



# REGREENING AFRICA HIGHLIGHTS



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## INTRODUCTION

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Welcome to this issue of our quarterly newsletter, showcasing some highlights of the Regreening Africa project activities. Regreening Africa is an ambitious five-year programme (2017-2022) funded by the European Union to reverse land degradation among 500,000 households, and across one million hectares in eight countries in sub-Saharan Africa by incorporating trees into croplands, communal lands, and pastoral areas. Regreening efforts make it possible to reclaim Africa's degraded landscapes. World Agroforestry (ICRAF) leads a consortium of non-governmental organizations comprising of World Vision, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), CARE, Oxfam, and Sahel Eco.

In this issue, we share how gender norms have been challenged in Ghana and Senegal as a result of gender transformative action training, thereby advancing women's land security and promoting social justice in land restoration and benefit sharing. As we adjusted to the new normal of virtual connectivity necessitated by the Covid-19 challenge, we continued to engage more virtually through various events. Among these virtual events was COP 26, during which we emphasized the importance of utilizing technology to identify areas with degraded soil and the use of the regreening app to record and monitor restoration. Participants in Kenya's national landscape restoration movement came from a variety of sectors and organizations, and they shared their landscape restoration experiences, challenges, and recommendations. Community participation is essential for long-term restoration because it ensures their full participation. The S/heroes of land and landscape restoration exemplified the critical role of traditional knowledge in enhancing dryland restoration. Peer learnings provided an invaluable opportunity to question and learn from one another's evidence and experiences through the reflective missions and virtual cross-country learning events.

So, join us as we give you a glimpse of the exciting highlights we have included in this newsletter.



# REGREENING HIGHLIGHTS

MARCH 2022



## Prioritising gender inclusion in landscape restoration

Gender transformative actions have attracted attention for their effectiveness in addressing obstructive gender norms and relations, such as gendered roles, activities and responsibilities and the behaviour of men and women toward each other, respectively.

To meaningfully address gender issues in land restoration, an innovative study using Gender Transformation Approaches (GTA) is being undertaken to determine whether changes in harmful gender norms and attitudes would contribute to desirable environmental outcomes. The approach challenges the underlying causes of gender inequality, including exclusionary cultural norms and customs.

Regreening Africa has incorporated this approach to support gender gender-equitable policies and practices to empower women and girls by promoting economic and social rights that strengthen their voice and participation.

## ***Gender transformation action challenging gender norms in Ghana***

Gender transformation action training for couples in Ghana has been beneficial to households because it addresses obstructive gender norms and relations towards men and women. The training has given men and women a better understanding of each other's challenges and opportunities, as well as negotiation skills for navigating important household decisions like which tree species to plant. This has resulted in improved well-being and family vision planning. Women who have participated in these training have been lauded by others for “coercing” their husbands into helping them around the house, but the truth is that many community members are amazed at the visible changes in these households and have inquired about participating in future gender trainings.

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## ***Women's group in Senegal securing land tenure rights***

Women's group accomplishments in tree product value chains and land restoration in Senegal have improved their status, and they are now able to voice their concerns and advocate for their land rights. For example, after successfully negotiating with the village chief, the women's group in Secco Keur Savely village now has administrative control and ownership of more than eight hectares of land. These land deliberations represent a breakthrough for women's land security, as well as a step toward greater social justice in land restoration efforts.

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*Nongoligo, a farmer in Bawku West District, Ghana, prepares a compost pit for use on her farm to improve soil health and yields. Photo: Regreening Africa/Marion Aluoch*

**‘We now value living together peacefully.’**



*A member of the women's group in Secco Keur Savely village in Senegal, holds a signed document from the area chief granting them access and ownership of eight hectares of land. Photo: Regreening Africa/Marion Aluoch.*



# Nature-based solutions crucial for climate and resilience

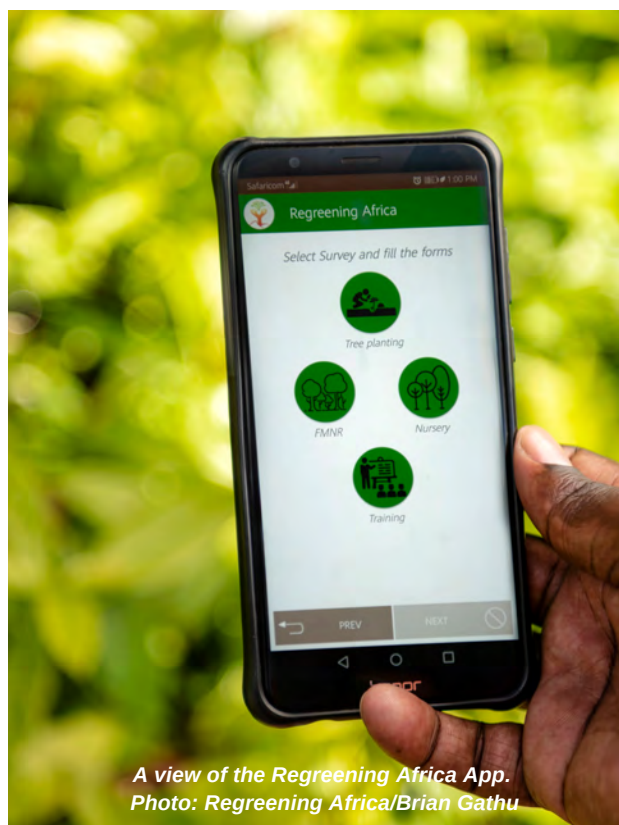
Nature based solutions remain one of the most viable and cost-effective approaches in mitigating and adapting to the negative effects of climate change and restoring degraded landscapes. This was highlighted at the European Union side event panel discussion during the 26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties (COP26) in Glasgow, Scotland, where participants explored how nature-based solutions create climate, economic and social benefits.

The importance of leveraging technology and innovation to obtain accurate and reliable data was emphasized to guide the implementation of nature-based solutions. Leigh Winowiecki, a CIFOR-ICRAF scientist, explained how the Land Degradation Surveillance Framework (LDSF) is intended to provide a biophysical baseline at the landscape level, as well as a monitoring and evaluation framework for assessing land degradation processes and the effectiveness of rehabilitation measures (recovery) over time. The Regreening Africa App, a mobile application that allows lead farmers, project officers, and government extension agents to record and track their land restoration practices, is another innovative tool that provides surveillance. The location of their activities are geo-referenced, and the diversity and growth of species are tracked in real time.

In a video, the Secretary General of the Ministry of Environment in Niger explained how Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) is promoted in Niger and how it has been supported by an enabling policy environment. Regreening Africa in Niger is a key player in this effort, having supported efforts to reverse the trend of land degradation in the communes of Simiri, Ouallam, and Hamdallaye in the Tillabéry region since 2018 by promoting agroforestry and ANR.



*A community member in Niger demonstrates how Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) is done.  
Photo: World Vision Niger/Garba Mamoudou*



*A view of the Regreening Africa App.  
Photo: Regreening Africa/Brian Gathu*





## Landscape restoration stakeholders join forces to catalyze a national landscape restoration movement in Kenya

The Kenya National Landscape Restoration Scaling Conference, which took place from 9-16 July 2021, marked a significant milestone in the collaboration between landscape restoration organizations and individuals. The conference highlighted various efforts to achieve Kenya's goal of increasing tree cover to 10% and restoring 5.1 million hectares of degraded land by 2030 under the [African Forest and Landscape Restoration Initiative \(AFR100\)](#) under the [Bonn Challenge](#).



*Members of the Likia nursery group in Nakuru County, Kenya having a discussion.  
Photo: Regreening Africa/Brian Gathu*

Participants from various sectors and organizations shared their experiences, lessons learned, challenges, and recommendations for scaling up landscape restoration. Committed to action, the conference focused on five thematic areas including: restoration approaches and practices, youth and women inclusion in restoration, movement building and leveraging, landscape restoration monitoring, and entrepreneurship and business approaches to restoration. One of the main outcomes of the thematic sessions was agreement on action plans to advance the restoration movement.

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**‘A successful restoration movement has to be rooted in local communities.’**

**Ms. Wanjira Mathai, Vice President and Regional Director for Africa World Resources Institute (WRI)**



*Members of the Chongoo women nursery group in Elgeyo Marakwet, Kenya receive tree seedlings.  
Photo: Regreening Africa*



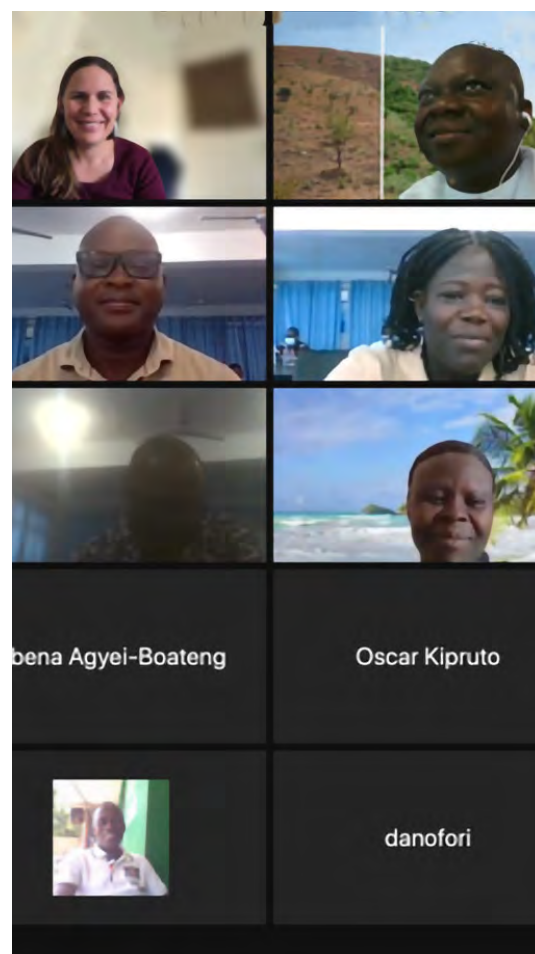


*World Vision and Catholic Relief Services in Ethiopia having a discussion during the JRLM visits. Photo: World Vision*

## Reflective missions: co-learning, adaptation and scaling options

The Joint Reflective and Learning Missions (JRLM) were held virtually for all the eight countries between July and August 2021 and were preceded by quality monitoring visits which were conducted by implementing partners, members of the National Oversight Committee (NOCC) and World Agroforestry (ICRAF) focal points. Field visits to the project location provided an opportunity to monitor and reflect upon the implementation process and progress, understand key challenges and to identify what practices or catalytic actions could be further developed to increase scaling to meet project goals and benefit the communities.

The observations made during the field visits were presented by the country teams during the JRLM and discussed by both country teams and ICRAF components. The JRLMs have been designed using the Stakeholder Approach to Risk Informed and Evidence Based Decision Making (SHARED) approach.



*Participants during the virtual JRLM sessions. Photo: Regreening Africa*





Regreening Africa and Trees for Goals have partnered to plant and grow trees and share knowledge on environmental stewardship among the youth in various schools in Kenya. Photo: Regreening Africa/Marion Aluoch

## ‘Land restoration requires localized efforts...’



Soap made from *Balanite aegyptiaca* (Desert date) and *Ziziphus mauritiana* and *Hyphaene thebaica* (Doum) nut biscuits. Photo: World Vision Niger/Garba Mamoudou

## Virtual cross country learning enables evidence sharing and experiences

The Stakeholder Approach to Risk Informed and Evidence Based Decision Making (SHARED) facilitated a series of events for countries to share their successes.

A conversation on gender transformative approaches highlighted the importance of empowering women in landscape restoration. These approaches have received attention due to their effectiveness in addressing obstructive gender norms and relations such as gendered roles, activities, and responsibilities, as well as men's and women's behavior toward each other.

Youth need to speak and act as advocates of land restoration, hence it is critical to engage them in meaningful ways, to explore fresh and inventive ideas, and to keep the conversation going. The empowering and mainstreaming of youth in landscape restoration focused on what it takes for youth to effectively run sustainable tree-based ventures while also increasing their understanding of the many benefits and opportunities that trees and land can provide.

The virtual cross country learning event on developing and expanding agroforestry value chains as an incentive for land restoration established that community engagement, benefits, and sustainability require localized effort. More actions are needed to encourage communities, the private sector, and the government to use tree product value chains as an incentive for land restoration.

Access and use of land and trees, faith-based organizations and land restoration, and managing grazing systems are among the other topics that will be addressed this year.

# Integrating science, community and development partners key to enhancing restoration of the drylands

The Global Landscape Forum (GLF) first ever digital event, “Restoring Africa’s Dryland: Accelerating Action on the Ground” held on 2 and 3 June 2021 brought together participants, including pastoralists, scientist, youth, restoration practitioners and government to raise awareness on the importance of Africa’s drylands and their key role in sustainable development in Africa.

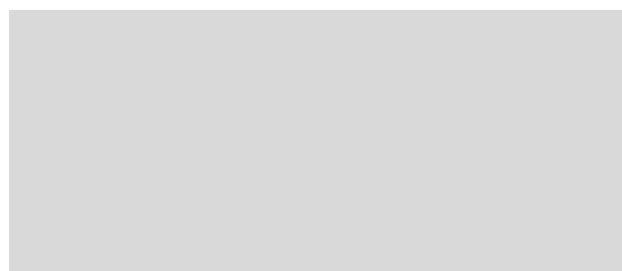
It was noted that dryland restoration must be driven by communities whose local knowledge and traditional strategies and capacities should be paired with and supported by scientific and technological interventions to enhance their resilience to climate change. Through the session Voices from the field: The S/heroes of land restoration, Regreening Africa showcased the successful restoration practices and the diversity and strength of the men and women who implement these practices across the Africa’s drylands.

Remote sensing, citizen science and data analytics, are real opportunities for targeting, prioritizing, and tracking landscape restoration investments. When integrated into the planning process, these innovative approaches inform practice, which in turn informs policy. The Symphony of science and practice: Bringing Evidence to Bear for Land Restoration Practice and Policy in Africa, highlighted these tools and approaches for measuring restoration progress, showcased key results from the Regreening Africa initiative and introduced novel partnership between science and practice that enhances integration of evidence in the planning, implementation, and policy processes.

The white paper emerging from the event on integrating evidence for enhanced land restoration practice and policy in Africa introduced the aim, impetus, and context behind the session.

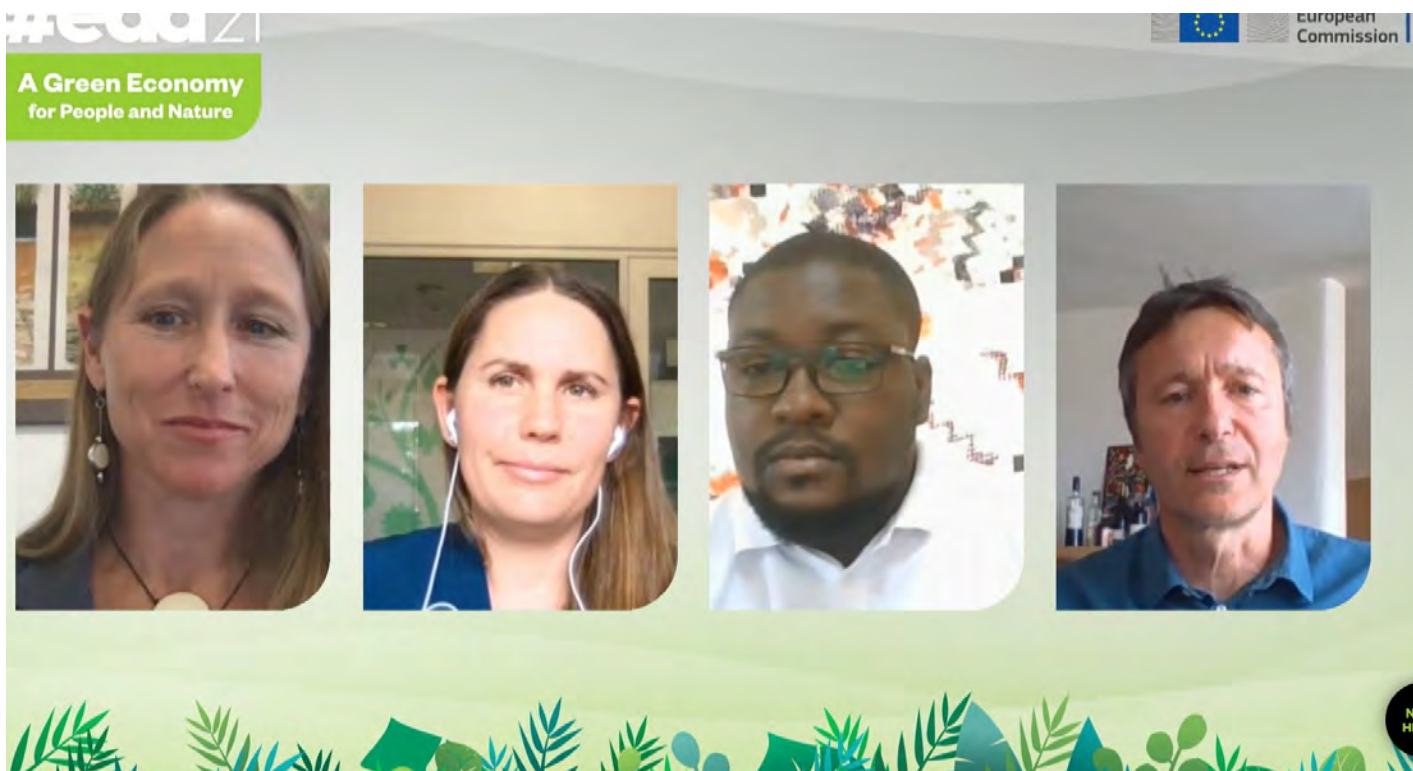


*Project staff and partners interacting with the Adonsi community in Ghana. Photo: World Vision Ghana*



*A field officer using the Regreening Africa App in Mali. Photo: Sahel Eco*





*From left: Leigh Winowiecki (Soil and land health research theme lead-CIFOR-ICRAF), Mieke Bourne (Regreening Africa Programme Manager -CIFOR-ICRAF), Hamed Tchibozo (Regreening Africa Project Coordinator-World Vision Niger) and Bernard Crabbe (Head of the environment mainstreaming & circular economy sector at the European Commission) during the EDD session. Photo: Regreening Africa*

## Restoring degraded land for people and nature

The 14th edition of the European Development Days on the Green Deal for Sustainable Future took place on 15-16 June 2021. The event provided a platform for a decisive moment for analysis and reflection on biodiversity loss, climate change and environmental degradation and how a coordinated and incisive efforts to build back greener and more inclusive societies and economies is crucial.

Regreening Africa showcased innovative tools and approaches for successful restoration on the ground, bringing together key stakeholders to discuss practical steps to implement land restoration. The session discussed key approaches such as selecting locally relevant options to suit agro-ecological niches, implementing farmer centered approaches to encourage innovation to meet farmer needs, generating livelihood benefits and innovative monitoring to track restoration over time to small holder farmers and reach global targets.

# PUBLICATIONS



[Regreening Africa Annual Report \(September 2020 - August 2021\)](#)



[Sustainability planning with community and local stakeholders](#)



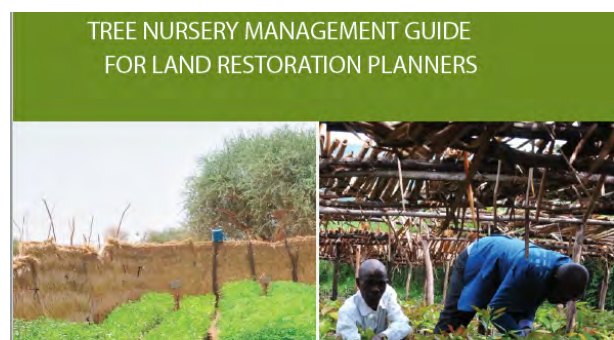
[Kenya National Landscape Restoration Virtual Conference summarized report](#)



[Eight steps for developing local tree value chains](#)



[Restoration Monitoring Readiness in Kenya: A Rapid Assessment](#)



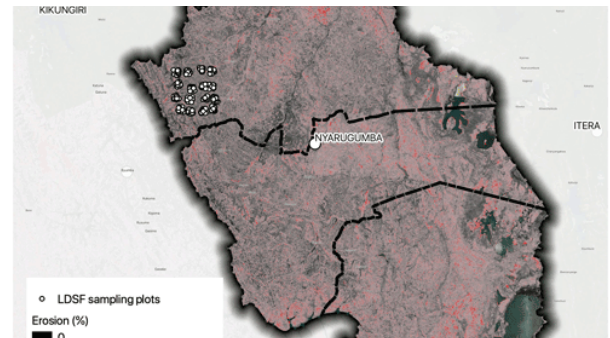
[Tree nursery management guide for land restoration planners](#)



# PUBLICATIONS



[Integrating Evidence for Enhanced Land Restoration Practice and Policy in Africa](#)



[Assessing soil and land health across two landscapes in eastern Rwanda to inform restoration activities](#)



[Regreening Africa: Puntland Country Information Brief](#)



[Regreening Africa: Ethiopia Information Brief](#)



[Regreening Africa: Ghana Information Brief](#)



[Regreening Africa: Kenya Information Brief](#)

# PUBLICATIONS



[Regreening Africa: Mali Information Brief](#)



[Regreening Africa: Niger Information Brief](#)



[Regreening Africa: Rwanda Information Brief](#)



[Regreening Africa: Senegal Information Brief](#)



[Regreening Africa: Somaliland Information Brief](#)



[Joint Reflective Learning Missions \(JRLM\) Report 2020](#)



## UPCOMING EVENTS



### United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification

Date: 9 - 20 May 2022

Location: Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

5<sup>th</sup> World  
Congress on  
Agroforestry  
.....>  
Transitioning to  
a Viable World



### 5th World Congress on Agroforestry

Date: 17 - 20 July 2022

Location: Québec City, Canada; virtual



### European Development Days 2022

Date: 21-22 June 2022

Location: Brussels and online

- Thematic cross country virtual learning events on access and tenure of land and trees; faith-based organizations and land restoration and managing grazing systems: May-November 2022



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