

About UTaNRMP

Project Background

Upper Tana Catchment Natural Resources Management Project (UTaNRMP) is a ten year project (2012-2022) funded by Government of Kenya, International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Spanish Trust Fund and the Local community. The goal of the project is to contribute to reduction of rural poverty in the Upper Tana river catchment. This goal is pursued via two development objectives which reflect the poverty-environment nexus namely (i) increased sustainable food production and incomes for poor rural households living in the project area; and (ii) sustainable management of natural resources for provision of environmental services.

UTaNRMP River Basins

Project interventions will be progressively scaled up beginning with further work on the tributaries of the five MKEPP river basins, 12 priority river basins and the other 12 river basins as follows.

- [MKEPP River Basins \(5\)](#)
- [High Priority River Basins for UTaNRMP \(12\)](#)
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Ena(Gitimbogo,Thura,Kuune,Rwanjoga,Kirini,Mavuria,Gichine,Riachina,Gangara, Kiambere)
Kapingazi/Rupingazi(Kiye ,Thambana, Nyanjara,Gichangai,Itabua and Kathita),
Kathita (Rugusu, Kathita, Munyi, Gachiege, Kanyango, Ngaciuma, Kinyaritha, Kuuru, Riiji).
Kithinu/Mutonga(Naka,Nithi,Maara South,Maara North and Thuci),
Tungu (none)

Maragua, Murubara, Nairobi, Ragati, Rujiweru, Rupingazi, Saba Saba, Thanagatha, Thanantu, Thiba, Thika/Sasumua, Thingithu.
Amboni/ Muringato, Iraru, Kayahwe, Lower Chania, Mara, Mariara, Mathioya, Nyamindi, Ruguti, Rwamuthambi, Sagana, Ura.

The upper Tana catchment is home to 5.2 million people and is under heavy and growing population pressure. The project aims at poverty reduction targeting about 205,000 households (1,025,000 people) whose livelihoods revolve around the use of the natural resources of Upper Tana catchment. These include smallholder crop and livestock farmers, agro-pastoralists, fishers, rural traders, and community groups involved in natural resources management (NRM) and income generating activities. Special focus is on women and youth as well as other vulnerable groups within the above categories. The project also provides indirect benefits to the non-target groups in the Upper Tana catchment through services and enterprises linked with the project activities, as well as to populations outside the catchment who rely on water and hydro-electricity from the river system.

The Implementation is through four components namely: Sustainable Water Resources and Natural Resources management, Sustainable Rural Livelihoods, Community Empowerment and Project

Coordination and Management.

Importance of Upper Tana Catchment

The Tana River is the most important river basin in Kenya, provides water for about half the entire Kenyan population

Country's hydroelectric power

80%

Total discharge of the country's rivers

27%

Water used in the City of Nairobi

92%

Kenya's gazetted forests

25%

Threats to Upper Tana Catchment

The Upper Tana catchment has experienced considerable land degradation and a drastic reduction of surface water availability during the dry season, and poor water quality during the wet season mainly due to high silt loads. The area is densely populated, with large concentrations of poor and very poor people, particularly in the mid-altitude zone. Landholdings are small and diminishing as population grows, crop yields are low and declining due to fertility depletion and erosion, and rural households are poorly linked to markets and services. The result has been a reduction of tree cover both in the forest reserve and in the farmlands. The reduced tree cover, inappropriate land use practices in the farmlands and overgrazing in the pastoral lowlands have resulted into increased soil erosion rate and hence higher sediment load for the Tana River and its tributaries..

Rational of UTaNRMP

The rationale for the project is based on the nexus between rural poverty and ecosystem health in a densely populated and environmentally fragile watershed of critical national and global significance. The high prevalence of rural poverty contributes to environmental degradation which in turn reduces sustainable livelihood opportunities; as well as creating negative environmental externalities including forest degradation, human-wildlife conflict, encroachment in water sources and reduced availability and quality of water to downstream users. The project recognizes the need to arrest the rapid loss of the life-supporting functions of the Tana River ecosystem due to forest degradation, inappropriate agricultural practices, and overgrazing, which have triggered decreasing water recharge, increasing soil erosion that contributes to a high sediment load in the rivers and electricity generating dams. These same factors contribute to the persistently high levels of rural poverty; and also have serious consequences for power supply, the supply of water to the City of Nairobi and other urban areas, the availability of water for irrigation, livestock raising, fisheries and domestic purposes.

UTaNRMP goal and objectives

The goal of the project is to 'contribute to reduction of rural poverty in the Upper Tana river catchment'. This goal is pursued via two development objectives which reflect the poverty-environment nexus:

- Increased sustainable food production and incomes for poor rural households living in the project area; and
- Sustainable management of natural resources for provision of environmental services.

The objectives are in line with: (i) IFAD's goal of empowering rural women and men to achieve higher incomes and improved food security; (ii) Kenya's Vision 2030 blueprint which aims at creating a 'globally competitive and prosperous country with a high quality of life by 2030' and transforming Kenya into 'a newly industrializing, middle-income country providing a high quality of life to all its citizens in a clean and secure environment.

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