



## Regreening Africa

Joint Reflective and  
Learning Missions (JRLM)

# Synthesis Report

September 2019



Funded by the European Union



World  
Agroforestry



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## Introduction and Approach

Funded by the European Union, Regreening Africa is an ambitious five-year project that seeks to reverse land degradation among 500,000 households, across one million hectares in eight countries by incorporating trees into agricultural and pastoral landscapes. Two years into the project, joint reflection and learning missions were designed using the Stakeholder Approach to Risk Informed and Evidence Based Decision Making (SHARED, See Box 1) method to create an innovative monitoring, reflection and learning opportunity between implementing Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), World Agroforestry scientists and partners engaged in oversight at the national level.

The design of the missions included field visits to project locations in order to update on implementation, understand key challenges and to identify what practices or catalytic actions could be further developed to accelerate scaling to meet regional goals. The reflective missions provided the opportunity for scientists, project managers, implementing staff and farmers to jointly query and learn from one another's evidence and experience, build upon project momentum and consider revising the scaling strategies.



The reflective mission visits were designed using the SHARED method, which is a key component in the project with a focus on cross-learning, policy leveraging and scaling options. Key elements of the SHARED method include:

- a **people centred and demand driven process**;
- tailored and rigorous **cross-sectoral and multi-stakeholder engagement** structure and space for addressing power asymmetries, building trust and collaboration;
- **deliberative dialogue and communication**, co-learning, and negotiation;
- **brokered knowledge exchange**, recognising different knowledge sources;
- a **systems approach** that appreciates complexity and inter-relationship;
- addressing **root causes and behavioural drivers**;
- and enhanced **decision making capacities** for transformative change.


**Box 1.** The SHARED Decision Hub

The purpose of this document is to provide a synthesis of the findings across the country level reflective missions with a focus on the innovative process methodology employed. Detailed individual JRLM country reports have been shared with each country and can be found at:



[www.regreeningafrika.org](http://www.regreeningafrika.org)





**The objectives of the 5-7 day joint reflection and learning missions that took place between May and July of 2019 were to**



**2**

**Review the evidence, from multiple sources (scientific studies and field experience) to enhance project planning for improved impact.**



**1**

**Provide a platform for mutual learning on what is working and what could be improved in terms of implementation.**





3

**Discuss all technical, managerial, and behavioural obstacles.**

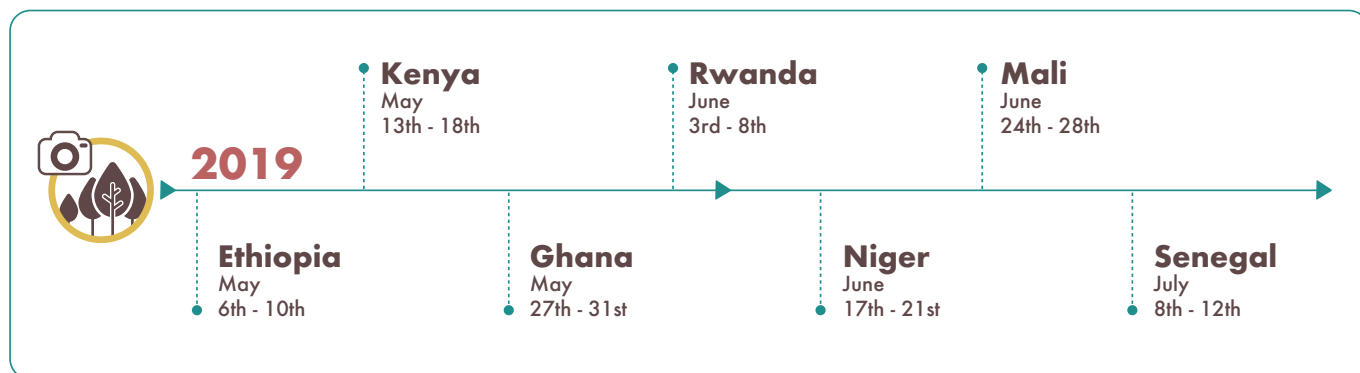


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**Agree upon concrete actions that can increase the uptake of greening practices that transform landscapes for inclusion in the Year 3 Activity Plans and budgets**

**The JRLMs were carried out in seven out of eight project countries between May and July, 2019. The country JRLMs took place per the dates shown in Figure 1.**

## Country Visits **May - July 2019**



**Figure 1:** Country Joint Reflective and Learning Mission dates.

The Somalia mission is planned for 2020 due to delays in onset of project activities. For Somalia, a planning meeting was held during 16-17 April 2019. The project successfully established oversight coordination committees in Puntland and Somaliland and an overall one at the country level. It was attended by representatives of the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) component and the European Union (EU) delegates for Somalia.



## Structure of the JRLMS

The flow of activities for the Joint Reflective and Learning Missions is shown in Figure 2 and consisted of:

- 1 Two-three day field visits and interactions with farmers



### Field Visits led by implementing NGOs in country



Field visit to see work underway and understand approach taken by each partner

ICRAF science and support team and NGOs reflecting and interacting on learning from the field visits



- 2 Two days of intense discussions around what we had seen in the field (project progress, technical issues on tree species diversity, value chain activities, gender involvement, etc.), discussion of data from executed surveys and reports, policy influence and communication strategies for mass scaling, budget and activity monitoring, planning for future activities and support needed by partners on the ground.

## Design of Joint Reflective and Learning Missions May - July 2019



### Reflection Workshops

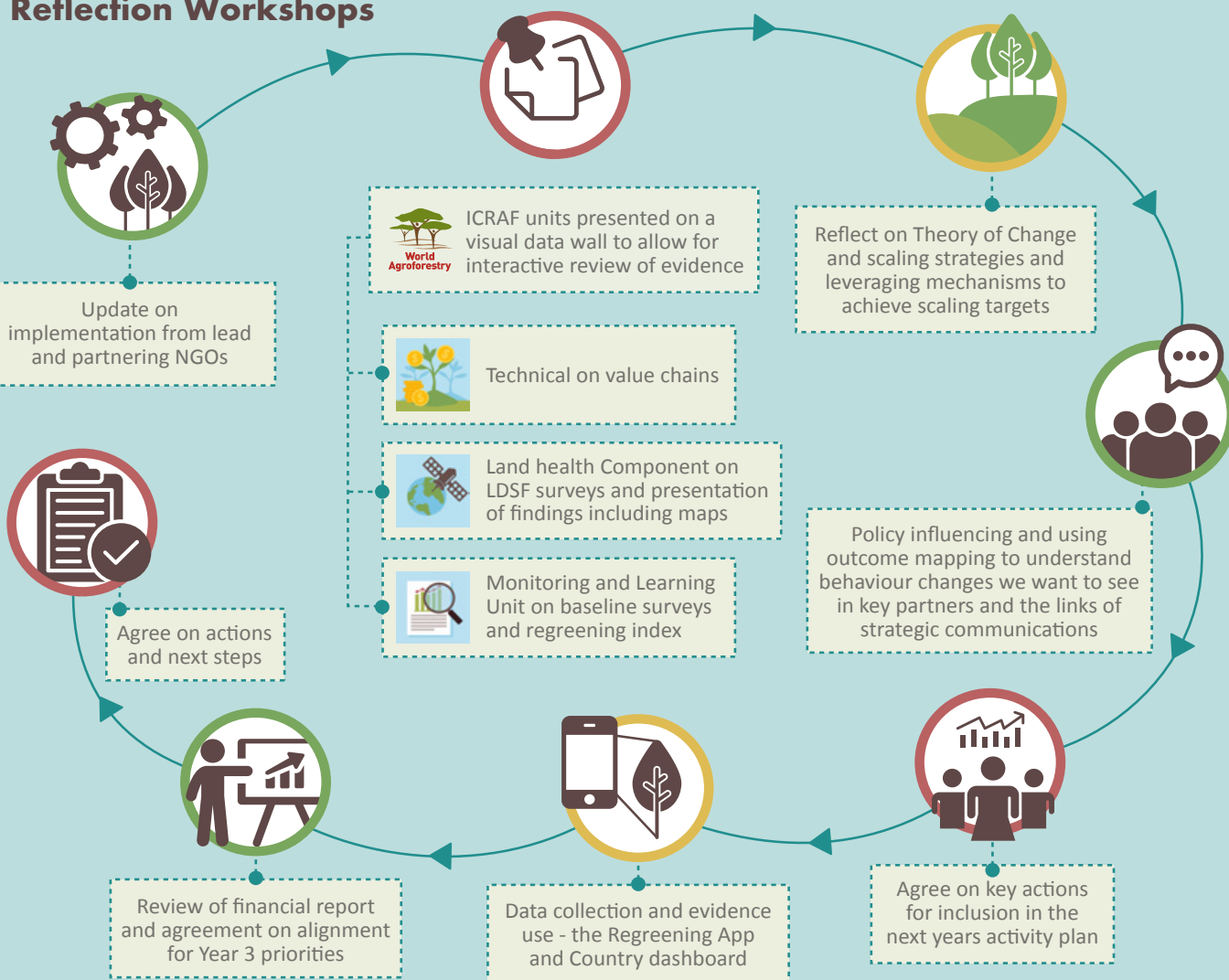


Figure 2: Overview of the Joint Reflective and Learning Mission activities that took place in implementation countries.

## Field Interactions

The on-farm field visits and facilitated interactions were led by the lead NGOs in each country to enable dialogue between field implementers, scientists and farmers. The aim of the field visits was to:

- 1 Monitor the work taking place on the ground;
- 2 Understand the capacity of and information exchange approach taken by different partners;
- 3 Gather first-hand information on the obstacles and opportunities to farmer uptake and broader scaling of regreening practices; and

- 4 Compare field reporting and realities on the ground (See Figure 3).

The field sites visited were randomized to maximize learning from successful and less successful endeavours and a mix of regreening practices. At this stage in the project implementation, the field level interactions revealed that there was still an emphasis on introducing the project and the local level benefits of regreening, and identifying lead farmers with initial uptake of regreening practices such as tree planting, farmer managed natural regeneration and soil and water conservation activities.



**Figure 3:** Right - Prof. Mitiku Haille explaining to farmers the ideal tree species to retain near beehives for maximum results (Ethiopia). Top - (Senegal). Bottom left - (Kenya). Bottom right - (Ghana).







## The field visits provided critical insights from the lead farmers and project implementors to positively influence uptake by women, men and youth related for:

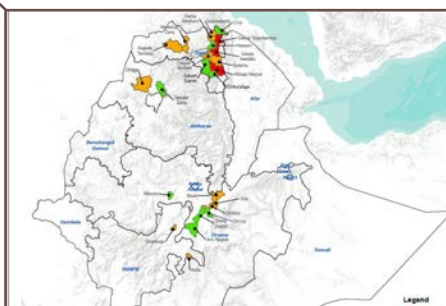
- 1 Tree species that work best in their contexts and generate desired benefits and return on investment;

- 2 Sustainable availability of high quality germplasm including well-stocked tree nurseries for quality seedling, particularly high value fruits and nuts as well as indigenous species;

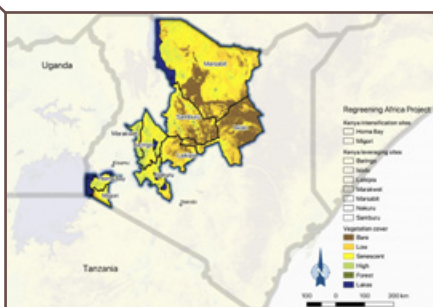
- 3 Management of trees once established given local constraints (e.g. moisture stress, free grazing livestock and fires, etc.)



Ethiopia



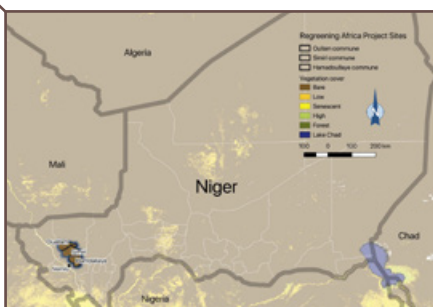
Kenya



Ghana



Niger



Both partners started activities quite late (year 2) but field visits revealed ongoing activities on Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), tree planting working through the government nurseries as well as interventions to manage enclosures. A number of recommendations emerged:

- Diversification of tree species to include high value fruit trees, further development of management of enclosures, supporting soil and water conservation where feasible through a watershed/landscape level management as part of a robust scaling approach.
- Activities involving management of enclosures in direct intervention sites (communal areas).
- Aligning activities with ongoing government programmes as part of leveraging.
- Further development of the value chain component.

There is a good start of implementation of various restoration activities in the direct implementation sites including impressive tree nurseries, water harvesting to support high value fruit trees such as papayas, onset of FMNR activities by lead farmers, among others. Substantial attention needs to be given on refining these activities and then implementing a clear and robust scaling strategy.

There is a slow start of implementation of various restoration activities in Ghana contrary to general expectations based on the presentation given during the project steering committee in Ethiopia in November 2018. The focus is primarily on FMNR as this is Northern Ghana which is semi-arid. Community mobilisation and awareness was strong in World Vision led sites but weak in CRS sites. There was good sensitization of communities on some of the drivers of deforestation and degradation, including forest fires and complete removal and burning of plant residue. Not much scaling was evident in either sites. Implementation in CRS sites need closer attention as the pace was much slower and progress at the communal level less evident.

There is a good start of implementation of various restoration activities in the direct implementation sites including impressive soil and water harvesting techniques, tree nurseries and FMNR in lead farmers' fields.



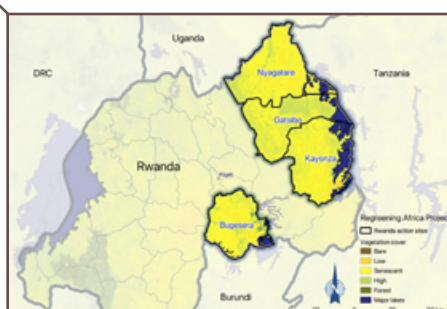
- 4 Integration of native and exotic species into value chains and markets;
- 5 The critical nature of communications that support messaging and technical information packaging to support lead farmers as well as catalyse behaviour change, sustained motivation and enthusiasm;
- 6 Broader policy influencing especially on land and tree tenure and various aspects of agroforestry

- 7 The multiple dimensions of capacity development that are needed to ensure success and going to scale.

In most countries, community mobilization to start greening activities, inclusion of women and passionate youth, and support by communities and local authorities and good relationships among partners were evident as summarised in Figure 4. Each of these experiential elements fed into the evidence interactions that are discussed in the next section.



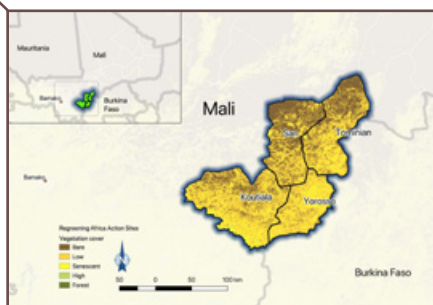
## Rwanda



There is a good start of implementation of various restoration activities in the direct implementation sites including impressive tree nurseries, integration of high value fruit trees such as mangoes, avocados and tree tomatoes, among others. FMNR is not a common practise in Rwanda and the project is still struggling to find the right niche, policy anchor and general acceptance at the government and local levels. Discussions revealed there was potential to implement FMNR in communal areas, but this would need influencing government policy which largely favour tree planting. Maintaining species diversity is crucial for both tree planting (currently there is dominance of eucalyptus) as well as when FMNR when it picks up.



## Mali



There is a slow start of implementation of land restoration activities. Considering most partners in Mali have implemented other land restoration projects in the past, they should be able to draw on this previous experience, with cross-learning from more experienced partners to accelerate overall project activities and impacts.



## Senegal



There is a slow start of implementation of various restoration activities in Senegal contrary to general expectations. With the recruitment of 45 animators in place, and the technical guidance provided during the Joint Reflection Meeting week, this is expected to change. The focus is primarily on FMNR where enrichment planting to maintain species diversity and integration of species with high economic value will be required to act as incentives to farmers for adoption and scaling. Activities to support value chain development and strengthening needs to be accelerated in year 3 with technical guidance provided by ICRAF when required/ requested.

Figure 4: Summary of field observation on progress of activities during JRLM

## Lessons for Improving Future Field Level Interactions

A number of ways were identified to improve the process and effectiveness of the field level interactions. These include:

- 1 Organize, articulate and distribute questions to be raised by the different partners and technical leaders of components in the field.
- 2 Those visiting the field sites felt that more time could be spent introducing them to what they were going to see during the visits before arriving in farmers' fields.
- 3 Each participant to have a template or protocol for a more rigorous interaction (principles of engagement) and capture of insights shared.
- 4 Providing a more inclusive and prepared space for farmers- women and men- share their insights and questions or demonstrate their techniques was recommended.
- 5 It is also important that scientists and technical experts come prepared to share expertise that can be valuable to the farmers, not only asking questions.

These changes would ensure a more robust integration of experience into the reflective journey. In terms of participation, field visits also offer an important interaction opportunity between decision makers that make up the country project National Oversight and Coordination Committee (NOCC). The NOCC memberships include technical officers and representatives from a mix of government ministries. The field visits can serve as an important learning through exposure and dialogue with farmers and implementers and prompt input into policy exchanges that can support regreening efforts at a national level.

**“ The JRLM was a real school that allowed the Mali team to learn from each other through field visits. The workshop exchanges were also very fruitful as they allowed us to clarify many themes such as outcome mapping, leveraging adoption, finances etc. It would therefore be important to institute this event annually. ”**

**Mamadou Coulibaly**





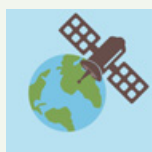
## Evidence Interaction (Data Wall)

Building on the experiential information in the field, the next step was to bring implementing partners, NOCC partners (where present) and scientists together to review the data that had been collected to date in support of the project. To ensure this information was shared in an easy-to-understand and accessible form and that project partners could interrogate and draw lessons/implications for implementation.

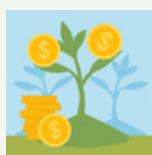
Data was presented from surveys collected under various project-supporting components (see Box 2) including baseline data from the Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning

(MEL) team, land health maps and field data from the LDSF surveys under the Land Degradation Dynamics (LDD) component and findings from the value chain scoping surveys under the Design, Techniques and Implementation (DTI) component. The Communications component also shared insights on targeted communication methods for promoting uptake and scaling. During the sessions on scaling through wider practice and policy, the SHARED component showed initial stakeholder maps and outputs from a policy synthesis and national stakeholder workshops. Findings of the ELD studies were not ready for sharing during these missions but will be incorporated in the next missions.

Research is embedded within the planning and implementation of regreening to ensure rapid and iterative learning and improvement and the networks and experience of NGOs are used to accelerate the expansion of regreening. Specific components that support strategic decision making include:



The Land Degradation Dynamics (LDD) component equips countries with surveillance and analytic tools on analysing land degradation dynamics, including social and economic dimensions, identifying and measuring key indicators of land and soil health in order to understand drivers of degradation, prioritize areas for intervention and monitor changes over time.



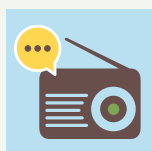
The Design, Techniques and Implementation (DTI) component focuses on availability of quality planting materials, regreening practice techniques and the improvement of value chains to support the production associated with tree-based farming systems.



The Stakeholder Approach to Risk-informed and Evidence-based Decision-making (SHARED) component helps Regreening Africa engage with a wide range of stakeholders, facilitate interaction with evidence and experience, and provide greater support for enhancing policies.



The Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) component generates evidence on the baseline and the iterative impact of the project.



The Communication component focuses on strategic communication methods to share evidence and experience and to target behaviour change among all groups involved in regreening, accelerating expansion.

### Box 2. Regreening Africa's Components

The evidence was displayed in a feature of the SHARED process- an evidence or data wall- where maps, graphs and other results were printed and displayed on meeting room walls (See Figure 5). The data wall provided an opportunity for scientists, implementing partners and NOCC members to discuss the relevance of the data and the relationship across different data sets, validate the findings and ensure

that there was a collective understanding of the evidence and its role in tailoring regreening efforts and uptake and scaling strategies. Partners were able to discuss how the findings can be capitalized upon for informing the project planning and help communicate with partners, including the community and government.

# Project evidence and data walls

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“ The JRLM was a great opportunity for the country team, with support from component leaders and project manager to reflect on strong and weak areas - come up with strategies for strengthening the weak areas, and think of how to even improve further in areas where performance was noted as being good. ”

**Alex Mugayi, World Vision Rwanda**



**Figure 5:** Presentation of data wall evidence in Senegal (top right), Niger (bottom right), Kenya (bottom middle) and Rwanda (bottom left).



## What Constitutes Regreening?

In the project, regreening has several diverse elements, and the combination of these elements will vary by context. To capture this diversity, a 'multi-dimensional Regreening Index' was developed. The Regreening Index comprises four dimensions, with four to five binary (yes-no) indicators falling under each. The more a household engages in the various dimensions of regreening, the higher its score on the 0 to 1 index (see Figure 6). The dimensions are described below.



### Extent of practice

Pertains to the extensiveness of a household's regreening efforts over the past four years. Maximum points are awarded if it has engaged in FMNR and/or tree planting on its main field, at its homestead, and on any other of its other land use areas (e.g. secondary field) during this timeframe, as well as participated in community-level regreening activities. Partial points, if any, are awarded otherwise.



### Intensity of practice

Relates to the intensity of the household's regreening practices. The more, new trees and/or shrubs established, the higher the score, with higher points still if agroforestry products produced on farm were used by the household and/or if any of these products were sold.



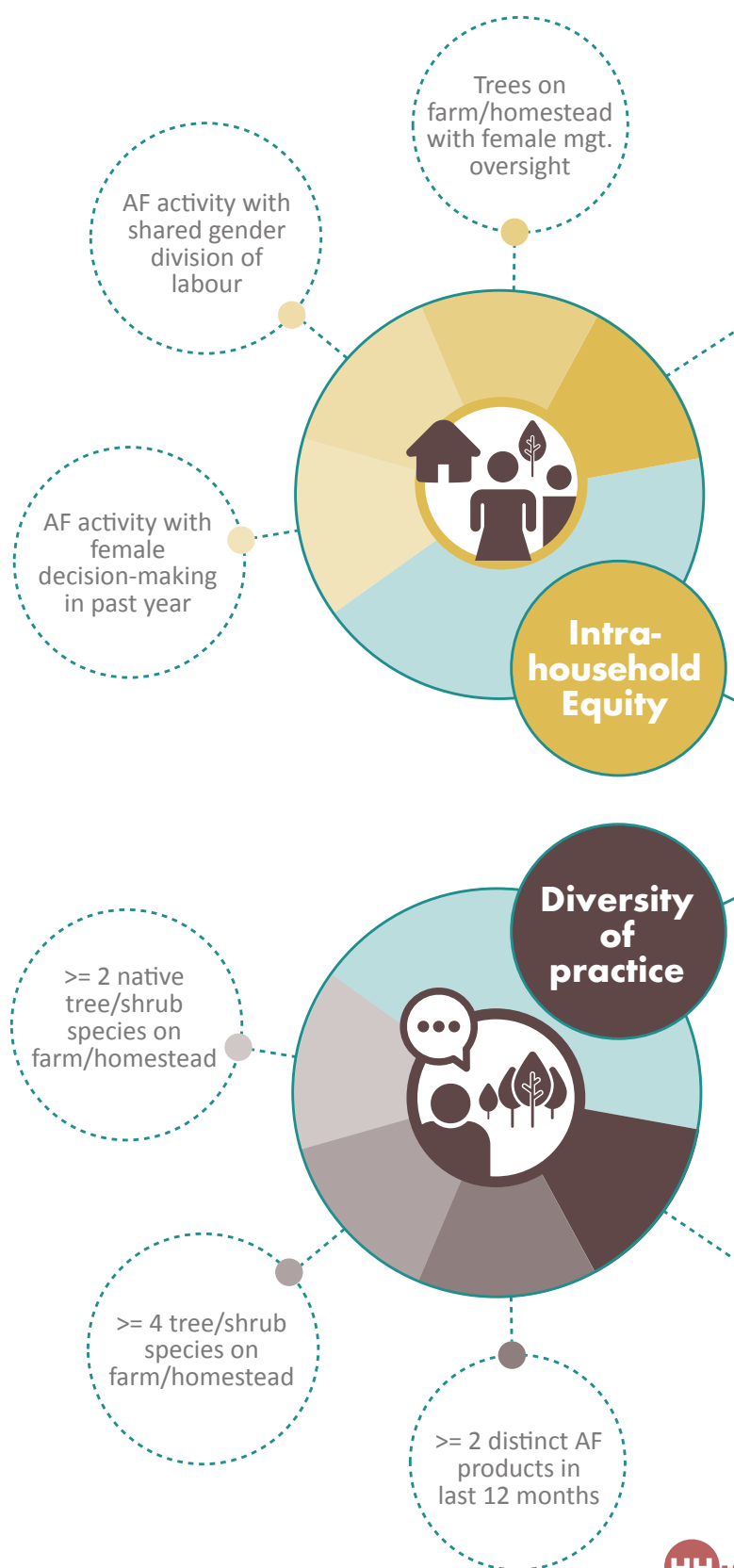
### Diversity of practice

Measures the diversity of a household's regreening activities. The more agroforestry practices in which a household was engaged and/or agroforestry products produced, the higher number of points awarded. The same is true for diversity of tree species on farm or at the homestead, with higher points for having at least two native species.



### Intrahousehold equity

Gauges the extent a household's engagement in regreening can be considered as equitable along gender lines. If agroforestry establishment activities were undertaken with female decision-making involvement and/or the associated work was undertaken by both women and men of the household, the higher its score will be on this dimension. The same is true for the management of already established trees on farm and if women were involved in spending decisions of any agroforestry products sold by the household.



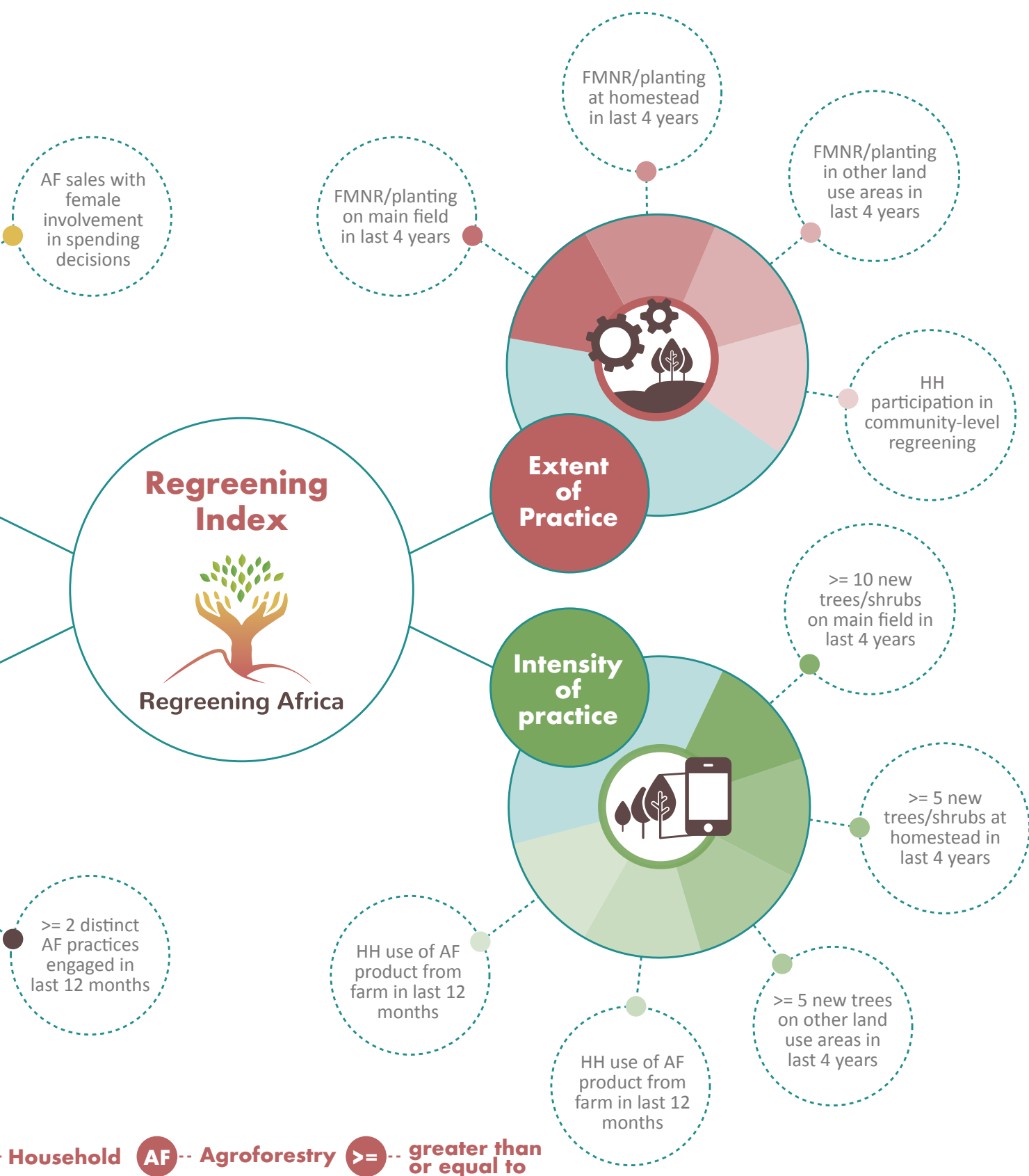


Figure 6: The regreening index

## Lessons from interactions with evidence

The unique approach employed by this project is to ensure research is embedded within the planning and implementation of regreening to ensure rapid and iterative learning and improvement and the networks and experience of NGOs are used to accelerate the expansion of regreening.

From both substantive and process perspectives, there were a number of positive outcomes to the sharing of scientific evidence. See figure 7

As a result of the interaction, it afforded the opportunity to overcome resistance that may have been held by either implementing partners or scientists and establish greater trust going forward. In terms of the data, the interaction also highlighted which types of data and which formats were viewed

as more valuable. In some cases, partners requested different formats of data going forward. A shift in perspective on the value of communication became apparent as well. While some project components had been viewed by some project partners as an “ICRAF thing”, or “NGO thing”, the interactions prompted a greater understanding of the need to mutual cooperation in scaling strategies and in one country. The preparation and translation of the evidence wall is considered time consuming and requires a great deal of printing, yet the value to improving interaction and uptake of diverse sets of information simultaneously likely outweighs the transaction costs. For sustainability, exploring sources of recycled paper or ensuring the materials are in a form that can be used in the future by country partners will be explored.

### Interactions with evidence

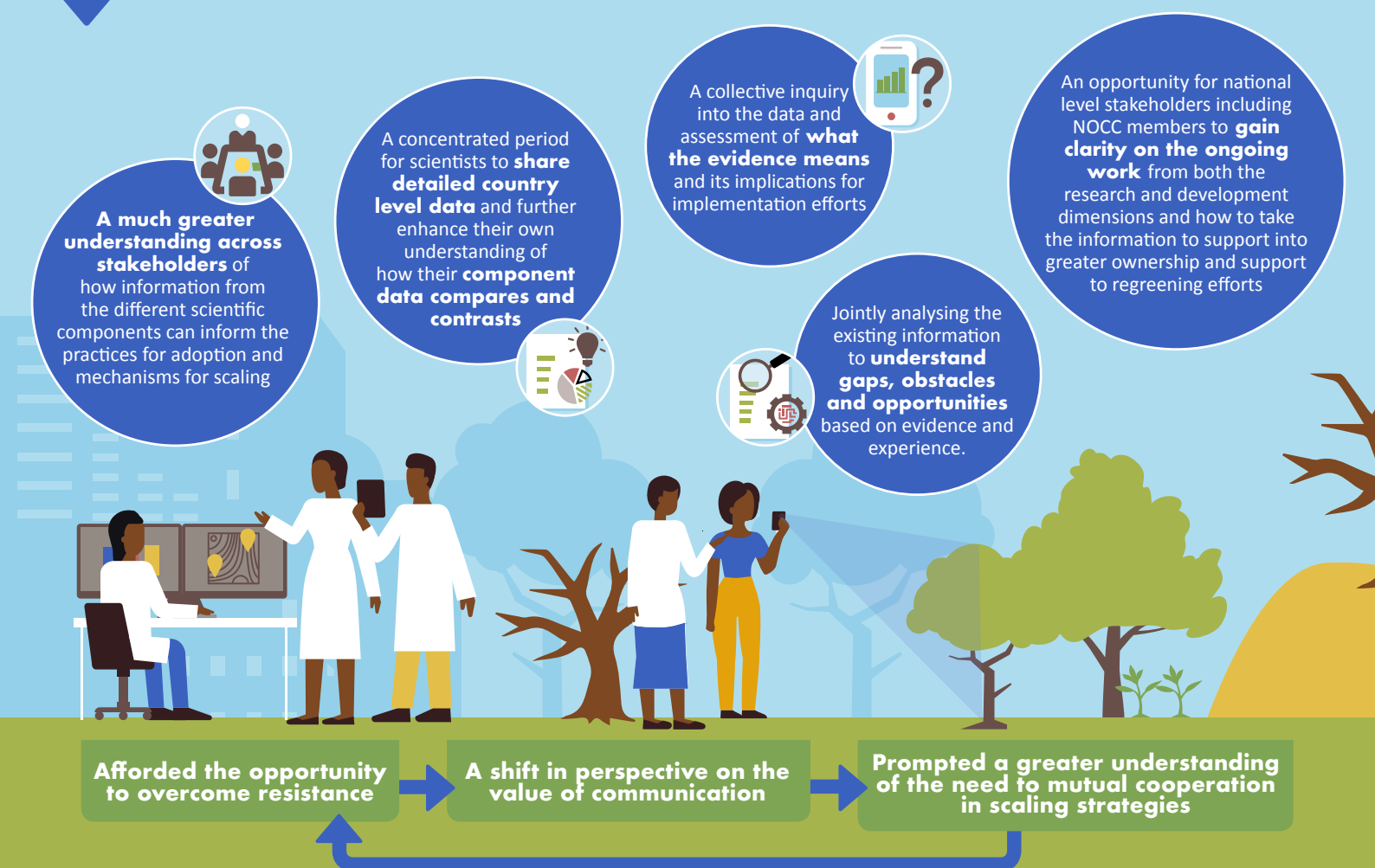


Figure 7: Lessons from interactions with evidence showing the process perspectives



# Scaling Mechanisms

The Regreening Africa project employs two levels of scaling meant to reach the ambitious targets for the 5 year project. The first is termed as 'direct scaling' for which the theory of change is aimed at the direct uptake of regreening practices by percentage of households on a percentage of hectares. 'Indirect Scaling' refers to the mechanisms that are used to catalyze a much wider scaling of regreening practices through, for example, communications efforts and policy advocacy among others. These are often referred to as leveraging adoptions and can include adding regreening efforts to projects or programs that have a different focus (e.g. livelihoods), through communications efforts such as radio that reach a broader audience or influencing national strategies and policies to enhance uptake.

Figure 8 shows how the various elements are designed to fit together in support of the scaling approach. For the two types of scaling, theories of change have been developed in each country. During the Joint Reflective Events in country, the two theories of change were revisited and refined based on the co-learning from the field and from the research studies. In addition to theories of change, the countries implementers had also developed outcome maps which elaborated the kinds of actors that needed to be influenced to enhance uptake of regreening practices and the progress markers to track changes in those actors' behaviors. See figure 8.

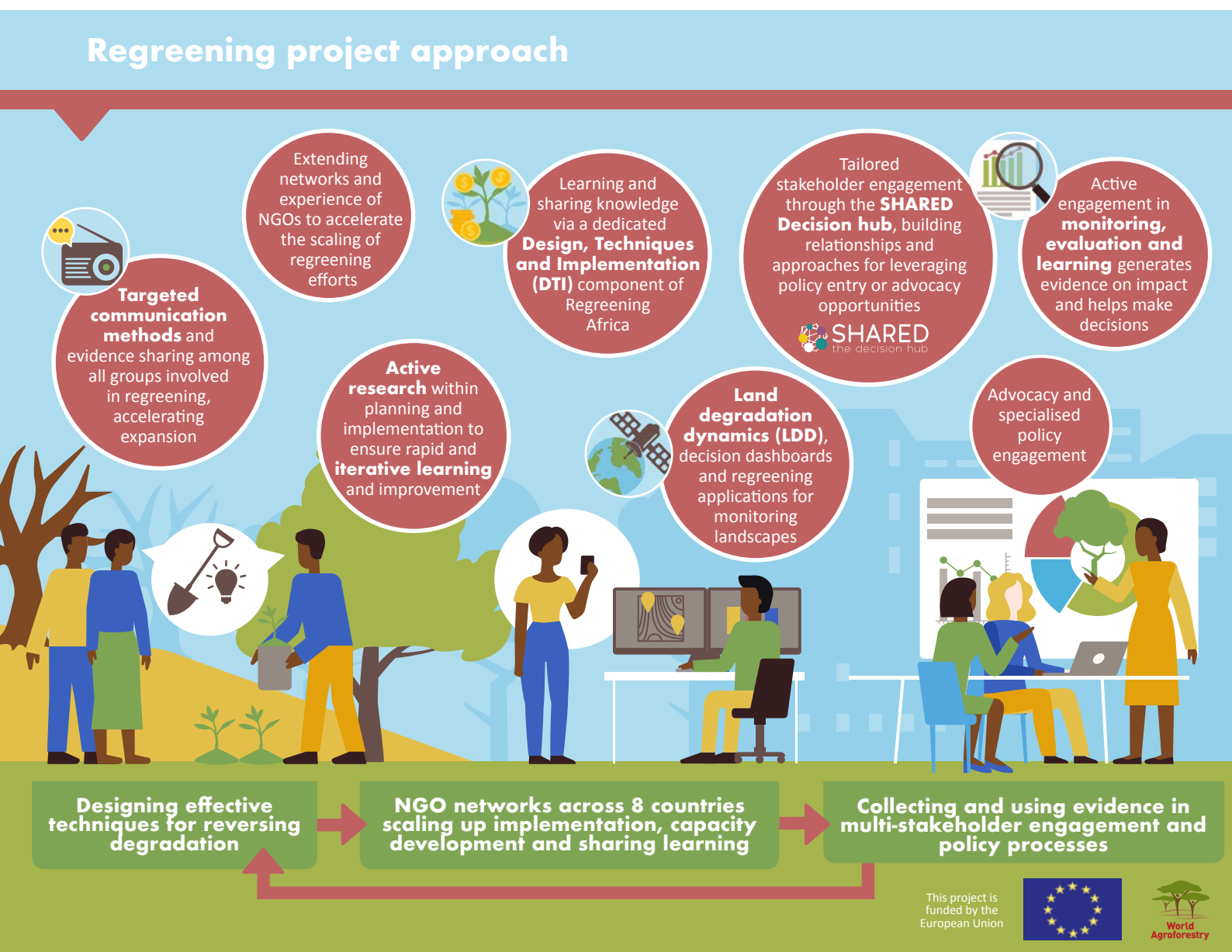


Figure 8: Approach to scaling up regreening activities showing how different elements work together.

## Direct Scaling

A review of the existing Theory of Change (ToC) for direct scaling encouraged participants to think about the scaling approaches for reaching the target farmers in a meaningful way, see examples in Figure 9 and Figure 10 from Ethiopia and Niger.

The group developed a scaling approach outlining the institutions engaged in the scaling process and their relationships. A discussion on the scaling modalities including the numbers to be reached, incentives for scaling and the levels at which to bring in different interventions took place such as value chains.



## Ethiopia Scaling Strategy

### Community



#### Nurseries

Government and community nurseries will be supported and strengthened to facilitate tree planting

The project will support government and community nurseries with special emphasis to nurseries run by youth and women groups to overcome structural barriers associated with provision of tree seeds and seedlings shortage



#### Gender Mainstreaming

Increase the number of women in regreening activities (FMNR, area closure, value chains, agroforestry)

Gender specific incentive systems e.g. flexible timings and getting men to bring their wives to trainings



#### Farmer Training Centres (FTCs)

Direct community-level intervention will be achieved through sensitising, mobilising and training the community to adopt regreening best practices



#### Technical Staff

Capacity building training will be given to local NGOs, CBOs, FBOs and service providers such as nursery operators

Capacity building training will be given to relevant Woreda and Kebele partners

To facilitates the scaling out implementation process and sustain project successes after the project ends



#### Village Meetings

Establishment of FMNR community groups and strengthen existing conservation groups



## Policy & Enabling Environment



### National Agroforestry Platform

#### Engage with the wider stakeholder community

Disseminating information on EGA through National advocacy platforms/network such as the National Agroforestry Platform

Participating higher officials on different events (field days, joint monitoring visits), and through providing communication materials (flyers, brochures, posters, success stories, technical reports)



### Communication Channels



#### Radio Broadcasting



#### Posters

Radio broadcasting and posters on best practices to influence the community and facilitate wider adoption



#### Video

Videos to show best practices, success stories, and to train farmers in implementation of re-greening practices, would be the main scaling strategy to accelerate adoption of regreening practices



### Policy Advocacy

#### Project will influence the wider policy, practice and investment decisions

through engaging policy makers, government offices, including all relevant Ministries

Through organising regular meetings and participation in already existing relevant networks/platforms (e.g. National Agroforestry Platform)

To get buy-ins, synergise with all existing work, and influence relevant policies

#### Through active engagements with policy makers

The government is expected to incorporate the project strategies and theories of change to its government plans at all levels, and facilitate the direct community-level EGA adoptions within and outside the project intervention sites

Strengthen existing platforms and networks to leverage regreening approach and influence higher officials and policy makers to incorporate agroforestry and regreening initiatives into the government strategic and annual work plans.

## Household and Farm Level



### Households

120,000 households will adopt EGA best practices on a total area of 200,000 hectares in 25 districts across four regions



### Training

#### Farmers' field days & Exchange visits

will be organised to facilitate farmer-to-farmer extensions of EGA practices

#### Farmer to Farmer visits

will be used as a key scaling strategy to intensify the outreach and impact of champion farmers

Figure 9: Example of scaling strategies from Ethiopia



# Niger Scaling Strategy

## Community



### Nurseries

FMNR and nurseries to provide high-value species that the producers themselves have chosen

Develop and implement affordable and simple methods for germplasm conservation and utilisation, regeneration and propagation of high-value tree species

Procure planting material of identified priority species with emphasis on drought resistant provenances and varieties to offset climate change effects



### FMNR Committees

support the dissemination of FMNR or other natural resource management practices, train their peers, ensure sound environmental governance (observance of existing environmental law etc.); conduct demonstration sessions, monitoring



### Fodder

Increase availability of fodder through collection and dissemination of forage germplasm and establishment of fodder banks



### Rural Resource Centre

Develop and disseminate soil, water and nutrient conservation and sustainable land management options

Provide farmers with a framework where they can access to knowledge and technologies  
The RRCs will provide farmers with training, link them with input suppliers and produce markets



### Gender Mainstreaming

Involve both men, women and youth in all the scaling up process

Ensuring that women are represented in the FMNR committees (at least 50%) and participate in decision making



### Support small-scale infrastructure and equipment

To facilitate storage and agro-processing of agricultural and tree products (warehouses, drying floors, processing equipment, etc.)



### Saving Groups

Women, beyond the benefits they derive from saving groups, will participate in the re-greening of their environment as grassroots organisation



### Awareness

Provide non-financial incentives to farmers to improve quality and quantity of tree seedlings being produced



### Farmer to Farmer

Strengthen and support local governance and skills transfer

### Farmer to farmer training & non-financial incentives

Evidence provided to aid in support of farmers in their FMNR efforts.  
e.g. organising "Best reforestation and awards to those who perform better"



Regreening Africa



## Policy & Enabling Environment



### Community Awareness

**Sensitisation to create general awareness on climate change and stakes of FMNR practices**

General Population  
Farmers  
Opinion Leaders  
Religious Leaders  
Local Government  
Agriculture Department  
Forestry Department



### Partnership with Government Technical Services of Agriculture and Environment

**Provide evidence to reformulate policies that influence decision making** Farmers and communities to adopt sustainable land management options through FMNR and enrichment planting

#### Leveraging other projects

Programs where re-greening activities are being implemented, EVA funds will be used to support efforts; and this will be counted in the project's EVA statistics

#### Partnership with Government Technical Services of Agriculture and Environment

Sharing of evidence success with the decision-makers. The aim is to promote their continued participation in the process of restoration of degraded lands and increase their influence in promoting investment and policy development/ amendment



### Communication Channels



#### Caravan

From one village to another the first 2 years / 2 sessions per year / per village



#### Community Radio Stations Private Radio Stations



#### Video



#### Office of Broadcasting and Television of Niger (ORTN) Private Televisions



### Value Chain

#### Creation of an enabling environment

To facilitate the sale of wood and non-timber forest products through agroforestry

#### Identify priority tree species

of community importance in fuelwood, nutrition, fodder, medicine or market potential. Paying particular attention to species suitable for specific regions/ project focus areas with well-known fuelwood characteristics

Develop strategies to promote the marketing of tree products within and outside the project site and explore new markets

Support small-scale infrastructure and equipment to facilitate storage and agro-processing of agricultural and tree products

Build the capacity of partners in post-harvest technology

## Household and Farm Level



### Households

Promotion of improved stoves to reduce the use of firewood and by the way to limit the pressure on natural resources



### Training

An exchange framework will be created for communities to share and receive information on EVA practices

Adequate follow-up and encouragement with monitoring visits, preferably joint monitoring visits with technical services and local authorities

Follow up farmers to promote care of planted trees (e.g. protection from livestock and other disturbance agents) to increase survival and growth

Figure 10: Example of scaling strategies from Niger

While more detail is provided in individual country reports, it was found that some countries have clear scaling models, are aligning with government projects, are broadening the approach to restore land with multiple practices, are employing rural resources and training centers, are training farmers and working with farmers to diversify the species, are engaging farmer cooperatives and schools, and are providing non-financial incentives, among others. In some cases, there is still quite a bit of work to be done to move beyond introducing the project and promoting greater uptake to contribute to scaling.

Some important lessons and inquiries were brought to light in terms of reaching farmers. Some of these included:



Aspects of gender and youth and how these stakeholders are being integrated into regreening practices;



The realization that just training farmers on practices such as FMNR is not going to be enough- the role of key messaging, strategic communication and incentives need to be emphasized;



It is also important to take into account the actual percentage uptake and attrition in determining targeted adoption numbers: and



Expertise held by field staff must be integrated in the preparation of workplans and monitoring progress.

Some countries have illustrated innovative approaches, looking at FMNR and soil and water conservation together, as a holistic approach to addressing scaling targets whilst addressing soil erosion.

## Indirect Scaling and Leveraging Adoption

The group then reflected on the wider leveraging and policy influence work that is a key opportunity and a unique feature of the project. The participants took time to gain clarity on the meaning of leveraging with input by the MEL component leads, who developed definitions and guidelines. They noted that 'Leveraged adoption' could be as a result of something as simple as a 'sister project' being implemented by one of the INGOs participating in the country consortium that is using the Project's same scaling approaches.

However, it could be less direct, for example, another organization or government institution pursuing the same scaling approaches as developed under the Project. While there is no set way to achieve or measure leveraged adoption, through the engagement with country teams and project stakeholders further elaboration on principles and measures.

The three principles include:

- 1 Meaningful link to the Regreening Africa;
- 2 Means of evidencing this link; and
- 3 A credible, yet realistic, means for estimating/ measuring the resulting adoption.

The third principle has been one of the most challenging to come to terms with- how might we measure leveraged adoption. Some of these methods for estimating or measuring leveraged adoption are outlined in Table 1.

Method	Description	When to Approach	How to Implement
<b>Extrapolation</b>	The same or similar intervention model used in Regreening Africa's direct scaling sites is implemented in the leveraged sites. Uptake rates from the direct scaling sites are used to estimate leveraged adoption numbers in the leveraged sites.	Use when Regreening Africa's community-level intervention model for the direct scaling sites is also implemented in the leveraged sites. The leveraged sites are not radically different (e.g. in terms of farming and agro-ecological systems), so that similar uptake rates would be expected.	Estimate household and hectare adoption figures by using the documented uptake rates ascertained by the uptake surveys implemented in the direct scaling sites. For example, if the uptake rate is 45% in the direct scaling sites and the number of households and hectares in the leveraged site is 20 000 and 10 000, respectively, leveraged adoption would therefore be 9 000 households and 4 500 ha.



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<b>M&amp;E Data from Leveraged Project</b>	The leveraged project or initiative has a functioning M&E system, and this system is relied upon to generate the leveraged adoption figures.	Use when a good M&E system is in place, e.g. one that undertakes surveys or keeps farmer records, which can be relied upon to provide adoption data.	Data will be obtained from the leveraged project's own M&E system. An agreement must be reached for sharing the data in time for Regreening Africa's reporting cycle.
<b>Direct Measurement</b>	Uptake surveys are undertaken in the leveraged sites and/or the Regreening Africa App is applied.	Use when options 1-2 are infeasible or when resources are available to undertake uptake surveys and/or roll out the App in these sites.	Uptake surveys and/or the App are rolled out in a similar way to the direct scaling sites or the leveraged partner in question is supported to do the same.
<b>Informed Estimation</b>	Local informant interviews and participatory methods are used to obtain household and ha. figures. (Note: This method is susceptible to bias, so exercise caution.)	Use when options 1-3 are infeasible, and the leveraging sites are at a reasonable scale to allow participatory data gathering.	Information is gathered from local informants on approximate number of households adopting promoted regreening practices and/or area of communal land covered.

**Table 1: Possible methods for estimating or measuring leveraged adoption**

Understanding and clarifying the concept of leveraged adoption was a critical process within the JRLM. Within this discussion, the participants were able to more readily identify partners and projects that would be integrated in their scaling activities through leveraging adoption. Based on an expanded view of leveraging and indirect scaling, there was a more enlightened exchange of broader ideas on entry points and participants reviewed and refined the associated theory of change, refined their outcome mapping efforts related to the behavior change needed to meet ambitious targets and articulated actions and timelines for year 3. The JRLMs also provided the opportunity to revisit mechanisms for overcoming policy related barriers to scaling that had been brought out during the National SHARED Workshops.

Some of the leveraging efforts including making use of existing policy or national opportunities that are being employed by the countries included: putting leveraging agreements in place building on national restoration targets and agroforestry strategies; active engagement with national ministries; bringing in other NGO/Donor projects as leveraging partners and rolling out radio and television campaigns. With scaling as the core of the Regreening Africa project, the sessions brought about a renewed and informed momentum to meet the scaling targets through direct and indirect scaling.

## Development of regreening decision dashboards

The reflection missions provided an opportunity to update and discussion in more detail about the development of tailored country dashboards, being developed in five implementation countries. Online web-based dashboards are being co-designed through the project to make data relevant to regreening easy to access and interpret. Regreening decision dashboards were introduced during the national SHARED workshops to determine interest in developing one for the country.

A team of project partners, including implementing NGOs and related stakeholders identified important indicators, some display features, data available and end users during an initial discussion. Online conversations and shared working spaces were then used to receive feedback on initial design ideas, receive data and input. The dashboards are now being graphically designed and programmed with the prototype due to be available by the end of 2019. Once the dashboard is available, it will be used to target and monitor project activities as well as feed into national level dialogues on regreening

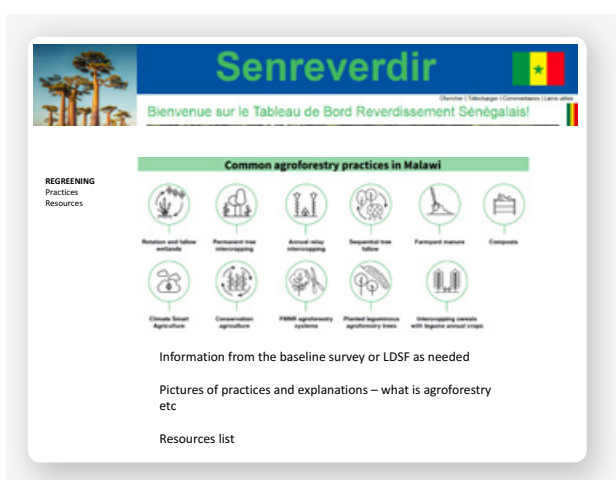


Figure 11: Example of basic design and theme selection based on outcomes from SHARED workshops and input during the JRLMs

## Use of mobile phone technology for monitoring restoration: the case of Regreening Africa app

A key innovation of the project is the development of mobile phone technology to track the progress of the project in reaching the targeted number of farmers and hectares. This is an advancement in addressing the challenges of lack of simplified and systematic monitoring tools that empower end users (project implementors including lead farmers) and promotes citizen science in data collection and monitoring of restoration efforts.

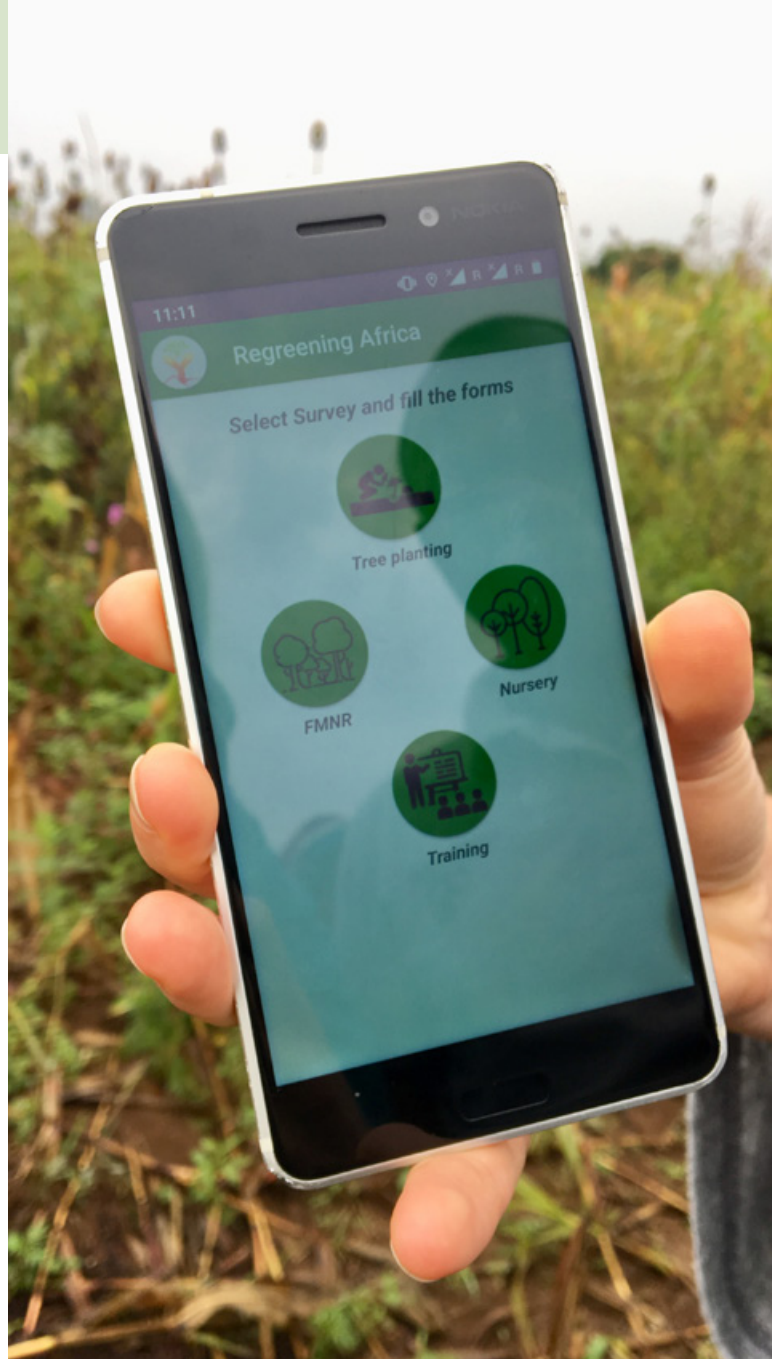
The Regreening Africa App was developed by the ICRAF GeoScience Lab for Android devices as part of the Regreening Africa project. It provides a user friendly and

efficient tool for field data collection and is being applied in eight countries in East and West Africa with the aim to track the implementation and performance of regreening practices such as tree planting and farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR) and can also be applied for general crowd sourcing. The data collected using the app is being used for real-time project progress monitoring and to support evidence-based decision-making through interactive Decision Dashboards that are co-designed with stakeholders in the eight project countries. The Regreening Africa app has four modules covering;

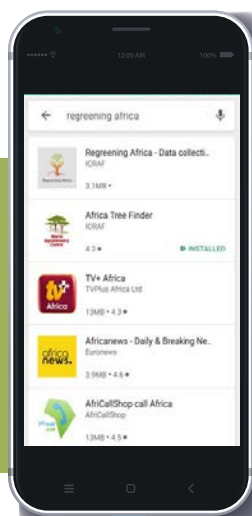
- 1 **Tree Planting**
- 2 **FMNR**
- 3 **Nursery Inventories**
- 4 **Training Activities**

These modules can be applied individually giving users a high degree of flexibility with offline data collection available for each module separately, allowing for efficient data collection also in remote areas.

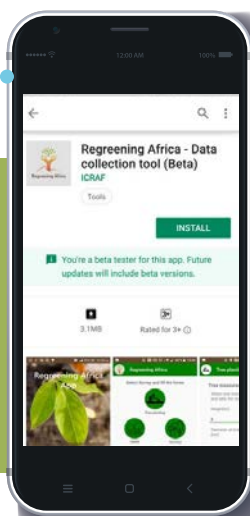
The app has been translated to French for use in Francophone countries. It will be rolled out across the eight countries systematically and the data collected uploaded in real time on the project dashboards where partners can be able to view and use it to inform project implementation.



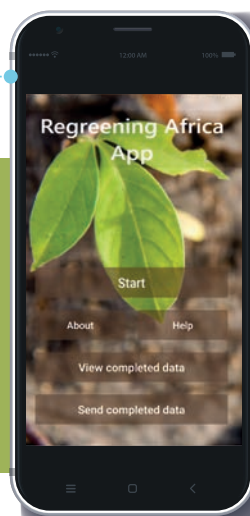
#### A. Locate App



#### B. Install App



#### C. Start up app



#### D. Opens survey forms

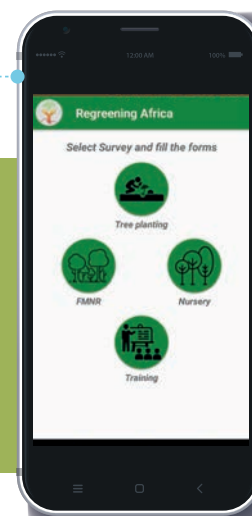


Figure 12: Steps to load, install and beginning using the Regreening App



## Feedback on the JRLM

Following the JRLMs a survey was sent to both ICRAF component leads and NGO implementing representatives to gather feedback on the missions, and to understand key areas of reflection. A summary of the responses are presented below from the survey respondents and the feedback forms an important aspect in the design and execution of workplans for year 3.



### What worked well?

- Building trust and confidence amongst the teams.
- Constructive feedback and sharing of experiences from different perspectives and stakeholders.
- Farmers had time to express the benefits and concerns of trees in their livelihoods.
- Interaction with farmers and communities.
- The field visit was a real exchange visit allowing partners to see what each other is doing.
- Understanding the partners' intervention model.
- Partners had the opportunity to appreciate the different components and their interactions on the project.
- Active participation of project managers and some NOCC members was excellent.
- Insights into and discussions of challenges to achieving country targets in detail and brainstorming possible solutions.
- The baseline data, value chain analysis and land degradation maps provided relevant information on where to focus.
- The use of clear and coherent data wall to engage participants, relevance of considering inputs from all stakeholders in project implementation.
- Systems approaches to guide the process.
- Leveraging principles, outcome mapping, data wall presentations were in an understandable format.
- The data wall was a great way to break down and discuss graphs, charts and maps to a level that was easily understood.



- Discussion with all partners on the importance of the scaling models with regards to the targets.
- SHARED facilitation focusing discussions on pertinent issues.
- The questions asked and the recommendations to each partner served the other partners.
- Results were thought provoking and provided avenues for further collaboration with the implementing partners.
- Good preparation for the JRLM.



## What were key areas of important learning?

- Understanding of interventions and adoption by influence.
- Facilitation skills.
- The budget performances.
- Leveraging and a better understanding the principles of leverage and the outcome mapping process.
- Interest of farming communities to regreen their localities despite the technical capacity gaps.
- Farmers, development practitioners including experts from the Government and the project implementing officers need more technical skill and capacity, consequently we will focus on providing training and technical backstopping going forward.
- How to improve the implementation and impacts of the Re-Greening Africa project by learning and leveraging existing successful practices while aligning with priority development strategies and targets of the intervention countries.
- Community engagement and the need for a continuous support to empower communities and be used as peer for other community.
- Importance of the intervention model.
- A lot of clarification was given on the management aspects of the project-scaling strategy, implementation, budget management, value chains.



## What should be improved?

- ✓ Increased time in the field to interact and have deeper discussions with farmers.
- ✓ A more farmer-centred approach during field visits and more involvement of local stakeholders throughout the JRLM.
- ✓ Additional time to visit varied intervention and leverage sites to allow for interaction with local communities, extension officers and implementing agencies.
- ✓ Involve local stakeholders throughout the JRLM.
- ✓ A protocol is needed for field visits to ensure consistency of questions and approach by project staff in the field.
- ✓ Engagement of more partners to share evidence during the data wall exercise.
- ✓ There is a need to focus on challenges to accelerated scaling. Sending out a quick survey before the next JRLM will be useful.

# Conclusions

The Joint Reflective and Learning Missions proved to be instrumental in improving reviewing progress, creating space for team building and interactions among different project partners, co-learning, clarification and problem solving in support of the reaching scaling targets. The following is a summary of key take home lessons and messages that have emerged across the country JRLMs.

## ● The Process

The SHARED process, used to design and carry out the JRLMs, enhanced partner and stakeholder engagement and trust, intentional interaction with evidence and implications, broadened understanding of programmatic components, and created co-learning opportunities for revising strategies for on the ground and leveraged scaling.

## ● Developing trust and appreciation among partners

Because this is a research in development program, partners with different perspectives are coming together to bring their skill sets to achieve the goal. This can translate to a sense of “we and they” among technical and implementing groups. One of the outcomes of the JRLM interactions and the in depth sharing of evidence and experience was a dramatic increase in both trust and appreciation of partners.

## ● Progress in the field

The JRLMs provided a space for a reality check in the field. The stages of progress of scaling regreening practices varied across countries, and in most countries the regreening activities in the field are only just being initiated as part of introduction of the project. However, in many cases, there were successful regreening efforts are serving to support scaling opportunities, there was awareness of the need for land restoration practices and their implications, strong support by communities and local authorities, substantial engagement of women and youth and insights into the challenges that need to be overcome - all of which are foundational to scaling efforts. One of the key challenges that needs to be bolstered through cross-country learning is how to incentivize behavior change for adoption of regreening practices.

## ● Sharing evidence

Going into the JRLMs, there was limited knowledge about the results from different surveys conducted by different components and associated implications in terms of supporting the implementation process and policy engagement efforts. The interactions around

the evidence wall served the purpose of integrating evidence across the different components which brought about a more systems-based understanding among all project partners. There was confidence that the majority of the components elements were valuable in terms of informing current and future implementation process, including providing the basis for adaptive management. It was also clear that some of the important work, such as strengthening value chains will need greater support and resources to ensure sustainable efforts in linking farmers to markets that offer good returns in their investments and catalyze the scaling up process. The need for clearer knowledge management and component interactions as well as a repository of reporting and accessible materials to project stakeholders and relevant focal points was highlighted. There is also a need for stronger guidance around project visibility, branding and communications at a local level.

## ● Understanding and building momentum around scaling

One of the major outcomes of the JRLM was related to increasing the understanding and momentum around both direct scaling and leveraged scaling. Awareness among the partners around the magnitude and dimensions of direct scaling was greatly increased. For example, there was strong agreement that farmer adoption at scale entails much more than providing a set of trainings. Rather, it takes process, behavior, technical, market, institutional and political dimensions. The facilitated interaction and evidence and experience sharing provided valuable lessons in what it will take to taking regreening practices on the ground the scale.

Some of the greatest shifts in awareness came around leveraged scaling - what it means, creative mechanisms and how it may be measured or estimated. This has been one of the most difficult elements to fully understand and realize the actions that can be undertaken. The development of leveraging guidelines by the MEL team along with some of the innovative ways that different countries were using, such as aligning to national targets, engaging other NGOs and donors as leveraging partners, and paying attention to desired behavior change, brought a lot of clarity and renewed momentum to this aspect of scaling.

The outcomes of the joint reflective learning missions are already practically influencing the concrete next steps in broader program. All of the country teams are putting together informed annual activity plans and budgets and the component leads will be much more engaged in this process going forward. In addition a cross-country learning webinar to advance thinking on incentivizing farmer adoption has been scheduled.



## Acknowledgments

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### Ethiopia



#### Malefia Tadele

Regreening Africa Project Manager  
Malefia.Tadele@acrs.org



#### Asfaw Mariame

Regreening Africa Project Manager  
Asfaw\_Mariame@wvi.org



### Niger



#### Hamed Tchiboza

EverGreen Agriculture Project Coordinator  
Hamed\_Tchiboza@wvi.org



#### Boube Chayaya

REDSAACC Project Coordinator  
Regreening Africa Project Manager  
BoubeChayaya.AbdoulKadri@care.org



### Kenya



#### Charles Odhiambo

Project Manager, Regreening Africa-Kenya  
Charles\_Odhiambo@wvi.org



#### Elijah Gambere

NOCC - Regreening Africa;  
Agriculture Chief Officer  
Elijah.Gambere@gmail.com



### Mali



#### Mamadou Coulibaly

Regreening Africa Program Coordinator  
MFCoulibaly@oxfam.org.uk



#### Aminata Fofana

Head of Department Agricultural Livelihoods  
Regreening Africa Project Manager  
BoubeChayaya.AbdoulKadri@care.org



#### Josue Goita

Regreening Africa Project Manager  
Josue\_Goita@wvi.org

#### Pierre Dembele

Executive Secretary  
Regreening Africa project manager  
pierre.sahleco@afribonemali.net



#### Sekou Salla Sissoko

NOCC - Regreening Africa  
sissokosalasal@gmail.com

#### Kaba Diallo

NOCC - Regreening Africa  
teli1072@yahoo.fr

### Ghana



#### Edward Akunyagra

Project Manager Regreening Africa  
Edward\_Akunyagra@wvi.org

#### Mawuli Asigbee

Program Manager,  
Agriculture and Livelihoods  
Mawuli.Asigbee@crs.org



### Rwanda



#### Alex Mugayi

Forest Landscape Restoration & Evergreen  
Agriculture Project Manager  
Alex\_Mugayi@wvi.org

#### Mugisha Livingstone

NOCC - Regreening Africa;  
Green Economy Expert  
Livingstone.Mugisha@giz.de



### Senegal



#### Anna Daba Ndiaye

Coordinator, Regreening Africa project  
Anna\_Daba\_Ndiaye@wvi.org



#### Ibrahim Khalil Sabaly

Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development  
BoubeChayaya.AbdoulKadri@care.org

### Australia



#### Davis Wamawungo

Grants Manager, EC-EVA Program  
(East and West Africa)  
Davis.Wamawungo@worldvision.com.au



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