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Legal Personality No 13/RGB/NGO/2015 of 12/08/2015

2025 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION FINAL REPORT

Organisation Name	Rural Development Inter-Diocesan Service (RDIS)
Project Title	Environmental conservation in Nyamasheke & Rusizi districts
Area of Implementation	Cyangugu Zone (Nyamasheke & Rusizi districts)
Financial Partner	Rwanda Action (RA)
Department	Department of Environmental Care and Disaster Risk Reduction
Reporter's Name	Daniel Ndayisenga
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Type of report	Final Report
Reporting Period	March 2025 – January 2026
Date of report	22 nd February 2026

0. Background information

RDIS is a Non-Governmental Organization established jointly by the five Anglican Dioceses in Southern provinces of Rwanda and Part of Western Province (Butare, Cyangugu, Kigeme, Nyaruguru and Shyogwe) meant to bring about social and economic development through church and community transformation for holistic and sustainable development by using limited resources available in the communities and households that the organization serves.

The organization has been registered by Rwanda Governance Board as a local NGO on the 12 August 2015 under registration number: 13/RGB/NGO/2015. It focuses on environment and food security issues as stated in its mission. Currently, the head office of the organization is located in Kavumu Cell, Gitarama Cell, Nyamabuye Sector, Muhanga District, in Southern Province of Rwanda. In addition, RDIS has also five Coordination Zones and offices in the following Districts; Huye, Muhanga, Nyamagabe, Nyaruguru and Rusizi. RDIS has for a long time collaborated with government leadership especially at the local level (District, sectors, cells and villages) as well as the Anglican church of Rwanda in southern and western provinces in establishment, running and managing tree nurseries from which seedlings are prepared and distributed to the community members.

1. Executive Summary

In response to accelerating environmental degradation driven by deforestation in Rwanda particularly in Rusizi and Nyamasheke Districts, the Rural Development Inter-Diocesan Service (RDIS) implemented a Tree Planting Project under the funds from Rwanda Action to restore degraded landscapes and strengthen community resilience. Persistent forest loss in these districts has contributed to declining biodiversity, reduced availability of wood and non-wood forest products, increased soil erosion, weakened watershed protection, and rising fuelwood costs, placing significant environmental and socio-economic pressure on rural households.

Aligned with its mission *“to safeguard the environment and increase production for sustainable and holistic development,”* RDIS, with financial support from Rwanda Action, implemented this initiative as a strategic intervention contributing to forest landscape restoration in Nyamasheke and Rusizi Districts. During the 2025 implementation period, the project prioritized the distribution of forestry, agroforestry, and fruit tree seedlings. Five community-based nurseries were established and fully operationalized, producing and distributing over **153,242 high quality seedlings** to smallholder farmers across the target areas.

The project was implemented in Bushenge, Ruharambuga, and Bushekeri Sectors in Nyamasheke District, and Nyakarenzo and Nyakabuye Sectors in Rusizi District. Through these interventions, the project contributed to increased tree cover, restoration of degraded land, improved soil fertility, reduced soil erosion, enhanced household nutrition through fruit tree promotion, and strengthened local capacity in sustainable natural resource management.

In summary, the Tree Planting Project demonstrates the effective and accountable utilization of donor support to generate measurable environmental and livelihood outcomes. It reaffirms RDIS's commitment to community-driven landscape restoration and its contribution to Rwanda's national priorities on climate resilience, ecosystem restoration, and sustainable rural development.

2. Realized activities against planned projects and programmers' activities

Following the receipt of financial support from Rwanda Action for the Environmental Conservation Project in Nyamasheke and Rusizi districts, the Rural Development Inter-Diocesan Service (RDIS) implemented the planned activities in accordance with the approved implementation plan for 2025. The project focused on systematic nursery establishment, seedling production, quality control, distribution, monitoring, and technical capacity strengthening. Implementation was carried out efficiently and in close collaboration with Sector Agronomists, Sector Forestry Officers, and District Forest Officers, ensuring strong coordination, technical oversight, and community participation.

Summary of Planned vs. Realized Activities (2025 Implementation Period)

No.	Planned Activity	Realized Activity	Implementation Period	Key Results / Observations
1	Site identification and confirmation for tree nursery establishment	Nursery sites identified and confirmed in 5 sectors (Nyakabuye, Nyakarenzo, Bushenge, Bushekeri, Ruharambuga)	April 2025	Sites selected through joint assessments with Sector Agronomists and District Forest Officers, prioritizing areas with high restoration needs and strong environmental impact potential.
2	Selection of Tree Nursery Managers	Experienced managers retained; new managers recruited for Nyakarenzo and Bushenge	April 2025	Selection based on technical competence and prior nursery experience, ensuring continuity and effective management.
3	Plot hiring and nursery construction	Nursery plots secured and infrastructure established	April 2025	Sites selected based on accessibility, water availability, drainage, and proximity to target planting areas. Rental costs covered by RDIS to ensure uninterrupted operations.
4	Seedbed preparation	Seedbeds prepared according to technical standards	April 2025	Properly prepared seedbeds ensured favorable conditions for germination and early seedling growth.

5	Purchase of seeds and Agriculture tubings	Certified seeds and nursery bags procured and distributed	May 2025	Seeds were sourced; materials transported to all nursery sites to ensure standardized production.
6	Seeding and watering operations	Systematic seed sowing and regular watering conducted	May – December 2025	Maintained optimal moisture conditions, ensuring healthy germination and seedling establishment.
7	Transplanting	Seedlings transplanted after reaching appropriate maturity	June – August 2025	Conducted at optimal growth stage to improve survival rates and root development.
8	Nursery management refresher training	Technical refresher training conducted at Murangi Field School	July 2025	Strengthened nursery management capacity, quality control, record-keeping, and post-planting monitoring practices.
9	Weed, pest, and disease management	Continuous weeding and preventive sanitation implemented	Ongoing (May–Dec 2025)	Maintained seedling health and vigor through integrated nursery management practices.
10	Grafting of avocado seedlings	Avocado grafting successfully conducted	August 2025	Achieved 92% grafting success rate, demonstrating high technical effectiveness.
11	Seedling distribution and field planting	153,242 seedlings distributed across 5 nursery sites	Oct 2025 – Jan 2026	Transparent distribution with systematic record-keeping; targeted eligible beneficiaries.
12	Nursery maintenance	Continuous supervision and maintenance conducted	Throughout project period	Ensured sustained seedling quality and operational efficiency under joint supervision.
13	Monitoring and follow-up	Monthly monitoring and formal evaluation conducted	Monthly (2025)	Monitoring conducted with Sector Forestry Officers; Rwanda Action evaluation completed in September 2025.
14	Survival rate assessment	Field assessment conducted among 25 previous beneficiaries	January 2026	Evaluated long-term seedling survival and sustainability of earlier interventions.
15	Reporting	Mid-term report submitted to Rwanda Action	August 6, 2025	Report documented implementation progress, challenges, and recommendations.

3. Seedlings produced per Tree Nursery Site

No	Location of Site	Species	Expected seedlings	Seedlings produced	Seedlings (Collected from Nursery for Establishment)	Planted from Field
		Eucalyptus Micro	5,000	6,641		6,602
		Grevellea	4,000	2,654		2,638
	NYAKARENZO	Markhamia	1,000	1,208		1,201
		Calliandra	4,000	3,674		3,652
		Tree Tomatoes	2,000	2,104		2,092
		Avocados	1,500	1,464		1,455
		Passion fruit	12,500	12,560		12,486
	Sub Total		30,000	30,305		30,125
2	NYAKABUYE	Eucalyptus Micro	15,000	15,450		15,538
		Grevellea	9,000	9,326		9,271
		Markhamia	1,000	1,450		1,441
		Passion Fruit	3,500	3,780		3,758
		Avocados	1,500	1,473		1,464
	Sub Total		30,000	31,479		31,292
3	BUSHENGE	Eucalyptus Micro	15,000	14,360		14,275
		Grevellea	7,000	8,156		8,108
		Markhamia	2,000	2,560		2,545
		Tree tomatoes	2000	2,256		2,243
		Passion Fruit	2500	2,610		2,594
		Avocados	1,500	1370		1,362
	Sub Total		30,000	31,312		31,126
4	RUHARAMBUGA	Avoca	1,500	1,325		1,317

		Eucalyptus Micro	1,5000	15,131	15,041
		Grevellea	5,000	4,360	4,334
		Markhamia	2,000	2,250	2,237
		Passion Fruit	3,000	4,245	4,220
		Tree Tomatoes	3,500	3,560	3,539
	Sub Total		30,000	30,871	30,688
5	BUSHEKERI	Eucalyptus Micro	15,000	15,037	14,948
		Markhamia	1,500	2,250	2,237
		Grevellea	8,000	7,045	7,003
		Passion Fruit	4,000	4,360	4,334
		Avoca	1,500	1498	1,489
	Sub Total		30,000	30,190	30,011

4. Seedling Production Performance

Each of the five designated nursery sites was assigned a production target of 30,000 seedlings, resulting in a cumulative target of 150,000 seedlings across all sites. The actual production surpassed this target, with a total of **154,157 seedlings** successfully raised during the 2025 implementation period. This represents an achievement rate of approximately **103%** against the planned target.

The Minor losses were recorded during seedling handling, transportation, and distribution processes, an expected operational risk in large-scale nursery and planting programs. Despite these manageable losses, a total of **153,242 seedlings** were successfully distributed and established in the field. This performance reflects a high level of technical efficiency, effective nursery management, and strong operational coordination. It demonstrates the project's capacity not only to meet but to modestly exceed its production and planting objectives while maintaining overall implementation resilience and quality standards.

5. Distribution of Seedlings

Out of the 154,157 seedlings produced, **153,242 seedlings** were successfully distributed and planted, with only 915 seedlings recorded as damaged during handling and transportation. To maximize environmental and social impact, distribution modalities were strategically diversified:

- i. **Smallholder farmers** received seedlings for planting on private landholdings to support agroforestry integration, soil conservation, household energy needs, and income generation.
- ii. **Schools** were supported with tree seedlings to promote environmental education, student engagement in conservation activities, and institutional greening initiatives.
- iii. **Public lands** were planted through community work activities (Umuganda), strengthening collective ownership of environmental restoration efforts.
- iv. **Church premises** received seedlings for erosion control, landscape restoration, and community demonstration purposes.

This diversified and inclusive distribution strategy strengthened environmental restoration efforts across multiple sectors while reinforcing community participation, shared responsibility, and sustainable natural resource management. The approach enhanced both ecological outcomes and social cohesion, contributing meaningfully to the project's overarching objectives of environmental sustainability and climate resilience.

No	Direct Categories of beneficiaries planted trees	Number of trees planted
1	Small holder farmers	110,850
2	School	4,230
3	Churches	16,940
4	Public land (Planted during Community work/Umuganda)	21,222
Total		153,242

6. Feedback from Project Stakeholders

6.1 Testimony from a Tree Nursery Manager

Name: Nyiramajyambere Beathe

Position: Tree Nursery Manager, Nyakarenzo Sector

Nyiramajyambere Beathe has been serving as a Tree Nursery Manager at the Nyakarenzo site. She reports that this opportunity has had a transformative impact on her economic independence, social standing, and personal confidence as a woman. Although the income earned from nursery management is modest, it has enabled her to contribute meaningfully to her household's needs and to assume greater responsibility for her family's well-being. Notably, she received this employment opportunity at a critical moment when one of her children was preparing to begin university studies. The income she earned allowed her to provide essential study materials, reinforcing her role as a supportive and capable parent.

Beyond financial benefits, her involvement in the project has strengthened her engagement in environmental conservation. She expressed pride in contributing to landscape restoration efforts while simultaneously advancing women's economic empowerment. According to her, the project has enhanced her sense of dignity, voice, and purpose within the community. She conveyed deep appreciation for the opportunity, emphasizing that the initiative not only strengthened her family's resilience but also contributed to building a more sustainable future for the next generation.

6.2 Testimony from a Beneficiary – Livelihood Improvement

Name: Niyirera Adidas

Role: Part-time Nursery Assistant, Bushenge Sector

Niyirera Adidas worked as a part-time assistant supporting the Nursery Manager at the Bushenge Tree Nursery. He reports that the project significantly improved her livelihood and economic stability. He said the income earned from the nursery enabled him to accumulate start-up capital, which she used to establish a small enterprise providing SIM card sales and Mobile Money services. This additional business venture has diversified her income sources, strengthened her financial security, and improved her capacity to meet daily household needs. In addition to financial gains, He acquired practical skills

in seedling production, nursery operations, and resource management. These competencies have enhanced his self-reliance and entrepreneurial confidence. He emphasized that the project clearly demonstrates how environmental conservation initiatives can simultaneously generate sustainable livelihood opportunities. She expressed sincere gratitude for participating in an initiative that protects the environment while creating meaningful economic empowerment at the community level.

7. Challenges Encountered and Mitigation Measures

During project implementation, several operational and financial challenges were encountered. However, proactive and adaptive management strategies were applied to ensure continuity and successful achievement of project objectives.

Challenge Identified	Mitigation Measures Adopted
Significant increase in plot rental costs for nursery establishment due to rising land value and demand.	Conducted negotiations with landowners and prioritized cost-effective sites that met minimum technical criteria while remaining financially viable.
Increased costs of nursery construction materials and essential equipment.	Applied strict budget prioritization and bulk procurement strategies where feasible to minimize cost escalation.
Relatively low incentives for nursery managers compared to rising living costs.	Strengthened non-financial incentives, including refresher training, technical support, recognition, and close supervision to maintain motivation and performance.
Delayed project commencement, which consequently led to late completion of tree planting activities and delayed submission of the final project report.	Submission of the project final report together with the 2026 project application.

Despite these financial and logistical constraints, the project maintained implementation momentum through adaptive planning, prudent financial management, and strong collaboration with sector-level technical authorities. These mitigation measures ensured that planned outputs were achieved and, in some cases, exceeded.

8. Conclusion

The 2025 Environmental Conservation Project implemented by RDIS in Nyamasheke and Rusizi Districts demonstrates a strong alignment between strategic planning, effective implementation, and measurable results. Despite financial and operational challenges, the project successfully established and operationalized five community-based nurseries, produced 154,157 seedlings, and ensured the successful planting of 153,242 trees across smallholder farms, schools, churches, and public lands. By exceeding its initial production target, the project reflects high technical efficiency, strong local coordination, and responsible resource management. The interventions have contributed to increased tree cover, improved soil fertility, erosion control, enhanced household nutrition, and strengthened local capacity in sustainable natural resource management.

Beyond environmental restoration, the project generated meaningful socio-economic benefits, particularly for women and vulnerable community members engaged in nursery operations and seedling distribution. The testimonies presented in this report highlight the project's role in promoting income diversification, economic empowerment, and social inclusion. Through collaborative partnerships with local authorities, faith-based institutions, and community members, RDIS has reinforced its commitment to holistic and sustainable development. The project stands as a practical example of how landscape restoration can simultaneously advance climate resilience, environmental protection, and community livelihoods, contributing to Rwanda's broader sustainable development and green growth agenda.

9. The Project Financial Report

No	Item	Planned Budget	Expenditure	Balance
I	Seedling cost	1,873,750	1,765,000	108,750
II	Tree nursery rehabilitation and maintenance	1,535,000	1,535,000	0
III	Training of tree nursery bed managers	422,000	422,000	0
IV	Tree nursery management	4,250,000	4,250,000	0
V	Fruit Grafting Materials	562,500	562,500	0
VI	Monitoring, follow-up and reporting	1,082,470	1,166,220	-83,750
VII	Bank charges	0	5000	-5,000
	Total	9,725,720	9,710,720	20,000

Done on 23rd. January 2026

NDAYISENGA Daniel _ RDIS Field Coordinator /Cyangugu Zone



Eric Bagenzi/ Director of Environmental Care and Disaster Risk Reduction.

10. Some Project Photos

Seedlings in nursery beds ready for distribution.



RA & Sector Agronomist Joint Monitoring and Follow-up Field Visit. Nyakarenzo.



Young learners receive seedlings to grow at school and home, nurturing future environmental stewards



Community members were pleased to receive well-prepared seedlings for planting nearby.



RNP and RDF join community workers in Umuganda activities.



RDF joined in gathering seedlings for planting.



Mission Statement: "To safeguard environment, increase the production aiming at sustainable and holistic