

NATURE BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME (NBCD)



1. BACKGROUND

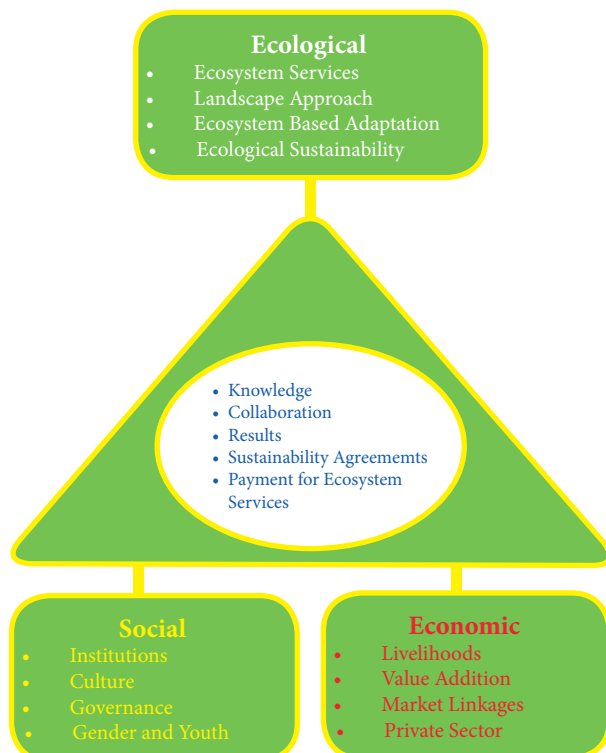
Founded in 1995, ARCOS is a regional conservation organization with the mission to enhance biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, in the Albertine Rift region, African Great Lakes region and in African mountains ecosystems, through the promotion of collaborative action for nature and people.

The Nature Based Community Development Programme (NBCD Programme) is one of the programmes through which ARCOS channels its collaborative actions to achieve its goals. Through this programme, ARCOS partners with communities as frontline actors to promote sustainable livelihoods and environmental resilience at grassroot level.

2. NBCD PROGRAMME

2.1. NBCD Pillars

The NBCD Programme takes roots from three pillars of sustainable development (ecological, economic and social capital) as described in the figure below:



2.2. OVERALL GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The overall goal of this programme is to promote sustainable development at household and community organization level by engaging community in environmental safeguard, supporting nature-based community enterprises and building community networks for experience and knowledge exchange.

The objectives of the NBCD Programme are:

- To develop the spirit of ownership and sense of responsibility among communities towards sustainable environmental management;
- To support community investments through small grants, community loans and financial sustainability through the Nature Based Community Fund (NBCF);
- To build a model for transformation through the Nature Based Villages (NBVs), Farmer Field Schools, and Community-to-Community Exchange;
- To build socio-cultural landscapes sharing the values of harmony between nature and people.

3. IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

As embedded in ARCOS' moto "Collaborative Action for Nature and People", collaboration at all levels is a key element towards sustainability. In this regard, ARCOS engages different stakeholders, namely: community, private sector, civil society, government and international organisations to understand and act on important issues related to environmental management and development.

Through participatory approach, ARCOS facilitates a Sustainability Agreement (SA), a negotiated performance and benefits-based contract between ARCOS, its partner communities and local government authorities. The SA strengthens the integration of sustainable actions to enhance environmental resilience, promote community development and facilitate community exchange based on ARCOS rich network.

The unit for transformation interventions is a geographically defined village, where efforts in community development, environmental safeguard and social-cultural improvement are concentrated. Through a four steps process involving feasibility analysis, intervention negotiations and design, implementation of on-ground activities and monitoring and evaluation, ARCOS works with communities and local government in the selected landscapes and selected villages.

The SAs signed clearly define each party's contribution in promoting business enterprises of the partner community, as well as in supporting common benefits and environmental resilience actions in the targeted areas. The selected villages are supported and serve as model of transformational and inspirational change toward sustainable development.

3.1. BEST APPROACH

Through this programme, ARCOS focuses on four key areas that constitute its "BEST" approach:

- **B** : Building leadership and sustainable institutions
- **E** : Enhancing environmental resilience
- **S** : Sustainability business solutions
- **T** : Transforming and inspiring others

EXAMPLE OF ACTIVITIES

The implementation of on-ground activities builds on the four pillars of BEST approach:

(B) Building leadership and sustainable institutions

The activities implemented under this area are among others: Capacity building in leadership, institutional management, setting targets and business plan, supporting gender balance and youth involvement in community based organizations, etc.



(E) Enhancing environmental resilience

This pillar consists of activities fostering Ecosystem and Community Based Adaptation through: Sustainable agriculture, enhancement and protection of soil and water ecosystems and biodiversity, forest landscape restoration, promotion of green energy technologies (energy saving cooking stoves, biogas and solar energy), etc.



(S) Sustainable business solutions

This pillar involves: Sustainable production, business planning at community organization level, value addition, private sector engagement, market linkages, organic certification, financial literacy and nature-based enterprises development.



(T) Transforming and Inspiring others

This consists of establishing Nature Based Villages (NBVs) which serve as demonstration units in incorporating community development, sound environmental management and resilience to climate change. Additionally, a Nature Based Community Fund (NBCF) is established to support sustainability-oriented community initiatives through small loans, incentives and common-benefit actions. Finally, ARCOS facilitates knowledge and experience exchange at local, national and regional levels through exhibition events, hands-on capacity building and site visits where communities learn from each other's experience.



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