Regreening Africa Roundtable

Unlocking large scale land restoration practices, approaches, and benefits in sub-Saharan Africa
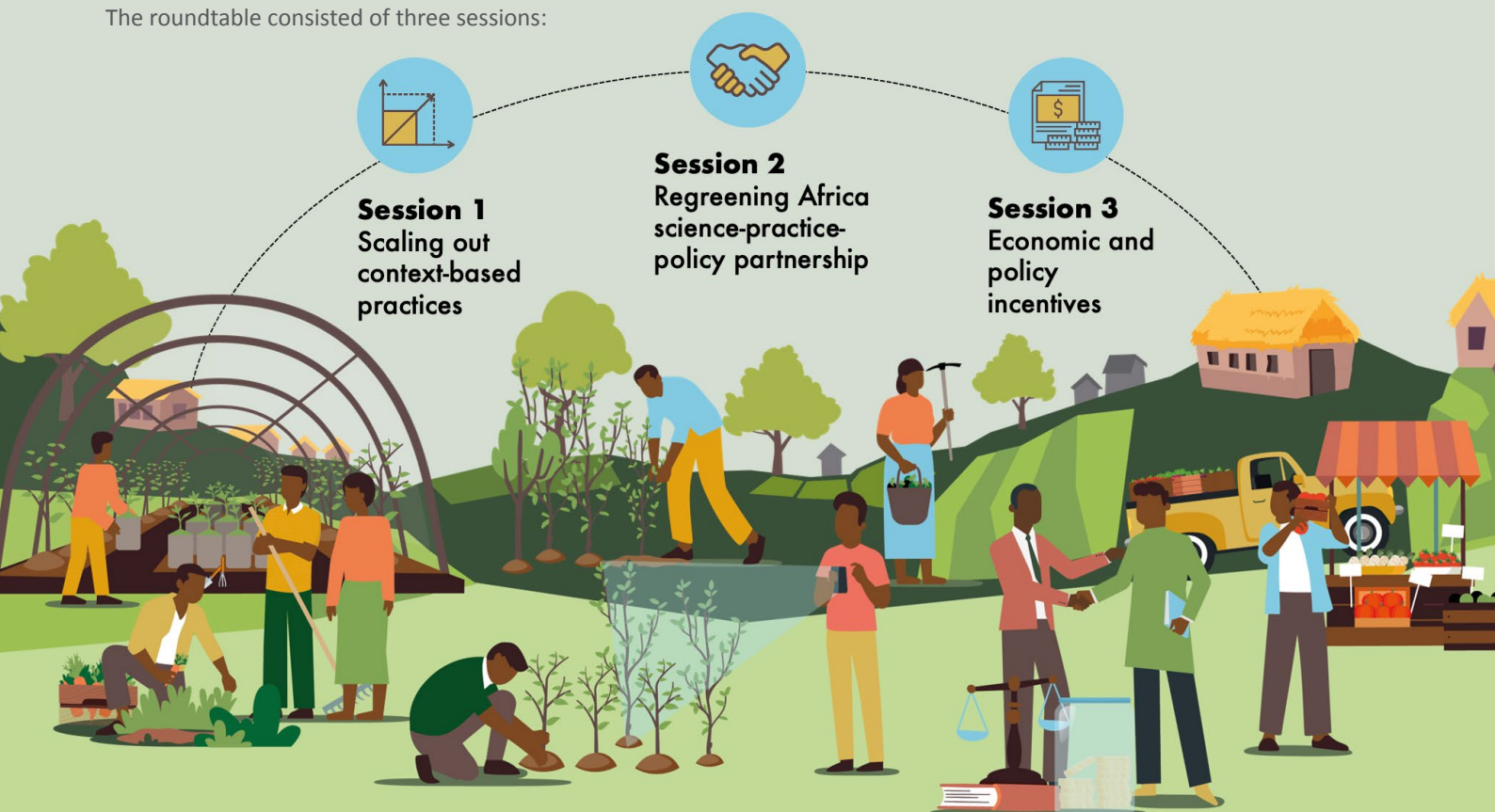
On 6th September 2022, Regreening Africa's project partners convened a diverse set of stakeholders for a virtual roundtable to share experiences and lessons learned during Regreening Africa's implementation from its inception in 2017. This brief provides a summary of key insights and learnings highlighted during the event.

As part of a larger global and regional effort to halt and reverse land degradation, the project Reversing Land Degradation by Scaling-up Evergreen Agriculture (Regreening Africa) aims to improve smallholder livelihoods, food security, and resilience to climate change in eight African countries by restoring ecosystem services. More specifically, it seeks to reverse land degradation over at least one million hectares and benefit 500,000 households, while also catalyzing an even larger scaling effort to restore tens of millions of hectares of degraded land across Africa.

Regreening Africa works to support people in their efforts to restore their landscapes to secure sustainable benefits while boosting the impact of invested resources. At the local scale, the project works with smallholder farmers through lead farmers, farmer groups, community-based organizations, extension staff, and local government to provide technical support. On a sub-national and national scale, the programme works with a range of stakeholders to share lessons and technical support as well as to create an enabling policy and institutional environment.

Roundtable structure

The roundtable consisted of three sessions:

Session 1
Scaling out context-based practices

Session 2
Regreening Africa science-practice-policy partnership

Session 3
Economic and policy incentives

Climate neutrality will not be achieved unless trees are planted and soils restored at significant scale. The Regreening Africa programme was conceived as a pilot project to influence and inspire broader action. Its impressive achievement shows it went beyond its pilot nature in terms of scale, thereby acting as a benchmark for future projects.

–Mr. Bernard Crabbé, DG International Partnerships, European Commission, Team Leader Environment mainstreaming and Circular economy

Roundtable attendance

44 countries represented

KEY:

- 115 participants (Kenya)
- 10-20 participants
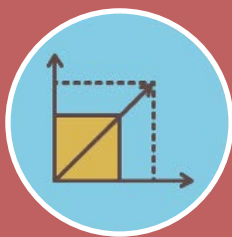- 5-9 participants
- 1-4 participants

326 attendees
(including panellists)

Summary messages

- **Large scale restoration is possible** with strong partnerships and by matching practices and approaches to local needs and conditions.

- Bringing science, research, evidence and monitoring to the global and local restoration agenda **accelerates impact** on the ground.

- Value chains with **equitable economic benefits** and policies that support an enabling environment are critical incentives for action.

SESSION 1:
Scaling out context-based practices

Session 1 discussed the practical application of sustainable land management practices, and how project partners can encourage widespread uptake of these practices. The session provided an opportunity to discuss the many sustainable land management practices implemented through Regreening Africa and the approaches that have been used to scale impact. The session also assessed the impact of both the advisory models and practices, based on preliminary impact evaluation results.

KEY MESSAGES

★ **Successful, large-scale, and impactful restoration is possible.**

★ It is important to **match practices to present and future local contexts** – there is no silver bullet.

★ **Embed implementation** in local processes and structures.

Accelerating tree establishment

Dr. Sammy Carsan, CIFOR-ICRAF

The Regreening Africa programme's restoration approach has involved accelerating tree establishment in the different project areas following locally relevant practices. These approaches and practices have been central to the programme:

- **Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) and Pastoral Managed Natural Regeneration (PMNR)** (adapted to exclosures in Ethiopia and improved with enrichment planting to get high value trees for economic benefits);

- **tree planting** and growing;

- **home gardening** (especially in areas where women have limited access rights to land);

- **soil and water conservation** practices; and

- **material and knowledge interventions** to accelerate tree growing (provision of genetic resources, establishment of tree nurseries, pest and disease management training, installation of Rural Resource Centres, where communities can link up with local advisory services)

AUDIENCE QUESTION

Q: **This programme has resulted in thousands of trees being planted, which are sequestering tonnes of carbon from the environment. Has the sale of carbon credits been explored as an additional benefit to the communities, farmers and landowners engaged in tree planting?**

A: We have discussed carbon credits at length in the programme, but there are a lot of important considerations. We have to consider carbon payments as one of the benefits, but it should not be the driver. Benefits from restoration/agroforestry including land and soil health, productivity, products etc. are the most critical. We also have to consider the equity of carbon payments and how they are being distributed – is this exacerbating inequality and can payments incentivise plantations of exotic species rather than mixed systems with indigenous species? There are opportunities to bring carbon payments in as one mechanism to benefit communities, but it needs to be planned with a lot of care.

Regreening Africa's advisory models

Mieke Bourne Ochieng, Regreening Africa

Three main advisory models have been promoted during the Regreening Africa programme to reach out to the communities:

1 **Training of Trainers:** direct farmer training and working with government extension officers.

2 **Lead farmer to farmer or farmer to farmer models** to allow for greater outreach within communities.

3 **Community based organizations** or community network-based scaling approaches such as saving groups, church groups, youth soccer tournaments, and community forest associations.

CASE STUDY

Scaling tree planting through community-based groups in Rwanda

Felix Mulindangabo, World Vision Rwanda

RWANDA

Over 9.5 million multipurpose trees and fruit tree seedlings have been established across Rwanda by Regreening Africa over the past four years. This has resulted in significant job creation, especially through tree nursery management.

Scaling tree planting in Rwanda has been achieved through:

- **Partnering with 63 farmers groups or cooperatives.**

- **Recruiting, training, and facilitating a total of 512 community lead farmers** on scaling regreening practices in their communities to provide extension services with the aim of reaching other farmers.

- **Establishment of three Rural Resource Centres (RRC)** that are knowledge hubs for farmers and sources of quality planting materials and business opportunities.

Leader of a local nursery co-operative in Rwanda gives a local lead farmer a tree seedling. The nursery is based in the 'rural resource centres' which have been established by Regreening Africa to act as a focal point for training, capacity building, farmer-farmer learning and seedling production.

ETHIOPIA

Exclosures for Ecosystem Restoration and Livelihood Improvement in Ethiopia

Malefia Tadele, Catholic Relief Services

Exclosures are the main landscape restoration strategy in Ethiopia to help it realize the ambitious land restoration target of rehabilitating 22 million hectares of degraded land under the Bonn Challenge and AFR 100. Exclosures are areas protected from human and animal interference to rehabilitate degraded communal lands. Soil and water conservation, assisted natural regeneration and enrichment planting are also practiced in exclosures to support restoration.

The implementation approach for exclosures involves the following steps:

- Community consultations to raise awareness and support mobilization

- Organizing communities into groups and cooperatives to facilitate the process of issuing land use certificates

- Site delineation and capacity building on restoration practices such as Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), tree management and silvicultural practices

- Establishing bylaws that define the roles and responsibilities of partners and penalties to be paid in case of violations

- Developing management and business plans in consultation with the communities

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

- ☑ **More than 110 000 hectares of degraded communal land delineated** and put under area exclosures in Ethiopia's Oromia, Tigray, and Amhara regions in four years.

- ☑ **Improved vegetation cover** due to enrichment planting and natural regeneration.

- ☑ **Increased species diversity.**

- ☑ **The enhanced provision of ecosystem services** e.g. provision of fodder and fuel wood and less soil erosion.

- ☑ **The creation of incentives for restoration through tree-based value chains** including seedling production, beekeeping and fruit orchards that created job opportunities, especially for the youth.

CASE STUDY

SENEGAL

Application and adoption of assisted natural regeneration in Senegal

Anna Daba Ndiaye, World Vision Senegal

Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) was implemented in through two strategies: directly through training and indirectly through influencing other actors. The project team selected and trained 48 facilitators on good agroforestry practices, who in turn went on to train 45 lead farmers. These lead farmers then undertook training in their own villages and neighbouring villages. Administrative and territorial authorities were involved in this process, and it was done in collaboration with technical services.

FACTORS LEADING TO SUCCESSFUL ANR ADOPTION

- Retraining and technical supervision missions to farmers already trained

- Broad communication and sensitization programmes on ANR through radio broadcasts, video programmes and awareness raising caravans that made it easy to learn about the approach

- Inter-zone exchange visits; the creation of dedicated livestock rangelands

- The diversification of practices including direct seeding, planting and introduction of improved species, which supported cohesion between farmers and herders

- The use of improved cooking stoves to reduce tree cutting.

Monitoring Evaluation and Learning (MEL)

Tesfaye Woldeyohanes, CIFOR-ICRAF

Regreening Africa's Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) activities and approach involves:

- A **comprehensive theory of change** was developed for the programme.
- An overall **impact assessment** approach was developed for the programme.
- **Phase-in impact evaluation design**, where villages were randomly assigned into village clusters to serve as treatment and comparison groups to compare the impact.
- **Data collection at household level** was implemented through household surveys, village-level key informant interviews and individual expert key informant interviews. A baseline survey was done in 2018, followed by tracking surveys. Endline surveys are currently under way in Kenya and Senegal, and have been completed in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Ghana.

Changes in the Regreening Action Index and its dimensions include:

a. Significant increase in all four dimensions of the Index, i.e., extent of practice, intensity of practice, diversity of practice and intra-household equity.
b. Exposure was significantly increased, and more farmers are engaged in land restoration practices compared to the baseline.
c. Women involvement and agency increased in agroforestry, particularly in Ghana.
d. Modelling of expected longer-term gains in total farm income for farmers, as well as triangulation and enriching the results through remote sensing, is currently underway.

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

Results of endline surveys in Rwanda, Ethiopia and Ghana revealed the following regarding programme performance:

☑ **A significant increase in the number of households reached** through different advisory support models over the past four years, especially in Ghana, where this indicator increased by 64%.

☑ **Households received regreening-related external assistance**, mainly for tree planting, tree care and management and FMNR. Primary sources of assistance were government extension services, projects/NGOs, leader farmers and local leaders.

☑ **A significant increase in the proportion of households practicing different regreening actions was achieved**: 46% increase in tree planting in Rwanda, 36% increase in FMNR uptake in Ghana and 13% increase in uptake of FMNR in Ethiopia.

SESSION 2:
Regreening Africa science-practice-policy partnership

Integrating data from science and practical experience is critical for improving planning, implementation, and the achieving required changes in the policy environment. This session explored how communities, governments, scientists, and development partners have worked together. Examples of integrating scientific data from multiple sources were provided, as well as how partners have monitored, promoted learning and improved the programme over time.
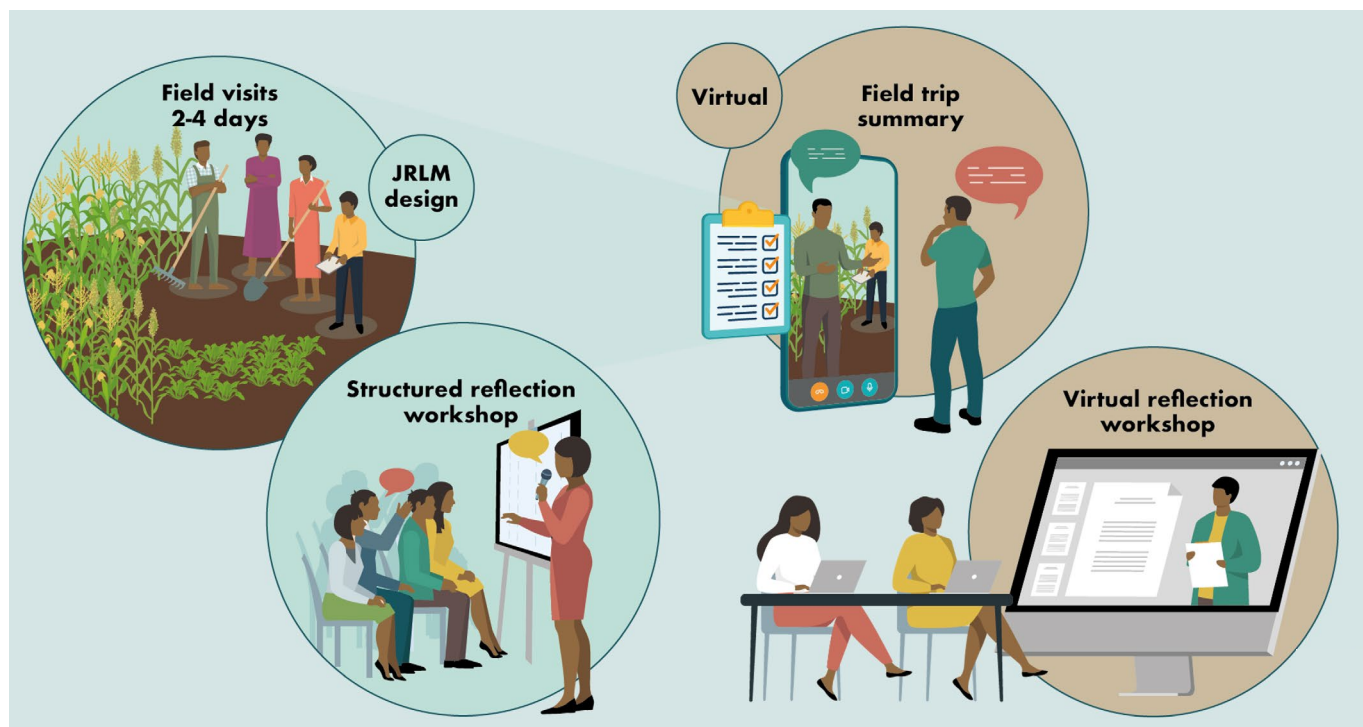
KEY MESSAGES

★ **Strong partnerships** between government, community, development actors, research and donors are critical and must be nurtured.

★ Bringing **science, research, evidence, and monitoring** to the global and local restoration agenda accelerates impact on the ground.

Integrating evidence and practice for adaptive management: The role of Joint Reflective Learning Missions

Dr. Constance Neely, SHARED Decision Hub, CIFOR ICRAF

The Regreening Africa programme is complex, with multiple implementers supporting scientific components with the intention of enhancing an enabling policy environment in eight countries. The Joint Reflective Learning Missions (JRLM) were therefore designed as **a robust engagement process based on the SHARED methodology to bring experiences and evidence directly into the programme's annual planning cycles**. These missions bring together a variety of partners such as practitioners, scientists, decision makers and farmers to reflect upon and integrate multiple evidence sources (that is, practical experience and scientific evidence) into policy and practice for greater impact.

The JRLM involves field visits; interrogation of interactive evidence and experience wall; reflections on implementation, scaling and leveraging; and policy influencing.

The key aspects for JRLM are: creating a neutral space; structuring dialogue for deeper understanding; and monitoring and strengthening relationships through collaboration in the project. The JRLM is a scalable approach applicable in other contexts.

SUCCESSFUL OUTCOMES

- ☑ Thematic cross-country learning and exchange events and visits
- ☑ Supporting an adjusted scaling model in Senegal
- ☑ Tree species diversification in Rwanda
- ☑ Greater uptake of the Regreening Africa app
- ☑ Targeted technical support

"Research in development is not new, but Regreening Africa's extent and scale was a unique experience – to come together as partners across countries and within countries, as an equal partnership, and the SHARED approach stands out in what brought us together. SHARED engagement allowed us to learn about what is impactful."

–Olaf Westermann (Senior Technical Advisor on climate change and natural resource management, Catholic Relief Services)

Bringing together scientific research and citizen science

Dr. Leigh Winowiecki and Dr. Tor Vågen, CIFOR ICRAF

Bringing together scientific research and citizen science enhances the participation of farmers and stakeholders in land restoration. Such cooperation also scales data collection and deepens the understanding of the effectiveness of restoration.
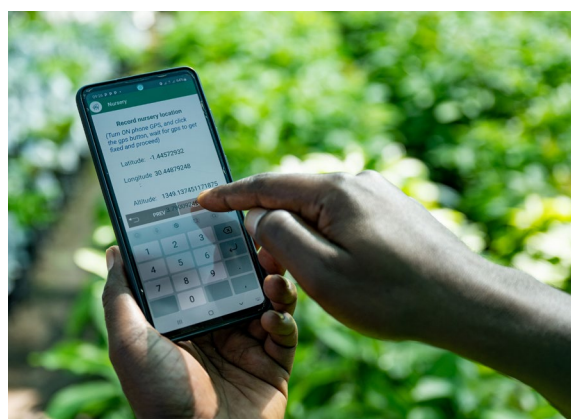
Combining tools for scientific research such as the **Land Degradation Surveillance Framework (LDSF)** and citizen science like the **Regreening Africa App** helps aggregate the benefits of all of them. For example, the benefit of systematic monitoring includes creating consistency when comparing sites, helping our understanding of impact over time, supporting the development of robust predictive models and assessing the multiple aspects of soil health. On the other hand, citizen science closes learning loops, encourages participation and co-learning, helps scale data collection and creates a database of importance to scientists.

The LDSF is a field-based monitoring framework that consistently assesses and monitors land health across diverse landscapes.

The Regreening Africa App helps generate data on implementation on the ground, which makes it easier to track regreening trends and then identify opportunities for land health improvement. It helps in the consolidation of data collected in the Regreening Africa programme across the various countries. The App has a total of 159 000 farmers registered since 2019.

AUDIENCE QUESTIONS

Q: Is the Regreening Africa App free?

A: Yes, it is free. It is available on the Google Play Store - available for Android only at this point

Q: How accurate is it to derive soil data from a satellite? Have you taken any soil data from the ground to strengthen your findings?

A: With the Land Degradation Surveillance Framework (LDSF), we collect soil samples at geo-referenced locations (in fact, from 160 plots per site). We use these data to develop the robust maps of soil organic carbon.

The Northern Restoration Initiative in Ghana

Edward Akunyagra, World Vision Ghana

The Northern Restoration Initiative (NRI) was established to restore the highly degraded lands of northern Ghana. Its objectives are to create a platform to scale successful restoration practices in northern Ghana landscapes and serve as a sustainability legacy for the project.

The process undertaken in establishing the NRI involved engagement at various levels and data collection. This was achieved through convening stakeholder forums at district, regional and national levels, and data collection through focus group discussions and key informant interviews. The findings of the data analysis were then disseminated back to stakeholders for feedback.

A Gender Transformative Approach was adopted for NRI implementation. It aims at raising awareness of gender roles and norms, challenging existing resource allocation, decisions and duties, addressing power relations between women and others then finally identifying shifts in norms and behaviours. The key expected outputs include improved access to fertile farming land for women, balance of household chores, greater agency by women in household decisions and improved household relations.

GHANA

AUDIENCE QUESTION

Q: What are the major drivers of landscape degradation in Ghana?

A: The underlying causes and drivers of land degradation in Ghana are diverse, but include various unsustainable land use practices such as charcoal burning and fires.
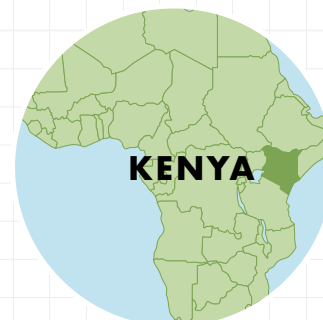
Kenya's Landscape Restoration Movement

Laura Mukhwana, CIFOR-ICRAF

The Kenya National Landscape Restoration Scaling Conference was central to the formation of the 'restoration movement' in Kenya. The conference-built momentum for the movement through a series of six pre-conference thematic webinars and it provided a platform for stakeholders in the restoration space to come together and develop a common roadmap and agree on key actions. One of the key actions agreed upon was the formation of action groups around the various conference themes. The action groups are at the heart of the restoration movement in Kenya. They bring together over 100 organizations to work collectively to scale land restoration.

The key achievements of the restoration movement are:

- Formation of seven **action groups**, with an estimated 100 organizations represented, which meet regularly.
- **Capacity building events** for youth, women, and faith communities/faith-based organizations.
- **Showcasing women leadership** in restoration: Celebrating Women in Restoration webinar, networking, and social media campaigns.
- A strategy for **faith-based regreening** in Kenya is under development along with a call to action to mobilize faith communities around restoration.
- The development of a **National Landscape Restoration Monitoring Framework**.

KENYA

KEY LESSONS

Six key lessons and insights from the Kenyan movement that can be replicated:

1 Engage in **continuous mobilization of people into the movement** using effective key messages articulating the objectives of the movement;

2 Identify and align with **political opportunities**;

3 Put in place **structures for mobilization and organization** such as existing social networks, social media (opportunity), groups/chapters, etc.;

4 Identify **passionate leaders** dedicated to the cause who can motivate others to participate in the movement; and,

5 Mobilize resources to sustain the movement.

SESSION 3:
Economic and policy incentives

Incentives are known to be a critical driver of landscape restoration and are key to any sustainable land use transition. It is the farmers and pastoralists who ultimately bring about change at ground level and it is important that they see benefits to participation in restoration initiatives. This session explored two examples of value chains that had been targeted by the programme, as well as cases where engagement with policymakers has made practices more accepted and where tree use rights have been enhanced.

KEY MESSAGES

★ **Equitable incentives** motivate and benefit those who undertake landscape restoration.

★ **Value chains with economic benefit and policies creating an enabling environment** are two critical dimensions where attention must be paid to incentives.

Incentives can come in different forms, but critical dimensions include those incentives related to livelihoods, economic benefits and to land ownership and rights. This session focused on those incentives and engagement approaches that enable land restoration.

Constance Neely (CIFOR ICRAF) set the stage by reminding participants of the systems and interconnectedness across all sectors, stakeholders and scales. She emphasized the visualization of farm and grazing land and their managers at the centre. Farming in pastoral systems is underpinned by their ecosystem functions and supported through production practices and value chains at different scales; this results in livelihoods inputs and at each step of the way, which are influenced by the enabling environment.

Regreening Africa's approach to value chains

Dr. Sammy Carsan, CIFOR-ICRAF

Tree-based value chains are important because they provide accessible business opportunities, particularly for rural women, and promote food security. Such value chains provide growth opportunities and provide incentives for investing in agriculture, agroforestry, and land restoration.

Tree-based value chains (e.g for shea nut) are created through the following steps:

- Assessing and mapping actors in the value chain
- Addressing key bottlenecks and challenges such as aging parkland and resource degradation, as well as the provision of technical support such as the provision of germplasm and varieties, etc.
- Organizational support/collective action through diagnostic and prioritization studies, business group support, trading support, business capacity development, and marketing and developing trainings
- Mobilizing support and learnings through linkages with national forums, connecting with national priorities, radio broadcasts, local fairs, etc.
- Marketing and diversification

Lessons learnt from the creation of value chains for shea nut underscore the need for restoration plans for harvested tree products and the development of business sustainability plans for the products, along with product diversification, which is essential due to the seasonality of the products.

Regreening Africa has supported bee-keeping value chain activities in Rwanda.

KENYA

The avocado value chain in Kenya around data

Brian Musya Wambui, World Vision

The **avocado contract farming model** was used to recruit farmers into the avocado value chain. The model involves contracting smallholder farmers to plant avocados for export, with each farmer planting a minimum of 40 avocado tree seedlings. These seedlings are provided on credit and free extension services are provided. There is also a guaranteed market for the fruit through contract agreements with the farmers.

The Regreening Africa programme has partnered with Habex Agro Processing Ltd to promote avocado fruit tree value chains in Kenya's Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet counties. The project leveraged Habex's expertise in marketing the avocado crop and mobilized more farmers to incorporate avocado production to diversity their farm's productivity. It supported the identification, mobilization and capacity building of farmers, as well as linking farmers to Habex, which supported them by supplying them with high value avocado seeds, extension services and a guaranteed market for the avocado produced.

Avocado growing, which is a multipurpose fruit tree, contributes to the **restoration of degraded soils** while promoting households' **nutritional** value. In the long term, this enhances the farmers income and the provision of ecosystem services.

KEY OUTCOMES

- ✅ 3 000 farmers have been mobilized and trained on avocado farming, with 2 300 of them recruited into the avocado contract farming model in Baringo and Elgeyo Marakwet counties

- ✅ 92 000 avocado trees were established covering an estimated 1 150 acres

- ✅ An annual output of 100 000kg and income of KES 5 million, both of which are expected to rise as most trees are currently at the growth and maturity stage
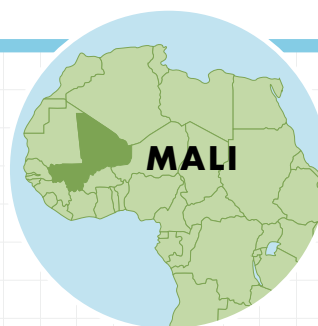
Shea value chain in Mali

Souleymane Fassoum Doumbia, Oxfam

MALI

Mali's approach to promoting agroforestry value chains under Regreening Africa revolves around the following aspects:

- **A diagnostic study following the Market Analysis and Development (ADM) approach that took stock of Non-Wood Forest Products (NWFPs).** Priority NWFPs were selected to identify actors and assess their capacities and to identify the constraints related to the development of agroforestry value chains including those of shea. For shea, the constraints identified were the aging of the shea parks; the weak organization of the actors in the sector; poor access to the market and difficult access to credit.

- **The organization and structuring of identified actors** into a cooperative society for processing and marketing.

- **Strengthening the technical and material capacities of cooperatives** through training on technical itineraries for processing shea butter and promoting entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship training focused on topics such as cooperatives, management of administrative stock, simplified accounting, and the development of business plans to facilitate the development of cooperatives.

- **Provision of processing equipment** (installation of multifunctional processing units and basic work equipment such as basins, drums, pots, packaging pots, hand washing devices, etc.).

- **Connecting cooperatives with financial service providers** and potential buyers.

KEY OUTCOMES

- ✓ Greater engagement of women in regreening activities through shea sowing activities

- ✓ Sensitizing each woman beneficiary of the project to plant shea

- ✓ Advocacy approaches to ensure acquisition of land dedicated to shea activities

- ✓ The processing and sales activities have enabled the groups to mobilize more than 20 million CFA francs

Policy engagement approach in Regreening Africa

Dr. Mawa Karambire, CIFOR-ICRAF

The Regreening Africa programme uses **Stakeholder Approach to Risk-informed and Evidence-based Decision-making (SHARED)**, a structured and evidence-based stakeholder engagement process to influence policy and practice. This is a targeted policy engagement approach that is inclusive and evidence-based, building coherence and supporting greater success for land restoration outcomes. The key steps in the programme's approach are illustrated below.
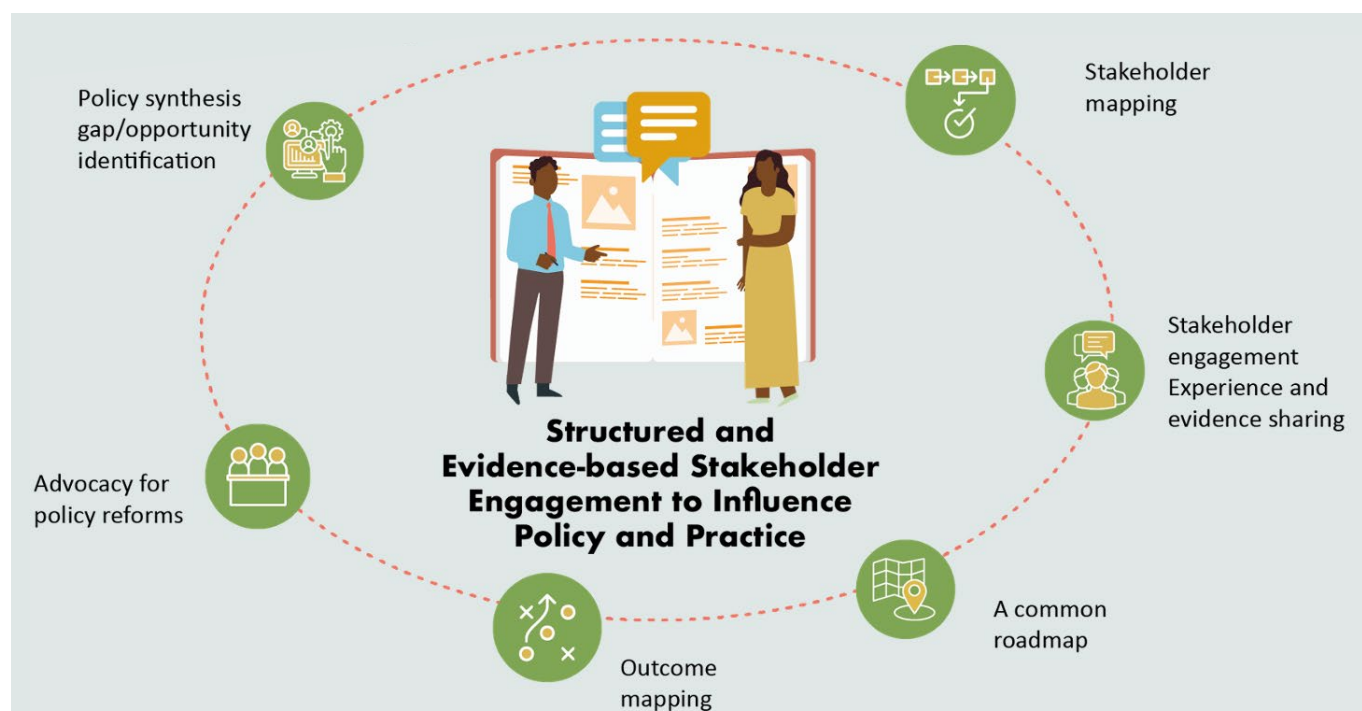
Policy engagement was implemented in various ways, both virtual and in-person, using multi-team and -country learning events focusing on specific topics towards advocacy for change, and convening SHARED workshops aimed at bridging science-policy-practice.

Examples of successful policy engagement under the Regreening Africa programme include the Northern Ghana Restoration Initiative (NRI); the Senegalese transhumance corridors; the Farmer Management Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Decree in Niger and the development of agroforestry strategies in Ethiopia and Kenya.

AUDIENCE QUESTION

Q: **There have been years of effort in support of restoration activities – why is traction still difficult in landscape restoration?**

A: A key factor has been inadequate funds to sustain the movement and action in the long term, and the lack of adequate political support. The sustainable scaling of land restoration requires an enabling policy environment.

FMNR decree in Niger

Boube Chayaya AbdoulKadri, CARE

FMNR is an alternative land restoration technique that integrates trees in agro-pastoral production systems. FMNR in Niger is supported by Provision Art. 2, law 2004-040 on the forestry regime, which recognizes agroforestry parks as an integral part of the country's common heritage and highlights the importance of owners of fields benefitting from forest tree recovery resulting from assisted natural regeneration. This decree resulted from advocacy by various actors based on the Regreening Africa programme policy engagement process.

The decree stipulates the following:

- The owner of the field has the right to locate, maintain, plant, and exploit the trees of his choice in the field subject to measures of protection of the environment and respect of the rights of third parties.

- The right to harvest any product or by-product from fenced or grafted trees or any tree that has been cared for belongs to the owner.

- No one may cut down, prune, or trim a tree without the permission of the owner. Others may however graze without cutting or pruning. This helps to prevent conflicts in the exploitation of resources in fields under FMNR.

NIGER

KEY CHALLENGES

Several challenges have emerged in practice that require regulations to ensure the sustainability of the interventions, for example, how to reconcile the right to graze with the imperative of the agreement of the owner of the field under FMNR? How to ensure that the right and authorizations to cut down trees are not abused and themselves become a source of conflict?

Integrating FMNR in Somaliland and Puntland State Policies

Ahmed Mohamed, CARE Puntland; Ibrahim Mohamed Muse, World Vision Somaliland

SOMALILAND AND PUNTLAND

Puntland has integrated FMNR and Pastoralist Managed Natural Regeneration (PMNR) into its policies through the following consultative process:

- Policy consultation with key stakeholders;

- Policy tabled before Puntland policymakers and FMNR/PMNR policy embedded in the national development plan

- Relevant agencies devise implementation strategy;

- Capacity building of government staff and communities on FMNR/PMNR approach;

- The incorporation of FMNR/PMNR initiated into state run projects in Puntland;

- Monitoring and evaluation activities, including assessing impact on primary stakeholders (beneficiaries); and

- Securing buy-in from the federal government, as well as exploring replication.

FMNR/PMNR has been mainstreamed in various Somaliland Government policies such as the Ministry of Environment and Rural Development (MOERD)'s National Strategy for 2021–2025, where it has been included as one of the land restoration approaches. The Ministry also produces weekly radio talk show programmes promoting FMNR/PMNR practices along with other sustainable land restoration practices in the country. The Ministry has also trained its technical staff, many of whom have become certified FMNR/PMNR practitioners.

Enabling policies and laws have also been developed for supporting restoration efforts which include:

- Forestry and Wildlife Conservation Law

- Environment conservation Law

- Climate Change Policy

- Somaliland Environmental Management Law

The government of Somaliland has also conducted consultative conferences on environmental protection and conservation of biodiversity in five regions of Somaliland where FMNR champions participated and advocated for the approach.

Reflections

PANELLISTS

- **Dr. Dennis Garrity** (Chairman of the Board at the Global EverGreening Alliance

- **Olaf Westermann** (Senior Technical Advisor on climate change and natural resource management, Catholic Relief Services)

- **Elvis Tangem** (Coordinator Great Green Wall Initiative African Union Commission

- **Irene Kibon (Project** Coordinator Regreening Homa Bay with FMNR, World Vision Kenya)

- **Niclas Gottmann** (Policy Officer, Land and Environment, EC)

- **Milton Oboka** (Co-Founder and Executive Director of One Vision Kenya and Youth Coordinator at Devolution and Climate Change Adaptation (DaCCA) Programme)

The ultimate benefit of the Regreening Africa programme cannot be seen today; it will only be observed in the future as the waves of Regreening Africa continue to ramify throughout the region and beyond.

Dr. Leigh Winowiecki chaired the final panel, promoting key messages from multiple stakeholder views.

Given your long history and deep connection with Regreening Africa, what has surprised you most and how can these lessons be brought into new initiatives to scale landscape restoration?

DR. DENNIS GARRITY

Dr. Garrity highlighted several pleasant surprises he has encountered with the implementation of the programme, namely:

- How the programme was coordinated and became a shining beacon for how effective regional land restoration initiatives can be managed for real impact.

- The contribution that was made by the Evergreening Agricultural partnership originally in the design of the project was very successful. Particularly in the transparent way in which the lead organizations and implementing partners were selected and in mobilizing the partners members, such as Catholic Relief Services, World Vision, Oxfam and many others.

- A further pleasant surprise was the way in which global interest in land restoration and the financial support for restoration has expanded as much as it has since this programme began.

- The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change COP process has been able to mobilize the commitments of thousands of corporations around the world to invest in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and to purchase restoration carbon credits to make up the gap.

- The Global EverGreening Alliance has grown so quickly from the original Evergreen Agricultural partnership to reach a size of 71 member organizations, which has enabled us to expand our mission to unite the global NGO community to pursue massive land restoration programmes, all building on learnings of Regreening Africa.

- The alliance has been able to launch a new successor programme to Regreening Africa that aims to restore 2 million hectares of degraded land in Eastern and Southern Africa.

What are the three words that best summarize Regreening Africa and why?

OLAF WESTERMANN

1 **Partnership:** This is critical for everything that Regreening Africa has done. Bringing all the partners together not only in research development but also bringing competing organizations together to work and build the necessary social capital.

2 **Learning:** Building evidence-based development is critical for achieving impact at scale. This is the foundation of Regreening Africa. The joint reflection and learning workshops have been very important to bring in all the stakeholders and learn together.

3 **Integration:** One of programme's key strengths lay in its integration of people, research and development, and many different practices such as FMNR and regreening with other context-specific practices to have the highest impact.

Building evidence-based development is really critical for scaling. It's the foundation of Regreening Africa.

What elements from Regreening Africa do you see as being most helpful in supporting scaling and monitoring efforts for the Great Green Wall Initiative?

ELVIS TANGEM

Regreening Africa is doing so much for the implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative already. The steps taken in Regreening Africa in itself are very important for the Great Green Wall. Moreover, the emphasis on taking advantage of synergies and supporting collaboration and information sharing are highly relevant for the Great Green Wall Initiative.

We are living in a strange world today. People want to go back to the basics and restoration is one of the basics of our lives. This is the best time as far as restoration is concerned in terms of subnational, regional and continental frameworks and policies. Moreover, it's the best time in terms of realization of the need for restoration, adaptation, mitigation and the importance that these actions can bring as solutions to the global practice that we have today.

What are the key insights and lessons learnt from the partnership that has been achieved in Regreening Africa between science, development and government policy? What is unique about this partnership and how is the project benefiting from bringing together these various actors?

IRENE KIBON

Through the Regreening Africa programme, World Vision has developed partnerships and strengthened networks. This has been strategic because this is an approach that contributes meaningfully to the achievement of World Vision's milestones in development work.

The key lessons we have learnt so far include:

- **Partnership has helped in accelerating policy and advocacy,** particularly advocating for the development of a national and regional framework that helps to create policy which is favourable.

- **The partnership has promoted integration.** The integration has minimized wastage of resources, helped avoid duplication of responsibilities, and enabled partners to leverage existing structures and the technical expertise. This includes cooperation on scientific research.

- **Partnering with communities and other development partners** has enhanced synergy and empowerment.

- **Funding opportunities.** With the right partnerships and networks, we are better positioned to access the funding required to promote environmental stewardship, address climate change and strengthen disaster resilience.

> **With the right partnerships and networks, we stand a higher chance in accessing and attracting more funding that will help address and promote environmental stewardship, address climate change and strengthen disaster resilience.**

What are one or two of the most important lessons for donors such as the European Union to take away from an initiative like Regreening Africa?

NIKLAS GOTTMAN

We must make sure that in such the programmes **donors and partners anchor themselves within local contexts** and see local policies as a starting point, because those are established sets of rules that donors have to work from.

Regreening Africa has shown that partnership is absolutely crucial. Even with the differences that we have, we are really trying to get everyone around the same table and figure out lasting solutions.

From the perspective of the EU as a donor organization, it is encouraging to see the leverage that we normally envision, with the little money that we have, to create a movement and generate significant impact.

We do need to see how we can create a longer time horizon. Nature needs more time than your normal project cycle and at the same time human relations take time to build and to sustain. Thinking of sustainability in general, we need to see how we can increase the time horizon for the things that we do and how we engage.

The world is facing a lot of challenges, specifically climate change and environmental degradation, and it's important to involve young people to spearhead the process and shape the future that they really long for.

MILTON OBOKA

It is critical to **engage young people in meaningful ways**. Give them a platform where they can hone their leadership skills. It is also important to avail opportunities that can help them grow professionally and even grow within their organization.

When designing projects or programmes, it is important to **be specific about how the programme will engage young people**. When developing programmes targeting young people, ask the following questions: Is it something exciting for young people? Is it promising? Is it something that is going to build their leadership skills? Are there great opportunities for growth? Who is going to engage these young people?

This programme was clearly ambitious, trying to do a great deal with limited resources. It was very clear to all of us that this would not work if it was business as usual. So, we set out right from the beginning to take a 'business unusual' approach. Collaboration, innovation, adaptation, the willingness to learn and, fundamentally, believing the goals are achievable, has been key to the success of the programme.

–Dr. Ravi Prabhu, Director Innovation, Investment, and Impact, CIFOR-ICRAF

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