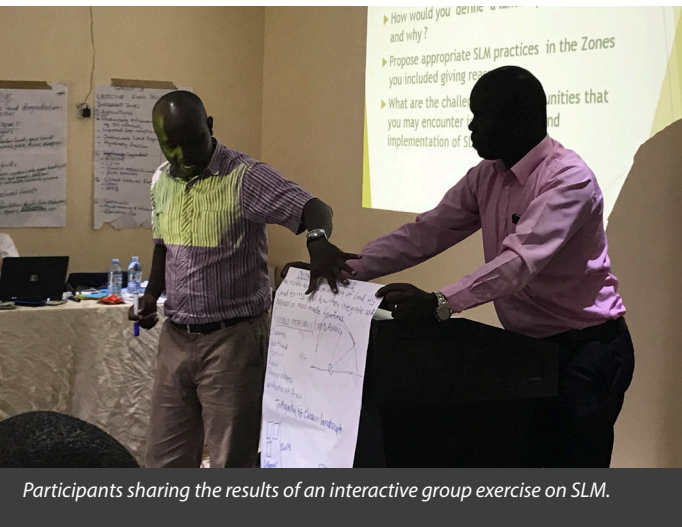
Day 1:

The first day began with an opening session to welcome participants and introduce the training event. Presentations on the Bonn Challenge, the AFR100, and ROAM followed the opening session.

Participants then discussed and identified local degradation indicators, drivers of degradation, and FLR objectives in an interactive group exercise. Participants learned about social and cultural considerations for FLR and completed an activity identifying and prioritizing important stakeholders to engage with in FLR and ROAM.

Day 2:

On the second day, participants completed an interactive group exercise identifying priority restoration areas in a landscape. They learned about ecosystem services and landscape restoration, including restoration strategies to achieve specific ecosystem service objectives and planning tools for measuring and assessing benefits. Participants then completed an interactive group activity to identify restoration zones and site-specific FLR interventions, using a landscape approach.



During the afternoon, Stephen Muwaya of the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF) and Polycarp Mwima of IUCN's Uganda office gave presentations on FLR topics specific to Uganda. They then led a group exercise discussing Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in depth.

Day 3:

On the third day, course attendees visited a field site to demonstrate course themes and help visualize FLR opportunities.

Participants visited a village in the Mukono District - a site where the "landscape approach" has been utilized. In this district, farmers from several villages have been mobilized into cooperatives, and they have implemented SLM, established woodlots and fruit orchards, and started animal husbandry activities, among other environmental and income-generating initiatives.

Due to heavy rains on the day of the field visit, it was not possible for participants to go into the field to see the FLR interventions firsthand. Instead, participants listened to a number of presentations and engaged in discussions with community members about the SLM efforts taking place in the district.

Participants first discussed with members of the Mukono Youth Farmers' Association, who discussed the efforts that they have done using improved farming methods to generate income and ensure better livelihoods for themselves and their families. They then met community members, many of whom hold leadership positions in various cooperatives.



Day 4:

On the final day, participants shared their reflections about the field visit, then completed an interactive exercise on cost-benefit analysis for landscape restoration interventions. The activity was followed by presentations on data and multi-criteria analysis for ROAM, financing for FLR, and considerations for scaling up FLR. Participants completed a final wrap-up activity, developing a "road map" to plan and implement ROAM. The event ended with course evaluations and closing remarks.





Participants learning how to use the Africa Tree Finder smartphone application during the Day 4 session on scaling up.

Participants:

Twenty-nine participants, representing Ugandan governmental departments (e.g., agriculture, animal industry, fisheries, and agricultural research) and other Ugandan institutions, attended the training.

Facilitators:

The course was facilitated by Craig Beatty (Programme Officer, IUCN Global Forest and Climate Change Programme), Karin Bucht (Online Training Program Associate, ELTI), Polycarp Mwima (Program Officer, IUCN Uganda), and Cotilda Nakyeyune (Senior Program Officer, IUCN Uganda), with assistance from country focal point Stephen Muwaya (Uganda Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry, and Fisheries) and NEPAD representatives Rudo Makunike, Edith Maboumba, and Teko Nhlapo.

Follow-up:

All participants were actively engaged during the four-day in-person course and indicated that their experience was a positive one. In the course exit survey, 96% of participants rated their experience in the course as “good” or “very good.” While only some participants accessed the online primer before the in-person course, those that did indicated that they found the content useful. In the coming months, ELTI aims to follow up with participants to see how the course has influenced their professional development, and how they are managing and planning FLR in their work.

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