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## Women’s engagement in forest landscape restoration (FLR) practices in Irodo watershed (DIANA region): Practices and challenges

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### Abstract

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) initiatives play a crucial role in enhancing ecosystem services, biodiversity conservation, and sustainable livelihoods. Women’s involvement in FLR practices has gained increasing recognition due to their unique perspectives, knowledge, and roles in natural resource management. This study investigates the features of women implementing FLR practices in the Irodo Watershed (DIANA Region), focusing on the types of FLR practices they undertake, their resource management strategies, and the challenges they encounter. Despite the importance of women’s involvement, limited research exists on their specific contributions and challenges in FLR, particularly in the Irodo Watershed. Through qualitative and quantitative mixed-methods research, this study uncovers a diverse array of FLR practices undertaken by women in the study area. A total of 159 women heads of household were investigated, and focus group discussions (FGDs) with women associations in 5 localities in the Irodo Watershed were carried out. These practices include agroforestry, tree planting and other land use system. These practices often combine traditional knowledge and community approaches, reflecting a holistic approach to landscape restoration. Despite their vital contributions, women implementing FLR practices face various challenges. Socio-economic constraints, limited access to land and resources, and gender-based inequalities hinder their full participation and empowerment in FLR initiatives. Addressing these challenges requires many approaches. These are capacity-building programs, gender-responsive approaches which are vital for promoting gender equality, enhancing women’s access to resources, and fostering inclusive governance in FLR processes. Gender-responsive approaches that empower women as key stakeholders in FLR processes. Understanding women’s roles in FLR is crucial for promoting gender equality, enhancing environmental outcomes, and fostering inclusive governance.

**Keywords:** Forest landscape restoration, land use, practices, women