



Regreening Africa



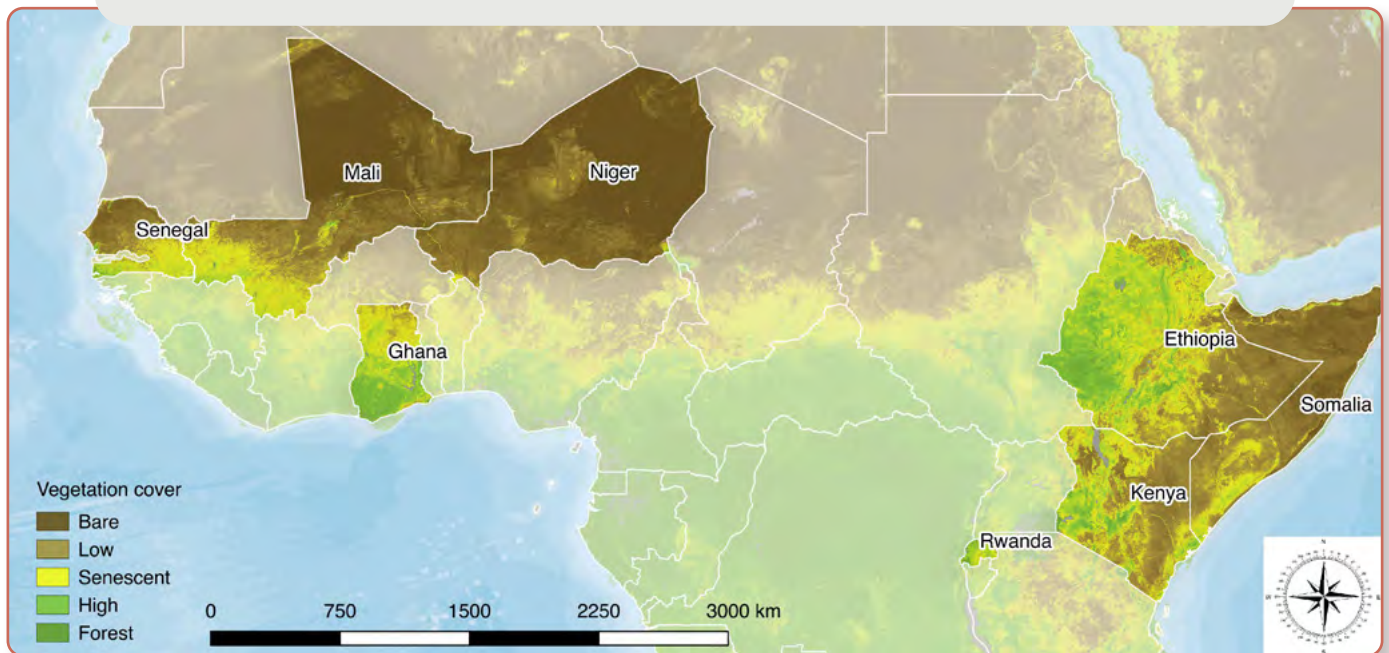
REGREENING AFRICA

GHANA Country Overview



Regreening Africa Program Overview

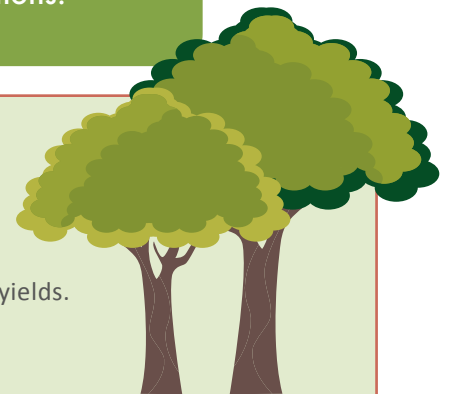
Regreening Africa is an ambitious five-and-a-half-year program (2017-2023) that seeks to directly reverse land degradation across eight countries in sub-Saharan Africa by integrating trees into agricultural systems while improving the livelihoods, food security, and climate change resilience of smallholder farmers. The program's vision is to spur regreening among 500,000 households across one million hectares in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, and Somalia, thereby catalyzing a much larger scaling effort to regreen tens of millions of hectares of degraded land across the continent.



To achieve this, Regreening Africa has mobilized and worked with diverse partners to scale up evergreen agriculture, using locally appropriate techniques such as Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR), grafting, establishing nurseries, planting trees and staging other agroforestry and sustainable land management interventions.

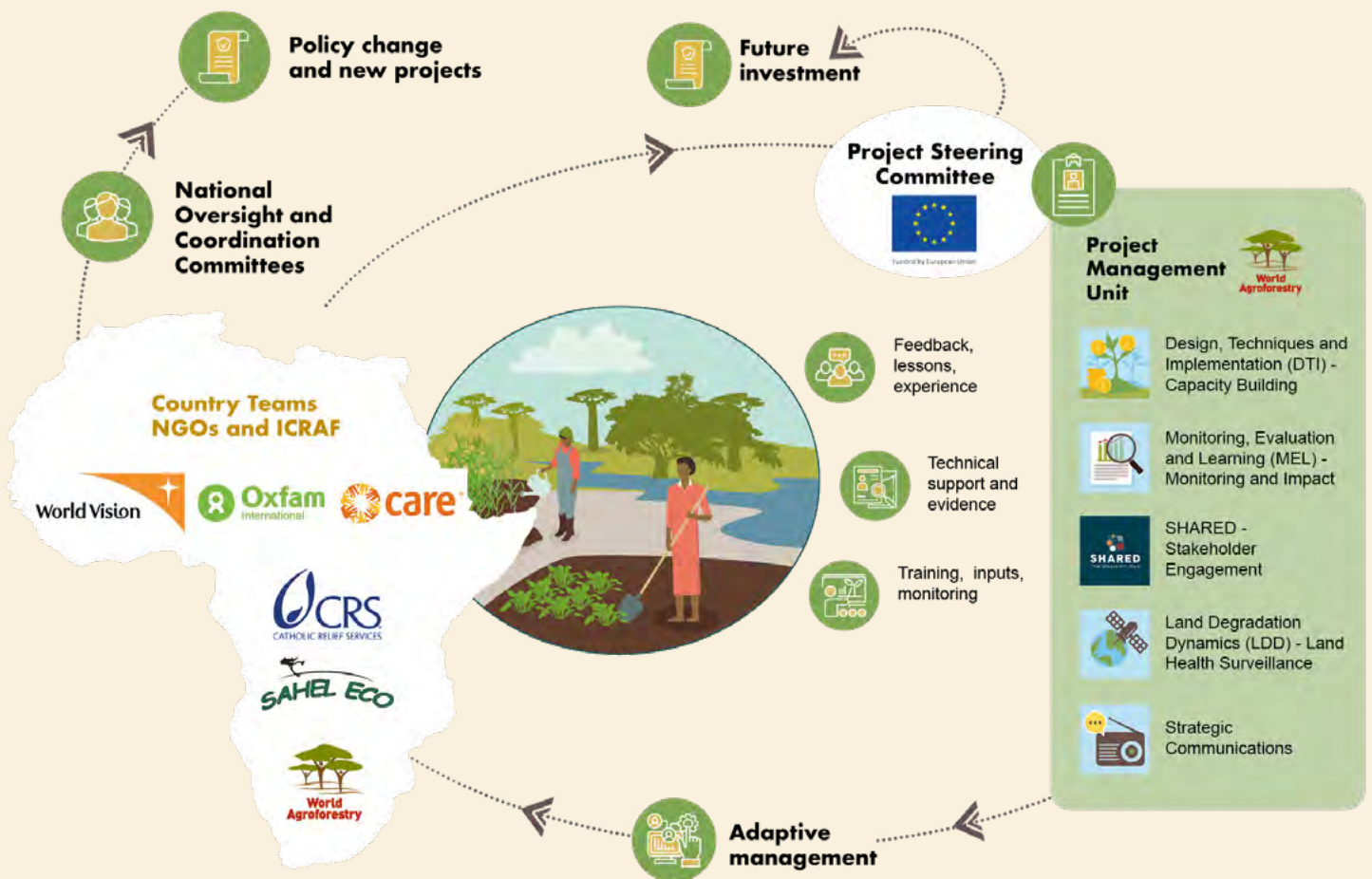
Agroforestry has many benefits

- It increases carbon storage, both above and below ground.
- It increases soil's ability to absorb and retain water.
- Trees slow strong winds and provide shade from heat, boosting crop and grass yields.
- Tree roots improve the structure of the soil, preventing erosion.
- Trees are efficient providers of multiple ecosystem services.
- Trees that fix nitrogen in the soil provide fertilizer for crops.
- Trees produce food, fuelwood, fiber, fodder, resins, timber and medicine which boost incomes, food security and nutrition.



The program’s unique engagement approach, partnership model, and advisory capacity aim to sustain the land restoration movement on local and country level beyond the five-year program. Thus, Regreening Africa engages in strategic decision-making for scaling, working across the eight countries to collect and apply evidence in multi-stakeholder engagement and policy processes. The program promotes proven land restoration techniques adapted to suit the needs of farmers and pastoralists in varying socio-ecological contexts. While adapting to diverse

circumstances, the program prioritizes gender, youth empowerment, and food security as outcomes of implementation. The program operates as a consortium of research partners (ICRAF) and implementing NGOs (World Vision, CRS, Care, Sahel Eco, Oxfam) with local governments and communities. Through the use of monitoring tools like the Regreening Africa app developed by ICRAF, citizen scientists are empowered to take charge of monitoring the initiative’s progress and giving stakeholders a more holistic picture of local realities.





Context for Addressing Land Degradation in Ghana

Land degradation is a pressing issue. Land restoration is a crucial investment.

The Sudanian Savanna zone, which extends from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Ethiopian Highlands in the east, once had a tree density of 230 trees per hectare. A recent survey of agroforestry parklands in Northern Ghana show tree population densities between 4 and 11 trees per hectare.¹ Ghana's deforestation rate is approximately 2% per year, accounting for a loss of 135,000 hectares annually.²

From 2001-2018, the Upper West Region recorded the highest rate of forest cover loss in Ghana, followed by the Upper East and the Northern Region.³ Uncontrolled bush burning, unsustainable logging, overgrazing and small-scale mining all contribute to the degradation of agricultural and forest lands. These regions have also experienced dramatic climate variability. Floods, droughts, bushfires and storms have resulted in decreased soil fertility and agricultural yields. Human activities and climate change exacerbate environmental and economic vulnerability.

Regreening Africa works to address these pressing anthropogenic and climatic challenges by promoting of regreening practices. Investing in land restoration makes financial sense:

"The annual cost of land degradation in Ghana is estimated at USD 1.4 billion. This is equal to 6% of the country's GDP. The returns on taking action against land degradation practices are estimated at 5 USD for every dollar invested in restoring degraded land in Ghana."⁴

"The average present value of enhanced forest produce and crop yields as a result of adopting FMNR and crop rotations is in the order of GHS 255 per acre per year (EUR 102 per hectare per year)."⁵

We were taught the value of having trees and shrubs on our farms as well as the dangers of burning farm residues during land preparation, which kills beneficial soil microorganisms and destroys soil organic matter etc. We also discovered that our yields were low because of these practices, making it impossible to feed our families."

John Akurugu, Farmer of Bawku West District



¹ Akpalu, S.E., Anglaaere, L., Damnyag, L., Dawoe, E.K., Abunyewa, A.A. and Akpalu, M.M., 2022. Floristic composition of agroforestry parklands in the semi-arid zone of Ghana: A special focus on *Faidherbia albida* (Delile) A. Chev. *Trees, Forests and People*, 9, p.100310.

² Forestry Commission, 2017

³ Global Forest Watch 2019

⁴ Vanja Westerberg, Angela Doku, Lawrence Damnyag, Gordana Kranjac-Berisavljevic, Stephen Owusu, Godfred Jasaw, Edward Yaboah, Salvatore Di Falco (2019). *Reversing Land Degradation in Drylands: The Case for Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Report for the Economics of Land Degradation Initiative in the framework of the "Reversing Land Degradation in Africa by Scaling-up Evergreen Agriculture" project.*



Ghana Operational Overview

The ultimate aim of the Regreening Africa Program in Ghana is to create a sustained approach to reversing land degradation and integrating food production through agroforestry.

Regreening Africa addresses pressing challenges in Ghana's savannas: extreme and prolonged dry seasons, overgrazing, uncontrolled fire, declining tree cover, loss of indigenous biodiversity and increased soil infertility.

Regreening Africa operates within the following Regions/Districts	The primary partners active in Ghana
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper East Region: Bawku West and Garu-Tempene districts* • Northern Region: Mion District 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Agroforestry (ICRAF) • World Vision Ghana • Catholic Relief Services • National and Local Government Agencies • Local Communities

*As Regreening Africa began before the split of the former Garu-Tempene District, much of Regreening Africa's data is not disaggregated between Garu and Tempene. Consequently, the program still primarily refers to these two districts as the Garu-Tempene District.



Programme Invention Map



Regreening Africa takes a 2-level approach to reversing land degradation

Level 1: Direct interventions with the communities in the three districts

- Introducing Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) to farmers and communities.
- Training of lead farmers, peer-to-peer farmers and farmers' groups to champion scale expansion of Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration and other agroforestry practices.

Level 2: Interactions with policy makers through multi-stakeholder campaigns and advocacy strategies

- Local champions and community leaders lead the process of communicating the benefits to policy-makers to encourage scale expansion.
- National-level multi-stakeholder workshops through the SHARED process to influence policies and practices in favor of land restoration.



Ghana's Primary Regreening Strategies

Agroforestry – the deliberate and systematic integration of trees with crops, communal areas, and pasture (where appropriate), which is central to the sustainable management of land and maintenance of healthy landscapes. In addition to a multitude of environmental benefits – such as limiting erosion and increasing carbon storage, soil health, and water retention – agroforestry also provides an additional source of food, fuel, and marketable tree products for farmers and pastoralists.

Agroforestry can take many forms. Below are the agroforestry practices that collectively make up the focus of Regreening Africa in Ghana:

FMNR (Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration)

Systematic regeneration and sustainable management of trees and shrubs beginning with tree stumps, roots, and seeds in the soil. FMNR takes place on agricultural lands, commonly smallholder plots. FMNR draws on indigenous techniques of the Sahel and can increase the number and diversity of trees in fields, largely indigenous or local species. Trees cultivated through FMNR have better survival rates as they use pre-existing root structures, and thus face less water stress.

To accomplish this:

- 1 Select desired tree shoots and for each, choose a number of the tallest and straightest stems to keep.
- 2 Remove the unwanted stems and side branches. Manage any threats to remaining branches, such as those from livestock and fire. Use the cut branches as fuelwood and the leaves as mulch or fodder.
- 3 Support emerging saplings with appropriate materials such as sticks, stones, etc. to quicken growth and attain straight stems.
- 4 Cull emerging new stems and prune side branches from time to time.⁶

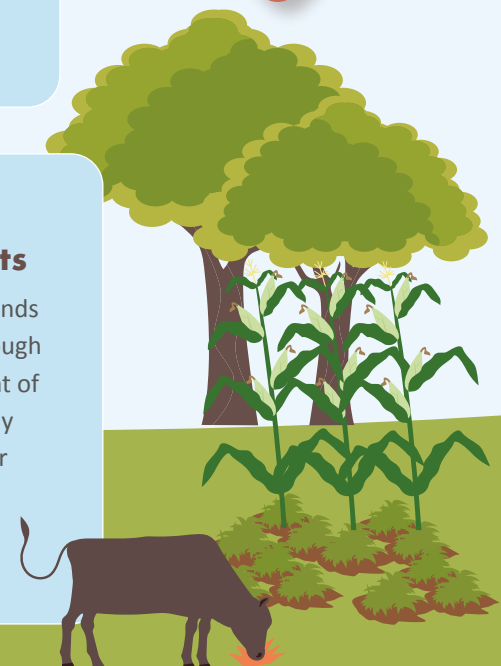
ANR (Assisted Natural Regeneration) and Community Forests

ANR and FMNR share the same practices; however, ANR takes place on communal lands where priority is given to protect mother trees and wildlings. Regreening Africa, through the work of World Vision (WV), has experienced notable success in the establishment of community forests, where ANR is practiced. These community forest areas commonly range from 10 to 200ha. They inspire farmers to practice regreening practices in their own fields, support collective action through social capital building, and underpin the formulation and implementation of community by-laws for bush fire and illegal wood extraction.

”

If you refuse to plant trees today, you will subsequently accept tree planting in the future when the events of climate change hits you hard.”

Mohammed Alhassan,
Mion District



⁶Rinaudo, T., Muller, A., & Morris, M. (2019). *Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Manual*. 204. <https://fmrhub.com.au/fmnr-manual/>.

Nurseries

Controlled spaces where young tree seedlings or other plants are propagated in large quantities for eventual transplant into fields or for sale in markets. They are most suitable for areas with less ideal soil conditions and commonly see a higher survival rate of plants compared to traditional tree planting. Farmer and women groups have been successful in establishing nurseries across program site areas. Seeds are mainly supplied through NGOs or from saving on farm seeds.

Tree planting

The process of transplanting tree seedlings. Planting high value tree-crops such as mango, cashew and shea trees (*Mangifera indica*, *Anacardium occidentale* and *Vitellaria paradoxa*) has been promoted and value chains for tree crops have been strengthened. In Ghana, trees have most commonly been planted in woodlots, as external boundaries, or to enrich communal land.



Bushfire Management: Firefighting

Emergency actions taken to prevent bushfires damaging life or property, and **fire prevention** – actions taken to prevent or reduce the risk or severity of fires before they occur. Fire volunteers have significantly reduced in bushfires which has translated to higher tree survival in the project sites.



Composting

The natural process of recycling organic matter, such as leaves and food scraps, into a valuable fertilizer that can be used to enrich soil and plants.



Soil and water conservation

Many different practices can help preserve these crucial resources. In Ghana, communities have been sensitized on practices such as minimum or zero tillage, mulching, contour ploughing, and watershed management. Field monitoring visits have shown that households that have adopted these practices experience little to no soil erosion on farmlands despite the heavy rains.



“Our indigenous trees have multiple uses so we need to grow them.”

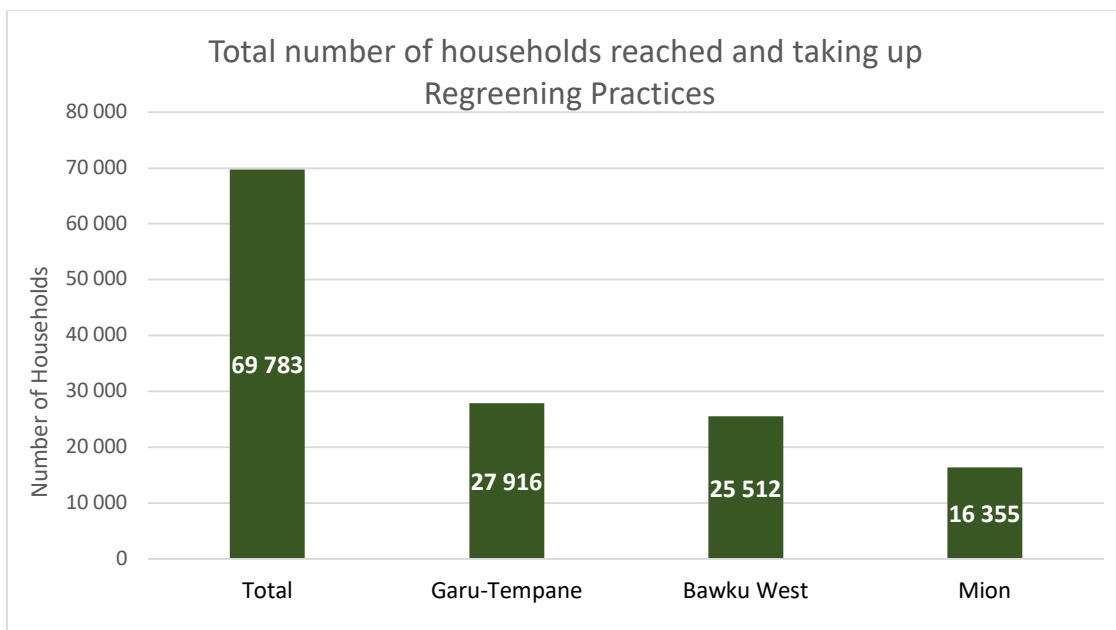
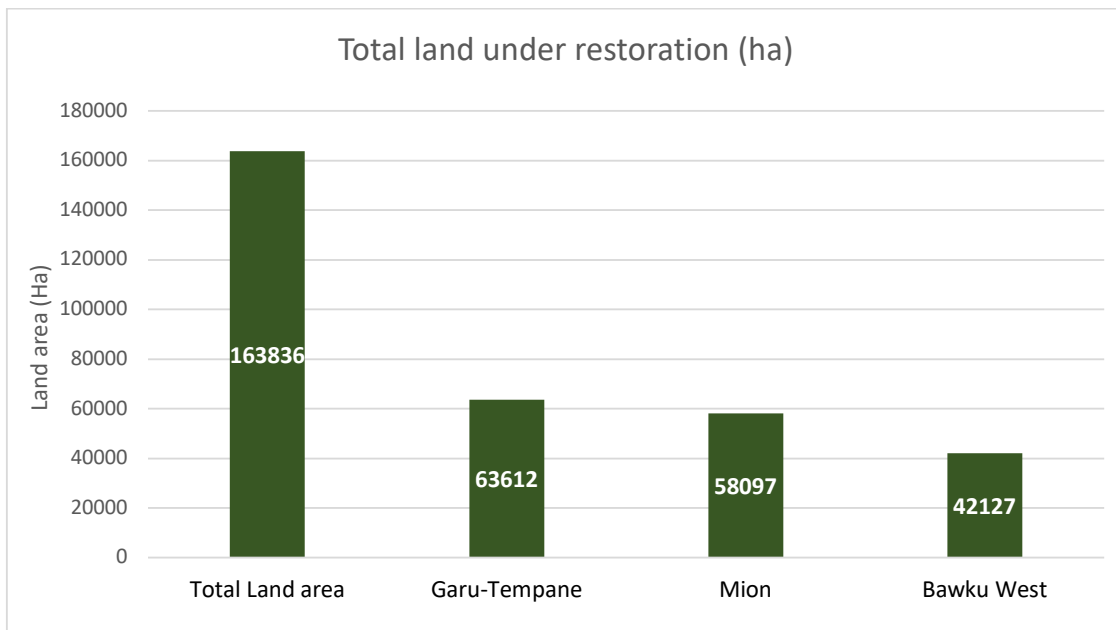
Azuweira, FMNR Group



Key Achievements and Impacts



Livelihoods - Creating more sustainable environments and livelihoods



Additional Top Impacts



11,920 lead farmers and fire volunteers were trained in FMNR and bushfire management across program sites.



17,550 farmers have benefited from conservation agriculture and compost training.



Over 200,000 seedlings planted cumulatively over the last 5 years across program sites.



From 2018-2021, an estimated 37,170 households practiced FMNR for the first time.



From 2018-2021, an estimated 24,035 households planted trees for the first time.



Business plans for one strategic actor were developed in each district to promote the shea value chain.



The program has worked towards gender and financial inclusion by introducing S4T interventions to 6,500 beneficiaries (87% women) in the Bawku West and Tempene.

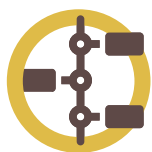


CRS was recognized as a contributor to prudent environmental management in the Mion district and subsequently received a national award during the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought.



“We get herbs to treat diseases, firewood from branches of the trees when we prune them and shea nuts for processing into shea butter.”

Barikisu Salifu, Farmer



Timeline of Key Events, Inventions and Impacts

This section gives an overview of Regreening Africa's major impacts, interventions, and events over the years - the multi-faceted work done through this program falls into the following categories:

Impact Areas



Livelihoods

Creating more sustainable livelihoods



Landscapes

Strengthening resilience to changing climates



Capacity

Growing and mobilizing skills and expertise



Outreach and Advocacy

Knowledge turns to action



Policy and Partnerships

Creating change at all levels



Women and Youth

Change requires engaging everyone



Partnership Building

Engaging across sectors



Program Governance

Increasing the efficiency of operations



Evidence Learning and Adaptation

Evidence informing practice

YEAR 1 (2017-2018)



Baseline survey conducted.



Rapid agroforestry value chain assessment conducted - economic and cultural trees were identified for promotion.



Inauguration and 1st meeting of the National Oversight and Coordination Committee (NOCC).



Identification of project communities, stakeholders, fire volunteers, seedling growers for scaling up, lead farmers to promote regreening practices and FMNR fields to serve as learning hubs.



Development of a Participatory Learning and Action (PLA) protocol.

YEAR 2 (2018-2019)



480 lead farmers (240 women) from Bawku West and Garu-Tempene districts received technical training in FMNR. Lead farmers were resourced with farm tools such as Wellington boots, cutlasses, pruning knives, hand gloves and sickles.



480 community fire volunteers (240 women) from Bawku West and Garu-Tempene districts received bushfire management training.



1,050 farmers (401 women) received training on composting and community composting structures were constructed.



CRS began a PLA exercise for 59 communities to identify their strengths, resources, opportunities and challenges.



Ghana's 2-day SHARED event was held in Tamale for actors such as national and regional government departments and agencies, donors, NGOs, traditional authorities, grassroots organizations and farmer representatives to share learnings on various regreening projects being implemented across northern Ghana.



A workshop on social and gender dynamics was held for project staff and partners to gain the skills to develop more gender and socially responsive interventions.



Collaboration meetings were held with the Global Shea Alliance (GSA) that is implementing the Sustainable Shea Initiative in the Regreening Project areas.

YEAR 3 (2019-2020)



600 lead farmers (300 men, 300 women) from Bawku West and Garu-Temapne districts were trained in FMNR.



600 community fire volunteers received bushfire management training.



A gender transformative approach was identified and piloted.



National Disaster Management Organisation and Department of Agriculture (DOA) Environmental Health and Sanitation Unit have integrated FMNR and tree planting in their programs.



By the end of Year 3, **100+** Saving for Transformation groups were up and running.



Farmer field days and exchange visits were effective in sharing information and promoting FMNR.



Radio proved to be an effective advocacy platform - there were 24 talk shows on two radio stations, Quality FM and Destech FM, with the average reach of **12,500** listeners per show.



8 enumerators (1 woman) were trained on the usage of the Regreening Africa app to collect and upload data. The enumerators uploaded **1,232** acres of FMNR lands and tree planting in 71 communities in Bawku West and Garu-Tempene districts.

YEAR 4 (2020-2021)



2,000 lead farmers (1,000 men, 1,000 women) from Garu-Tempene and Bawku West districts were trained in FMNR and regreening practices.



Ghana National Fire Service (GNFS) supported the training of **1,600** community fire volunteers (800 men, 800 women).



40 communities established environmental by-laws in the Bawku West and Garu-Tempene districts.



In collaboration with AAK, **22,000** shea seedlings were planted in 40 communities.



Approx. **18,000** people in seven districts were reached by radio programs promoting regreening practices.



Approximately **300** opinion leaders from Mion District had their capacity built on land degradation and restoration.



FMNR pilot fields have been established in **100** communities.



80 communities in Bawku West and Garu-Tempene districts were sensitized on bushfires.



Shea nut and shea butter improvements were targeted through the development of detailed business plans.

YEAR 5 (2021-2022)



District level stakeholder dialogues held in the Garu-Tempene, Bawku West, and Mion districts to review evidence of landscape restoration achievements and lessons learnt, design a strategic restoration plan, and explore how the Northern Ghana Restoration Initiative could facilitate mechanisms for expanding savannah landscape restoration and securing the long-term success of interventions.



In the Mion District, CRS and GNFS sensitized **3,200** farmers (1,600 men, 1,600 women) from 15 communities on bushfire prevention and management.



With the support from GNFS and the DOA, **2,040** fire volunteers (1,020 men, 1,020 women) in 102 communities in the Bawku West and Garu-Tempene districts received training on bushfire management.



Regreening App enumerators monitored and recorded 100 communal FMNR fields and **3,000** individual tree planting sites across the Bawku West, Garu and Tempene districts.



12 Community Nursery Gardeners were trained on nursery establishment and management and were supported with polypots, seeds and other nursery materials - It is expected these gardeners will raise at least **65,000** seedlings of diverse species.



Stakeholder power analyses were conducted to canvas for the support of **100** (87 men, 13 women) traditional leaders in implementing the project in their respective communities.



Multi-stakeholder engagement event held for **accelerating land restoration in Northern Ghana** using the SHARED method.



Highlighted Successes

Working for a Better Future - Establishment of the District Environmental Management Committee in Mion

District and community level structures have proven effective in sustainably managing natural resources. The following timeline illustrates the establishment and role of the **Mion District Environmental Management Committee**.

Timeline

2012

2019

2021

The Mion District Assembly was established with a vision of maintaining a clean and environmentally friendly district where women and men have access to quality and sustainable health services, education, economic resources and have a right to participate in decision making processes.

28 environmental by-laws were officially published by the Mion District Assembly. **Three specific by-laws** are focused on natural resource management regarding **tree cutting, manufacture of charcoal, and the control of bush burning**.

To strengthen governance on natural resources, **the Mion District Environmental Management Committee was formed** by the Mion District Assembly and CRS through the Regreening Africa project to:

- 1 Advise the District Assembly on environmental regulation and policies** and make recommendations for addressing pressing environmental issues in the district;
- 2 Coordinate the activities and serve as a channel of communication** between the Mion District Assembly and different environmental management bodies including government agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs);
- 3 Serve as a regulatory body for the implementation and enforcement of district by-laws** in the district.



Key Lessons

- Formulation of the district environmental by-laws is critical.** However, the challenge lies in their effective implementation.
- Competence and capacity** in landscape restoration/natural resource management **need to be increased**.
- There is a need for an **information and communication strategy** at community and district level.
- Political parties and traditional leaders** should play an active role in **advocating adherence to the by-laws**.
- The **by-laws can also control commercial farming activities, especially land clearing**.
- Monitoring and evaluation** are important and can help brand the districts as "Green" and attract future **investments for sustainable development and landscape restoration**.

The committee is composed of diverse stakeholders, such as **traditional leaders, assembly members, police, government representatives, religious leaders, women and youth groups, NGOs, and community members**.



“When I graft a mango, I sell it for GHC 10 (≈ USD 1.60) and it matures in two years’ time, unlike the non-grafted mangoes, which mature in 3–4 years and sell for half the price of the grafted mangoes.”

Sheik Ahmed Bashiru, Farmer of the Garu District



“In the past, we thought that bare land was good, but now we know that such exposed land causes land degradation. Trees provide a good environment. When the last tree dies, man also dies.”

Christopher Mba Abugre, Farmer of Bawku West District



FMNR/ANR

A promising 'community forest option'

As noted in the section on **Ghana's Primary Regreening Strategies**, Regreening Africa, through the work of World Vision (WV), has experienced notable success in the establishment of community forests, where FMNR/ANR is practiced.

Below is the process for establishing a community forest:


WV identifies and trains **lead farmers from various communities on FMNR/ANR and other restorative techniques**, such as composting, appropriate land preparation, and tree grafting. This program uses a **cascading train-the-trainer approach in which lead farmers sensitize and train farmers within their respective communities on these techniques**. Among lead farmers, there is **equal gender participation** to ensure that a diversity of interests and needs are represented.



WV engages with communities to **identify and select areas of degraded land to be restored through FMNR/ANR practices**. These areas of land have commonly been degraded by prior mining, bushfires or excessive logging or grazing etc.

Lead farmers and other community members begin practicing FMNR/ANR to restore identified communal lands. As they practice FMNR/ANR, they track and monitor growth. **The positive changes in these communal lands in turn inspire other community members to adopt these techniques in their fields.**






We must protect the environment. We must not do bush burning, people must not cut trees. As chief, that is my responsibility.”

Paramount Chief Bonaba Baba Salifu, Bongo Traditional Area

Lead farmers work with **fire volunteer groups** to protect the community forest and cropland from bushfires by establishing fire-belts during the dry season.

As tree coverage on these communal land matures, community members can benefit from a wide range of products such as **fruits, firewood, medicine and fodder**, in addition to increased soil health and fertility.

WV supports communities in the **establishment of regulations and by-laws** regarding the use of their community forestland to ensure their sustainability. Regulations may include **monetary fines or community service work** in response to degrading actions, such as over extraction. These regulations are overseen and enforced by community chiefs, elders and opinion leaders.





Lessons Learned

Best practices and bottlenecks for scaling up greening practices

What are the key challenges hindering the adoption of greening activities?

- **Land ownership:** Tenure remains the single most challenging obstacle to accelerating the scale of landscape restoration. This is notably an important barrier for women and the youth, who have limited land ownership and access to tree resources, which in turn curtails their role in undertaking restoration activities.
- **Tree tenure:** Lack of strong tree tenure results in tree planting disincentives. Two-important policy documents driving reform proposals are the 2012 Tree Tenure and Benefit Sharing Policy and the 2016 Tree Tenure and Benefit Sharing Framework.
- **Small-scale mining** contributes to land degradation through destruction of vegetation cover, and there are no legal provisions for restoring degraded land post-mining. The Small-Scale Gold Mining Law of 1989 (pnDCL 218) legalized small-scale mining in Ghana through license purchases but there is a need to formulate adequate legal instruments to ensure rehabilitation and restoration of small-scale mining areas.
- **Unregulated commercial farming** with the increasing inputs of machinery and chemicals threatens not only the survival of trees and shrubs but also biodiversity and essential watershed functions.
- **Bush fires** continue to remain a serious issue that contributes to further degradation while also hindering the land restoration process. These stem from a variety of human activities such as community festivals and rituals, like the Fire Festival, land clearing, and hunting practices. There is a lack of awareness and know-how of bush fire management as well as ineffective monitoring of bushfires.
- **Illegal charcoal production:** In the north of Ghana the abusive felling of trees, notably shea trees, for charcoal is contributing to the destruction of an important species for women's income and for household food security and to the degradation of the parklands.
- **Poor tree selection and low survival rates of planted trees:** This is due to poor tree germplasm sourcing, distribution, and management, especially for native species, and narrow tree selection for both public and private/informal actors. In addition, the list of species (18) offered by the Forestry Commission (largely with exotic species) is not well matched to the needs for reforestation or enrichment planting in the Northern regions.
- **Knowledge and capacity gaps** regarding the scaling of FMNR and agroforestry, as classical tree planting has received most attention.
- **Limited collaboration and commitment among stakeholders at both regional and district level** has led to a fragmented approach to solving interconnected land degradation and rural poverty problems. Exclusion of important stakeholders such as local and traditional chiefs as well as farmers has led to a lack of implementation and impact at the grassroots level.
- **District assemblies overall are underfunded, understaffed and lack the adequate resources** needed to efficiently manage resources and their users despite the role they have in decentralized governance.
- **Community resource management areas (CREMAs) have shown opportunities for sustainable landscape management but have been associated with a range of shortcomings**, such as the reliance on short-term external funding, encroachment issues (mining, sand, tree felling), local elite capture, lack of recognition and coordination with local law enforcement and compliance agencies, and insufficient mainstreaming in the district medium term development plans (DMTDPs).
- **Data sparsity:** Lack of geodata has made monitoring efforts difficult.

What worked well?

- ✔ FMNR/ANR is a low cost land restoration technique rural communities can use to combat land degradation.
- ✔ Planting trees to enhance species diversity.
- ✔ Preparing and using compost and manure as fertilizer.
- ✔ Not using fires during land preparation.
- ✔ Creating and supporting of district and community level structures for managing natural resources.
- ✔ Mobilising traditional authorities, opinion leaders and local people in the management of restoration areas.

What are the best practices for gender and youth inclusion in the greening movement?

- Designing gender transformative actions.
- Encouraging women to take leadership positions.
- Forming anti-bushfire groups with equal representation of men, women, and youth.
- Training couples in gender transformative action.
- Actively engaging women and youth groups.
- Strengthening government flagship programs, such as women and youth in afforestation.
- Cultivating community champions to support households with the gender discourse.

What are the most promising value chains and investment opportunities that could incentivise greening activities?



Shea Butter



Fuelwood



Honey





After the training, my wife and I now work together and get work done faster and effectively. This is the way to live. We support and discuss with each other and now understand that as a couple one can get angry over minor issues but it does not have to result in a quarrel."

Ayidanbil Awini, Farmer of Bawku West District after attending gender transformative action training in Bawku West



Gender Transformative Action Research in the Regreening Landscapes of Northern Ghana

Women in Northern Ghana are faced with a double-edged sword for, in addition to increasing degradation of land and natural resources on which they depend for their livelihood, cultural norms and customs severely limit their control of and access to land.

In Bawku West, gender transformative approaches were facilitated using a series of participatory gender engagement dialogues in 15 communities. 150 couples were engaged in activities aimed at exploring priority gender issues. These included exercises to develop common goals and identifying progress towards positive change. Six trained community trainers working in pairs facilitated community

dialogues with groups of 10 couples in each community. Trained community champions, cultivated through the process, supported the continued engagement and action of participating couples (or households).

Men and women must be actively engaged in decisions about household wellbeing. This begins with an appreciation of contribution to household wellbeing; share of workloads, control and access to land/ assets, household incomes and decisions. To become resilient, households must understand resources, and tasks should be equally distributed amongst household members to minimize shocks from loss/disasters.

Looking forward

While Regreening Africa has been largely successful in achieving its targets for Ghana, various challenges to successfully accelerate the scale of land restoration nonetheless persist.

Since the onset of the project, Regreening Africa has continuously consulted a range of critical actors through **multiple stakeholder engagement processes** to ensure the success of interventions and their long-term sustainability. The project also specifically responded to the clear need expressed during the 2018 Tamale national workshop for “a Northern Ghana Restoration Initiative (NRI)” to improve coordination and planning with evidence-based decision-making and to **design a strategy tailored to the socio-ecological contexts of the regions**. The aim of the initiative is firstly to propose a set of recommendations to support the design and implementation of strategies and policies that are aligned and coherent with the savannah mosaic landscape contexts.

Secondly, the aim is to **foster a sustainable multi-stakeholder engagement mechanism to create synergies in knowledge, resources and interventions amongst key stakeholders while improving the enabling policy and institutional environment** necessary to restore land health and tree cover and provide fair benefits to communities. In 2022, a series of dialogues and consultations from grassroots and national level enabled a collective review of the evidence and learning of both Regreening Africa in Ghana and experiences from a range of other governmental and non-governmental agencies, farmer groups, faith-based and civil society associations.

The objectives of the events were to share evidence and experiences to draw and integrate the important lessons and co-design recommendations for addressing key challenges to land restoration in Northern Ghana.



Priority actions for accelerating the scale of land restoration in northern Ghana – recommendations from Regreening Africa multi-stakeholder dialogues



SCALING SUCCESSFUL PRACTICES

FMNR is a low cost, easy to use land restoration practice that can be mainstreamed through extension/ technical services within the Department of Agriculture and Forestry Commission. It aims to enhance tree cover and land restoration. The technique is effective for both on-farm tree regeneration as well as a promising community forest option.

Fire volunteer and nursery groups, women village saving and loan associations and technology champions/ lead farmers are important **social mechanisms to foster cohesion and successful ownership** of regreening activities. **School environmental clubs should be promoted to consciously include youth in restoration.**

Creating and promoting alternative livelihood means for local communities are essential to restoration. This can be through the development of forest village enterprises for improving the value chain of key fruit trees like Shea, Baobab, Dawadawa or diversifying (e.g., bee-keeping), improving business creation, labeling, certification and support for indigenous products and cultural heritage.



Trees are like children. When they are small, you nurse and protect them. But when they are grown, everyone benefits.”

Safora Abdulai, Lead Farmer,
Garu District



ENABLING POLICY AND INSTITUTIONS

Long term financial mechanisms are required to mainstream land restoration programs in medium term development plans (MTDPs) of metropolitan, municipal and district assemblies (MMDAs) with clear cut budget allocation. Competence and capacity in landscape restoration/natural resource management need to be increased and there needs to be support for sustainable environmental management subcommittees.

District assemblies need to ensure the **formulation, enactment (gazette) and enforcement of community by-laws** on environmental restoration and protection (bushfire, charcoal burning, tree felling, land clearing for mining, agriculture investments). **Advocacy and engagement with traditional leadership** is also important both to increase land allocated to restoration and to enforce adherence to environmental by-laws.

Community forest management planning, reward and benefit sharing mechanisms need to be developed and mainstreamed as incentives for landscape restoration.



EVIDENCE AND SCIENCE

Use of GIS and Remote Sensing is urgently needed for improving planning, management (identification of degraded lands and hotspot areas) and coordination of restoration activities on the ground. There is a particularly important need to reinforce GIS and data collection in wildfire detection and control.

Tailored vegetation restoration plans are needed to address the range of conditions across the semi-arid agroecosystems in the Northern savanna regions.

Monitoring and evaluation processes for tree planting or protection are critical to tree survival and to encourage communities to protect tree seedlings. Citizen science and Regreening Africa indicators have the potential to be used to assess progress towards national indicators as well as the district's performance.



PLATFORMS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Institutional mechanisms, governance and consultation principles and processes for coordinated actions among institutions and stakeholders needs to be created to ensure approaches used by different stakeholders in the same geographical and socioeconomic contexts are harmonized.

There is a need for an effective platform that can be sustained over time and that supports the development and sharing of evidence, knowledge, and skills. This would target necessary improvements in the **information flow and communication** across scales, from district level to communities but also between research and development from the NGOs and research institutions to donors, government, and the private and public sector.





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