The Identification and Early Prioritisation of Adaptation

Case Study on Agricultural Mainstreaming in Rwanda

As adaptation moves from theory to practice, there is a need to identify and prioritise adaptation interventions, while ensuring Value-for-Money (VfM). To support this, DFID has produced a framework, report and tool on early VfM adaptation. This uses an iterative climate risk management approach, as recommended in the recent IPCC 5th Assessment Report. This starts with current climate variability and extremes, and then considers future climate change and uncertainty.

This framework can help in sequencing adaptation activities over time and for identifying early actions that offer good returns on investment. While it includes a focus on low- and no-regret options, it also includes priority areas for mainstreaming and early planning for the long-term. DFID is currently testing the framework in several country offices.

Climate Mainstreaming in Agriculture in Rwanda.

An emerging focus for adaptation – especially in recent years – has been on mainstreaming. This aims to integrate adaptation into existing strategies, policies and plans, e.g. through the national and sector development planning process, because of the strong overlap with existing development activities.

Rwanda is one of a small number of countries that is advancing mainstreaming. A cross cutting theme of 'environment and climate change' has been included in the national development plan (Economic Development and Poverty Reduction Strategy II) and in sector development plans. However, moving to implementation raises some challenges, because it requires the identification and prioritisation of actions.

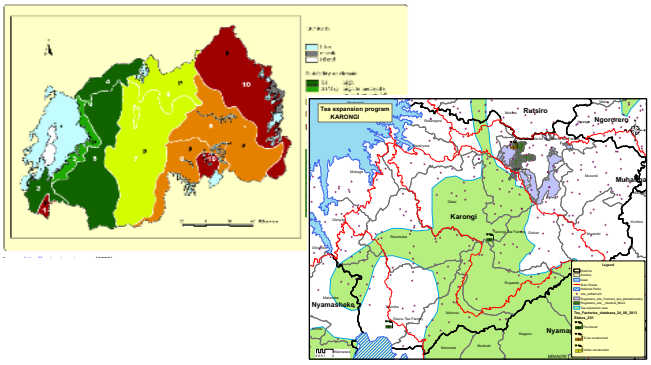
Delivering Value-for-Money Adaptation using Iterative Risk Frameworks & Low-Regret Options

This case study explores a practical example of mainstreaming for the agriculture sector in Rwanda, aligning to Rwanda's Agriculture Sector Investment Plan (ASIP), which sets out the planned activities and investments over the next 5 years.

DFID provided some early technical support to the Government (MINIAGRI) to build a tool for mainstreaming climate and environment, but this identified some considerable challenges. The case study therefore applied the value-for-money framework to advance sector mainstreaming.

The first stage was to prioritise and map the current and future climate risks for the agricultural sector in Rwanda using an iterative risk framework. This identified the risks of current climate variability, including heavy precipitation (soil erosion), climate variability (rain-fed agriculture), and extremes (floods and droughts). It also identified a number of longer-term risks, related to water resource availability and shifting bio-climatic and agro-ecological zones, which are important in sector planning (e.g. for irrigation) and land-use development policy for long-lived activities (e.g. forestry management).

The case study used this information to undertake a high-level risk screening of the ASIP, mapping existing and future risks against the 24 programmatic and 300 sub-programme activities in the plan. This identified the actions and investment most at risk, i.e. early priorities, in terms of the existing adaptation deficit, long-lived activities (risks of lock-in) or long-term challenges.



A case study on tea is being undertaken: looking at the potential change in climatic suitability (left) and planned expansion areas (right) under future climate change.

The case study is currently using the VfM framework to test and develop the mainstreaming tool in two key areas. The first is looking at current climate variability, and planned activities for soil conservation and management in the ASIP. This involves the potential for low-regret adaptation options, particularly climate smart agriculture. The second is looking over the longer-term at agricultural land-use planning under a changing climate. This is considering the future climatic suitability of different areas of the country for growing crops with high export value (tea, coffee), which is important given plans to expand production areas. Due to the potential risks of lock-in from land-use planning, and the longer growing cycle of these crops, some early analysis and planning is important.

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