

Ruhinda Sub-County,
Rukungiri District.
21/01/2025.

The Head Complaints,
Independent Redress Mechanism,
Green Climate Fund.

Dear Sir,

RE: COMPLAINT AGAINST THE ILLEGAL, CRUEL, INHUMAN, ARBITRARY RECLAMATION AND BOUNDARY MARKING OF NYAMBABI WETLAND IN RUHINDA SUB-COUNTY RUKUNGIRI DISTRICT UNDER THE GREEN CLIMATE FUNDED PROJECT TITLED "BUILDING RESILIENT COMMUNITIES AND ECOSYSTEMS THROUGH RESTORATION OF WETLANDS AND ASSOCIATED CATCHMENTS IN UGANDA"

We the under-listed members hereby present to you this complaint against the said project.

We are residents of the villages of **Nyakihanga, Kabare, Bwamuha, Butagasi, Kakoma, Kashenyi go down, Nkanga, Rwoya** in **Ruhinda Sub County in Rukungiri District** in South Western Uganda.

We have lived in the said villages for all our lives carrying out different activities of crop production, animal husbandry, hand crafts, pottery among others and all our great grandparents plus deceased relatives are buried on the said land.

Between the **10th to 18th November 2023**, there was an exercise that was purported to be reclaiming wetlands in **Ruhinda Sub County in Rukungiri District** titled **Building Resilient Communities and Eco Systems through restoration of Wetlands and Associated Catchments in Uganda** supported by **Green Climate fund**.

The said exercise was led by **Rukungiri District Local Government** [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

During the said exercise, gross human violations were committed by the said officers who were being guarded by Police and the army which included violations of rights to property as they declared and planted markstones in our lands without any compensation, violently invading our land, homes and plantations of trees, bananas, coffee and seasonal crops like maize, beans, millet, cassava Groundnuts, rice and razing all of them to the ground claiming that the same were in a wetland called Nyambabi while leaving our families at the brink of starvation. **Photos of the razed down houses, cut down trees, crops are attached here for ease of reference**

As if the above were not enough, the exercise has left many of our vulnerable members like the elderly and widows in a depressing state as some of their homes and sources of livelihood have been shattered without being provided any alternative sources of shelter or food. **A photo of one of one elderly woman sitting in-front of a boundary mark in her garden with part of it taken away.**

Whereas the objectives of the said project may have been well intended, the implementation of the same has left in its wake only misery and trauma in places that have never been gazetted as wetlands.

When this started, we sought clarification from both Local and District leaders but none of them was able to respond hence this complaint.

Looking at the title of the project and its social management plan, it appears to have been intended for implementation in places where there were wetlands yet in our case, there were no gazetted wetland and this can be corroborated by the recent Notice dated the 4th December 2023 titled the **National Environmental (Declaration of Wetlands) Notice 2023** and the **Uganda gazette of 4th December 2023** all of which show the wetlands in Uganda and none is shown in our place. Check Story-Gov't Launches National Gazette for Wetlands, Uganda radionetwork, 2nd Feb, 2024; Uganda commits to Protecting Wetlands, February 23, 2024 www.undp.org

Whereas under the Memorandum of Understanding and Activity Implementation Agreement entered into between Rukungiri District Local Government and Ministry of Water and Environment, the project was meant to be implemented in Burombe parish in Ruhinda Sub County, this was violated with the same being extended up to the parishes of Kicwamba and Rwamugoma. **Copies of the Memorandum of Understanding and Activity implementation agreement is attached hereto.**

Whereas under the Project's social Management plan it was provided that no displacement of people should be done, some of us were forced off our land by the implementers from Rukungiri District Local Government and our houses, crops demolished and slashed down.

Whereas under the Project's social Management plan it was provided that among the objectives was to improve agricultural practises and providing alternative livelihood options to the communities in the wetland catchments, no such provision was made to us up this day. This has been acknowledged by the Rukungiri District RDC in his recent report a copy of which is attached.

Whereas under the Project's social Management plan it was provided that sensitization should be made before any exercise could be undertaken, this was not the case in our case as we only learnt of the exercise when they started demolishing our homes and cutting down our crops which shocked so many of us leading to sudden death of one resident [REDACTED] [REDACTED] **A copy of his Medical forms area attached hereto**

The purpose of this letter is to not only invite you to investigate the said grave allegations but prevail over the implementing agencies to stop their egregious activities until our concerns are addressed.

Looking forward to your urgent intervention;

Yours faithfully,

The Concerned Residents; [REDACTED]