



# COMMUNITY FORESTS IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO

STRENGTHENING FOREST COMMUNITIES' RIGHTS AND ENABLING THEM TO MANAGE THEIR TRADITIONAL LANDS IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE MEANS OF BOTH PROTECTING RAINFORESTS AND FIGHTING POVERTY.

IN 2014, THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC) PASSED COMMUNITY FOREST LEGISLATION IN WHAT IS ARGUABLY THE MOST GROUND-BREAKING LEGAL DEVELOPMENT RELATED TO CONGO BASIN RAINFORESTS IN RECENT YEARS.

**50** THOUSAND  
HECTARES

COMMUNITIES CAN NOW MANAGE UP TO 50,000 HECTARES OF FORESTS ACCORDING TO THEIR OWN CUSTOMS AND NEEDS, IN PERPETUITY.

**75** MILLION  
HECTARES

OF FOREST COULD BE AVAILABLE TO LOCAL COMMUNITIES. THAT'S THREE TIMES THE SIZE OF THE UK.

**3x**

RFUK HAS PROMOTED COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN DRC FOR YEARS AND SINCE 2016 HAS LED A CONSORTIUM PROJECT THAT HAS PUSHED THE ISSUE TO THE FOREFRONT OF FOREST MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES.

# OUR APPROACH



**FIELD  
WORK**

**CAPACITY BUILDING  
OF ALL STAKEHOLDERS**

**POLICY/ADVOCACY  
WORK**

# OUR IMPACT

## SECURING COMMUNITY LANDS

### ALL MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

- including women, indigenous people and marginalised groups - are actively involved in our work, which is based on customary tenure arrangements

### 8

communities have developed **LAND USE PLANS** to ensure they manage their forests equitably and sustainably

## EMPOWERING KEY ACTORS

### 14 PROVINCES

now have local authorities that understand the community forests law and are able to process applications and support communities



National authorities have skills and technology to monitor the community forestry process and to manage information in a

### **NATIONAL DATABASE**

## PRODUCING AND SHARING KNOWLEDGE



### **WE HAVE DEVELOPED AN EXTENSIVE REPOSITORY OF RESOURCES**

for different audiences, including research studies, training guides, briefings and multimedia outputs

### 6 COMMUNITY FOREST CONCESSIONS

granted and 4 more applied for in Equateur and North Kivu, benefitting

### OVER 25,000 PEOPLE & PROTECTING 100,000 HECTARES

## STEERING INCLUSIVE POLICY MAKING



### **WE CREATED AND FACILITATE THE MULTI STAKEHOLDER ROUNDTABLE**

for Community Forests in DRC, building consensus around the strategic direction and core principles underpinning community forestry



### Developed by the Roundtable, **THE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR COMMUNITY FORESTS IN DRC**

was adopted by the government in 2018 sustaining the vision of learning by doing, a gradual approach, based on community rights and traditional management practices



## WHERE WE WORK

Hundreds of people from all provinces of DRC have taken part in our training, workshops, and provincial and national roundtables.

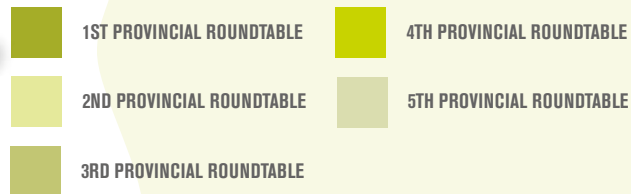
**“ I AM HAPPY TO SEE THAT COMMUNITY FORESTS ARE NOW A REALITY. VERY SOON, THE MANAGEMENT PHASE OF THESE FORESTS WILL BEGIN. ”**

– Fifi Likunde, Head of Community Forestry Division, Ministry of Environment, DRC



### MAP KEY

#### PROVINCIAL ROUND TABLES



WORKSHOPS AND TRAININGS

## LOOKING FORWARD

- **Supporting the National Community Forests Strategy** experimental phase and pave the way for national scaling-up of community forests in 2023
- **Continuing to develop and test** the legal and policy framework
- **Providing continued training and tools** to DRC government at national and local levels
- **Maintaining and strengthening** civil society monitoring and advocacy
- **Supporting more communities** to obtain their community forests
- **Preparing for the management phase:**
  - **Strengthening community governance** to ensure equity and inclusion
  - **Testing models to improve livelihoods** and attract private investment into community forests
  - **Designing management plans** that prevent deforestation and protect biodiversity

**“ THE APPROACH WE PUT IN PLACE TO SUPPORT THESE COMMUNITIES WAS EFFECTIVE BECAUSE IT PUT COMMUNITIES THEMSELVES AT THE CENTRE. IF COMMUNITY FORESTRY IN DRC IS TO SUCCEED, IT MUST BE DONE BY AND FOR COMMUNITIES THEMSELVES. ”**

– Julien Mathe, Director, GASHE







“ BY WORKING TOGETHER UNITED AS A COMMUNITY WE CAN HOPEFULLY ACHIEVE A BETTER DEVELOPMENT. OUR FOREST HAS LOTS OF NATURAL RESOURCES WHICH WE WOULD LIKE TO MANAGE BETTER. ”

– Florence, community member, Irebu

**R RAINFOREST FOUNDATION UK**  
SECURING LANDS, SUSTAINING LIVES



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