



Considering barriers to and solutions for accelerating impact in the Great Green Wall Initiative

Summary Report of a Virtual Event Series
October 25 and 24 November 2022



ClimBeR: Building Systemic
Resilience Against Climate
Variability and Extremes



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KANDS Collective hello@kandscollective.com

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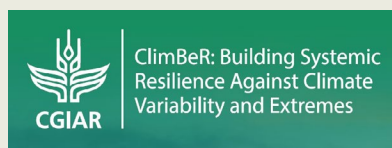
Through the sub-grant, the Centre for International Forestry Research–World Agroforestry (CIFOR–ICRAF) have supported ClimBeR through extensive stakeholder consultation on the four focus countries, Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia and Sudan. In addition to the focus countries, regional engagement and a series of virtual events and stakeholder interviews have been synthesised into the knowledge series. We would like to thank the time and expertise from stakeholders for interviews, workshops, regional events and sharing their insights towards this important project.

ClimBeR

ClimBeR seeks to address challenges to adaptation by small-holder farmers through science and innovation aimed at transforming the climate adaptation capacity of food, land, and water systems, working closely with partners at the local, national, regional, and global levels. ClimBeR focuses on generating knowledge to unlock public and private finance, foster climate- and peace-sensitive policies and backstop the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI), Africa's flagship programme to address climate change and desertification.



<https://www.cgiar.org/research/publication/initiative-overview-climber-building-systemic-resilience-against-climate-variability-and-extremes/>



Knowledge series





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Background

The Sahel offers a valuable example of the challenges that climate change can impose on livelihoods derived mainly from agriculture and livestock. Temperatures in the region are rising 1.5 times faster than in the rest of the world, while simultaneously, heavy rains have been accompanied by destructive river floods and numerous flooding episodes.

Under the combined effect of drought and floods, natural resources that are essential to agropastoral livelihoods and that underpin the economy and political stability of the region have been degraded. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) estimates that agricultural yields in the region will fall by 20% per decade by the end of the 21st century. In the coming decades, the region could face persistent droughts, lack of food, conflicts over dwindling natural resources, and mass migration to Europe.

The scale of these challenges is difficult to overstate, and only a systems transformation approach will be capable of offering effective solutions to them. The challenge lies in mobilising the partnerships, finance, knowledge, tools and policies in a coherent way to catalyse transformational change across diverse contexts, at a massively accelerated speed.

To advance a transformational approach and in support of the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI), a study in four countries (Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia and Sudan) has been undertaken by the GGW Accelerator and the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW), the One CGIAR ClimBeR Initiative, the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, along with CIFOR-ICRAF, and hosted a series of virtual events across a wide range of stakeholders to generate knowledge to understand key barriers to and potential solutions for accelerating impacts for the GGWI. This report summarises the virtual regional events that were undertaken on October 25 and November 24, 2022.

Objectives and format of events

The overall objectives of the virtual regional event series were to:

- **Validate identified bottlenecks and opportunities** to accelerate the impact of the GGWI, both regionally and nationally.
- **Identify synergies** between the Great Green Wall and key research, policy and practice initiatives and institutions.
- **Establish opportunities to support the National Coalitions** in linking to relevant research activities and critical stakeholders implementing the GGWI, to address bottlenecks.

The first virtual event focused on presenting the initial outcomes of desk review and interview activities in Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia and Sudan, in order to identify and deepen the understanding of existing barriers to finance and alignment, policy and institutions, science, practice and scaling. Facilitated interactions in this session focused on barriers to the scaling ambitions of the GGWI and their underlying causes.

The second virtual event focused on exploring solution cases, particularly inter-institutional relationships, science and information across scales, and scaling nature-inspired landscape practices. These and other solutions were explored in interactive working groups in consideration of support to GGW National Coalitions.

For each of the virtual events, a series of speakers were invited to share their expertise and findings, followed by break out groups that delved deeper into the given topics.





Identifying the Barriers to Impact

Series 1 Insights and Main Messages

25 October 2022

SERIES 1 VIRTUAL EVENT

1. Opening and stage setting
2. Overview of preliminary study findings
3. Working groups on barriers to accelerating impact in the GWW
 - Funding mechanisms and alignment
 - Policy and enabling environment
 - Institutional relationships and partnerships
 - Research and academia
 - Promoting practice and capacity development
4. Summary and close

The first virtual event sought to identify and validate bottlenecks to accelerating the impact of the Great Green Wall Initiative, both national and regionally.

Setting the stage

Dr. Elvis Tangem, the African Union (AU) focal point for the GWW, opened the event with an overview of the AU's work in supporting member states in Southern Africa (including the Comoros) to extend GWW in the region. He outlined the key challenges that member states face, including a critical lack of institutional capacity, financial constraints, working in silos, and the lack of action taken by the private sector. Dr. Tangem proposed that not only do we need to learn from the Sahel region in order to develop a more robust approach in Southern Africa, but we also need to be more proactive in nexus building.

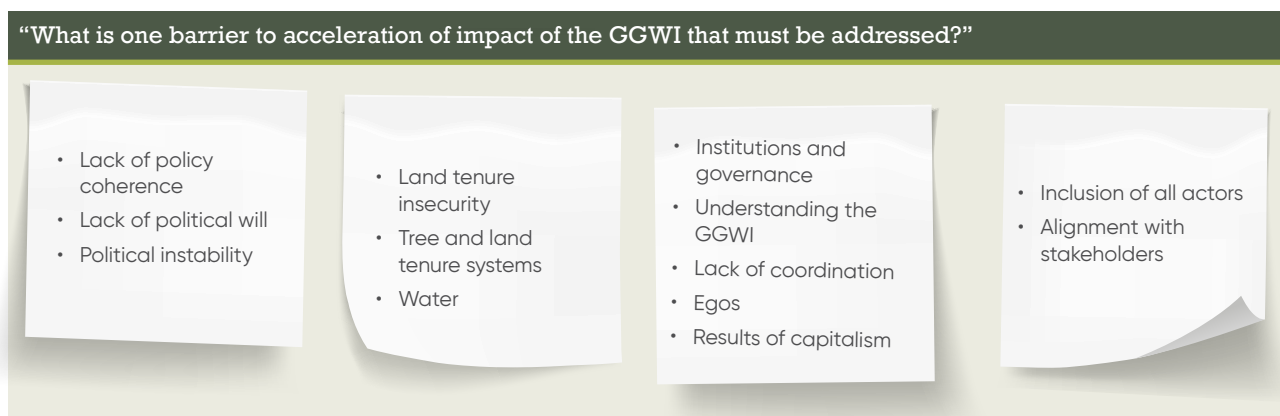


Figure 1. Participants were invited to highlight one barrier to accelerating the impact of the GGWI that must be addressed.

A panel discussion collectively stressed the importance of deepening our understanding of existing barriers and their underlying causes, in order to effectively meet the scaling ambitions of the GGWI. Speakers were as follows:

- Director Sawsan Khair Elsieid Abdel Rahim** (Great Green Wall Agency, Sudan) discussed the lessons learnt on the institutional analysis and legal framework of the GWW in Sudan. Building on the barriers identified by Dr. Tangem in his opening remarks, Dr. Rahim added that a lack of accountability and effective M&E has resulted in severe land degradation in GGW areas of Sudan.
- Dr. Robert Zougmore** (West African Lead for AICCRA, Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT) used the case of Mali, where an analysis diagnostic has recently been completed, to share some of the key barriers and opportunities for scaling GGWI ambitions that we can learn from. He shared how the absence of public-private partnerships in Mali has demonstrated how critical it is to engage the private sector to ensure sustainable financing of initiatives, and how limited financial resources made available by government can lead to limited field and operational capacities. He highlighted the importance of developing bankable projects that can be funded to address climate-related activities. Despite the challenges, Dr. Zougmore mentioned that the GGW Agency in Mali is very enthusiastic, highly motivated and there is a clear willingness to make change happen. This includes strong political will that needs to be leveraged to scale up.
- Mme Anna Daba Ndiaye** (Project Manager of Regreening Africa, World Vision) spoke of the importance of synergy across projects and capitalising on a diversity of stakeholders and projects. Enhancing the coordination among these actors and ensuring the complementarity of projects will yield greater results and avoid duplication. Mme Ndiaye used the example of the AICCRA project which is currently providing tools to enhance the capacity of communities in the same area as Regreening Africa (CIFOR-ICRAF), where a synergy between these projects would create increased capacity with more people able to access the tools and results stemming from the two projects.

Outcomes of the preliminary study results

Studies have been undertaken within **four pilot countries** (Mali, Senegal, Sudan and Ethiopia), to understand **how the GGW fits within national level architecture** and to carry out a thorough **stakeholder and engagement review** and an analysis of **regional policy coherence**. Policy windows are also being mapped to understand GGW links to the climate agenda and identify any opportunities for engagement and alignment. The detailed study is rooted in **linking emerging bottlenecks with research and practice offerings across the region**. While work has begun in Sudan and Ethiopia, at the time of the event Mali and Senegal were still in the initial stages.



ETHIOPIA

Dr. Gezahegn Ayele (AgriBilcha) provided an overview of the preliminary study results from Ethiopia. The country launched the GGWI in 2011 with a pledge to restore 15 million hectares of degraded and deforested lands in 58 woredas by 2030. The initiative is implemented in the North and Eastern regions, both heavily exposed to degradation and deforestation.

Dr. Ayele mentioned that while there are good policies and programmes in place, such as the Climate Resilient and Green Economy Strategy,

communication and coordination is severely fragmented. This is in part a result of the broader socio-economic challenges including military conflicts, malnutrition, and environmental stresses. Key institutional relationships and partnerships such as the Resilient Landscapes and Livelihood Project, Partnering for Green Growth and the Ministry of Agriculture Green Legacy Campaign, have great potential in scaling the GGWI, but are constrained by poor coordination and communication. Additional bottlenecks are outlined in Table 1.

Table 1. Key bottlenecks identified in Ethiopia study

Key bottlenecks in Ethiopia	How bottlenecks can be addressed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Poor coordination and cooperation, fragmented approach, replication with national institutions Limited information sharing 	Strengthen horizontal and vertical cooperation and coordination
Lack of stable lead institution, particularly in the forestry sector	Strengthen national institutions in data collection, human resources
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of coherence and continuity of policy design implementation Inconsistency between laws for climate change and the GGW 	Revisit policies in the face of growing population and limited land use related to climate change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of finance, with slow release of funds from donors The GGWI does not have resources to initiate projects 	Donors should use appropriate and accountable national institutions
Accountability of institutions is weak, particularly with regard to monitoring and evaluation	Put in place good governance, monitoring and evaluation learning mechanisms. The MoA need to strengthen their system.
Lack of skilled manpower and knowledge in climate change, adaption, and resilience	Mobilise experience-sharing among neighbouring countries
Moisture stressed areas make tree planting unsustainable without irrigation	Invest in irrigation and watering of plants in such areas

Dr. Ayele spoke of the funding mechanisms and alignment that have been designed to help mitigate the challenge of adequate financing. The Great Green Wall Umbrella Programme (GGWUP), a new investment strategy still in the design stage, aims to promote **inclusive green financing**. The lead institutions are the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Bank and the programme is well aligned with the Ethiopian Ministry of Finance through the Ministry of Agriculture, creating partnerships for forest development.

Figure 2 demonstrates the GGW funding landscape in Ethiopia, which includes several organisations funding climate change initiatives, although **funding mechanisms remain unclear**.

Important recommendations for promoting practice and capacity development in Ethiopia are presented in Figure 3, centering upon land use policy and governance, multi-stakeholder relationships and ownership of efforts by the community.

GGW-Ethiopia Funding				
Funding	Project Type	Number of Projects	Total Financing (US\$)	Total Co-Financing (US\$)
GEF Trust Fund	National	27	102,259,787	722,266,747
	Regional/Global	58	751,494,718	6,194,695,187
Least Developed Countries Fund	National	6	31,453,378	151,157,430
	Regional/Global	2	9,751,956	33,528,600
CBIT Trust Fund	National	1	1,166,000	192,000
Multi Trust Fund	National	1	12,962,963	94,655,517
Special Climate Change Fund	National	1	995,000	1,866,667
Total		96	\$910,083,802	\$7,198,362,148

Source: GEF Ethiopia Country at-a- Glance (2022), Ministry of Planning and Development

Figure 2. GGW-Ethiopia funding sources, scales, projects, financing and co-financing

Promoting practice and capacity development in Ethiopia

Ethiopia needs a land use policy and governance structure so that communities have ownership to successfully restore degraded lands and avert recurrent droughts and loss of livelihood.

GGWI needs to reach out to civic societies and the private sector to mobilise resources and enhance community resilience. The emphasis on designating implementation to certain government institutions needs to change.

Local community ownership is fundamental to incentives and final outcome of the GGW projects, particularly for the annual tree planting campaign.



Figure 3. Recommendations for promoting practice and capacity development in Ethiopia



Presenting on the GGWI in Sudan, **Professor Ganawa Eltaib** (University of Khartoum) discussed the critical issue of insufficient resources and the consequence of this on project sustainability. He mentioned that while there are effective projects in Sudan, **insufficient resources and political instability** often cause them to be halted or stopped completely, negatively impacting the availability of resources to address the country's multi-dimensional challenge of land degradation and climate change. Professor Eltaib stressed the importance of **enhancing the coordination of fundraising**, as well as reviewing national and regional project proposals under the GGW umbrella programme and providing guidance and arrangement on the formulation of projects.

In terms of the policy and enabling environment, Professor Eltaib explained that projects need to be coherent and harmonised with existing policies. The absence of land use plans and the lack of laws governing land tenure and land use have a substantial impact on the successful activities

relating to addressing land degradation. The issues associated with institutional relationships and partnerships are shown in Figure 4.

In Sudan, the **slow movement of data and information** has a direct impact on the implementation of GGWI related activities. Furthermore, academia and research institutions do not have an optimal relationship, attributed to the fact that these relationships are on an individual to individual basis and are not institutionalised.

Professor Eltaib presented some of the key priorities promoting practices and capacity development, such as creating synergy between the national action plans of the country and the GGWI activities, creating opportunities for the GGWI projects to work closely with the national development programmes, on implementation within Sudan's priority intervention areas.

Barriers to institutional relationships and partnerships in Sudan

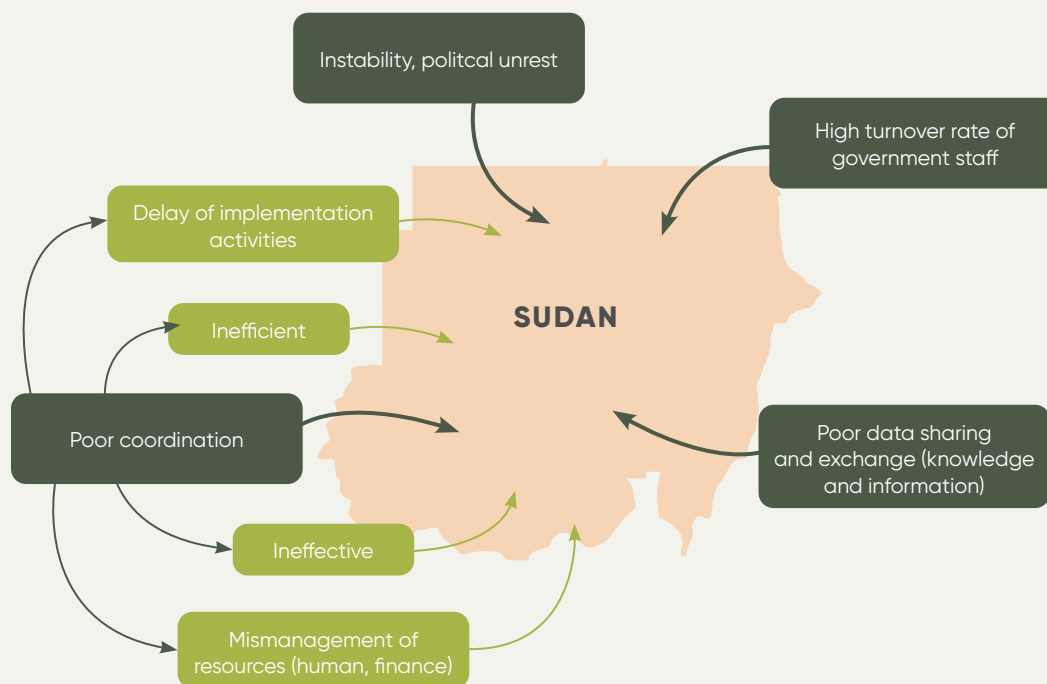


Figure 4. Barriers associated with institutional relationships and partnerships in Sudan



MALI AND SENEGAL

Sasha Mentz presented the initial findings on Mali and Senegal. In the absence of analytical accounting, it is difficult to know the total amount of investments that have had a positive impact on actions to combat land degradation. What is clear, though, is the **lack of robust internal resource mobilisation** in Mali for the implementation of sustainable land management (SLM) policies, strategies, and plans, as well as a **high reliance on external funding** (up to 70%). Furthermore, insecurity has limited access to areas and has proven to compromise funding.

In both Mali and Senegal, the positioning of national agencies has formed an additional obstacle to the mobilisation of resources, with agencies under the direction of each country's Ministry of the Environment but with financial partners convened at a national level by the Ministry of Finance and Planning.

In Senegal, the Senegalese National Alliance for the Great Green Wall (ANGMV) is currently translating the PAAGGW priority investment plan into a national programme, aligned with the five pillars of the Great Green Wall Accelerator Strategy and the PAAGGW priority investment plan. A first draft has already been produced, as well as indicators for 2022 and 2023, which will be discussed in a validation workshop with all stakeholders and submitted to the Presidency.

In terms of the policy and enabling environment in Mali and Senegal, Ms. Mentz discussed how there is scope for **policy harmonisation** to maintain land restoration and resource management strategy across different sectoral domains and jurisdictions. Furthermore, she mentioned how the absence of a policy framework for the governance of agroforestry impedes adoption and scaling of agroforestry and other SLM interventions.

One of the biggest challenges for the GW in both countries is the **conflicting demands between agricultural development and ecological restoration**, as well as the lack of coordinated plans and activities addressing root causes of gender inequality.

GW Coalitions have been put in place in both Senegal and Mali, however a coalition meeting had yet to be held in Mali by the time of the event. There is scope to support national platforms focused on SLM, and to improve the synergy in the implementation of projects and support long term activities that intend to sustain all of the regenerative initiatives such as the National Strategic Investment Framework.

Ms. Mentz noted the following key observations, based on initial findings from Mali and Senegal:

- Farmers have a key role to play – they need to have access to mechanisms that enable them to be involved easily
- Lack of coordination and participation of key actors such as civil society organisations (CSOs), private sector and local government – all essential to successful implementation
- Expert approaches prove to be ineffective in boosting general stakeholder understanding.

Looking across the two countries, Ms. Mentz identified emerging research priorities, as illustrated in Figure 5.

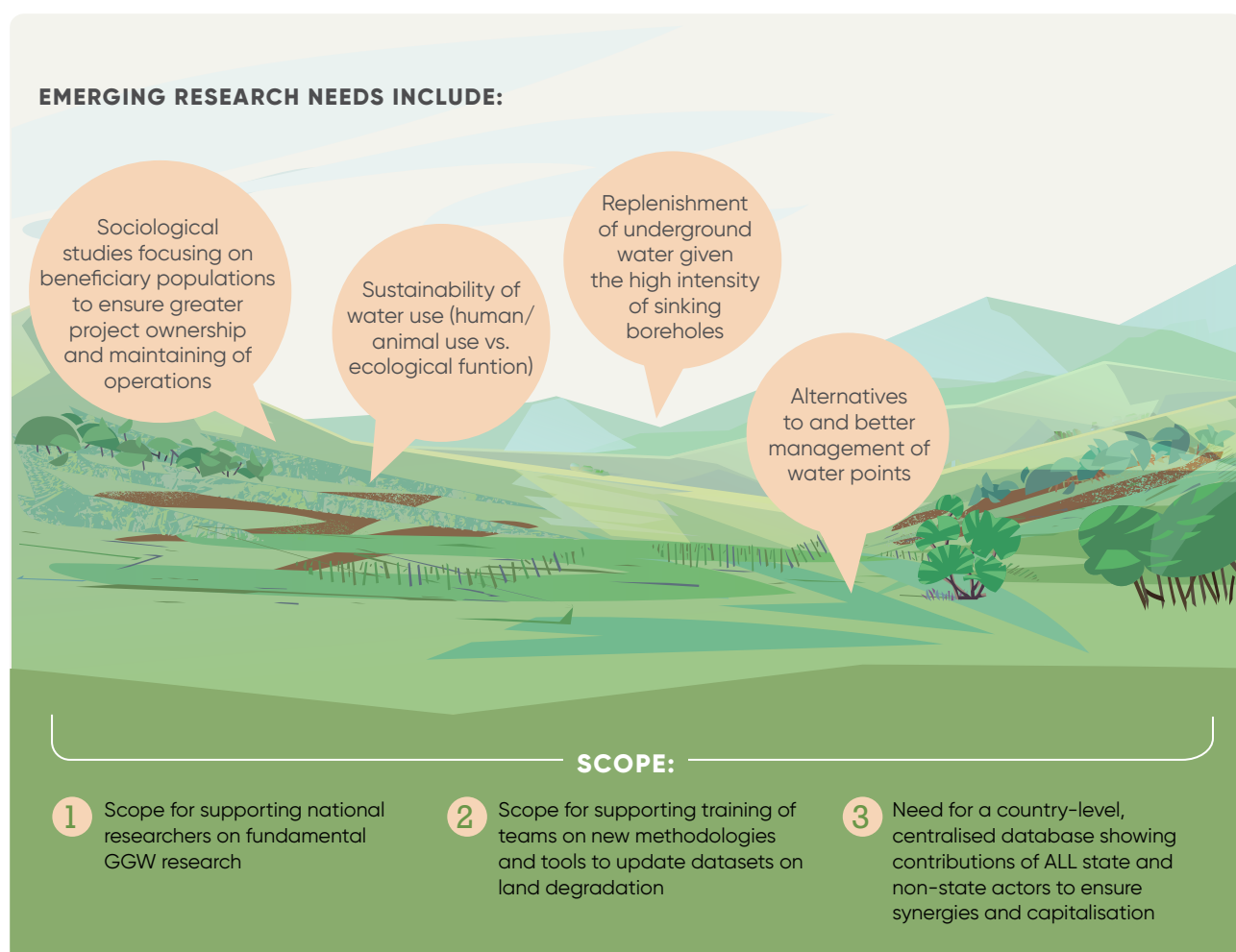


Figure 5. Research and academia priorities and scope in Mali and Senegal

WORKING GROUP FEEDBACK

Examining barriers

In working groups, participants identified **barriers to accelerating impacts in the Great Green Wall** and considered potential underlying causes. Working groups were organised by thematic categories:



institutional relationships and partnerships;



funding mechanisms and alignment;



policy and enabling environment;



research and academia for development; and



promoting practice and capacity development.

Original notes from the discussions of thematic breakout groups are captured in Tables 2–6.



INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

One of the biggest challenges discussed was the **lack of funding of partnerships**, given that this is not a traditional funding line item. This working group also highlighted the need for more national engagements to break down the silos that are a major barrier to effective communication and coordination. One of the key outcomes of the

Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and AGRHYMET partnership for example, is the development of a **national platform to work together across countries** and create a common programme of work.

Table 2. Discussion notes for Institutional Relationships and Partnerships working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partnerships are hindered by lack of long-term engagement with implementing partners, with countries and communities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local communication and how the decentralisation can leverage this
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No clear budget for partnership. Partnership is costly and requires considered engagement and investment – needs to be a core pillar 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to address resource competition and create coalitions of action so how can we have better reach and scale and needs of populations (environmental and socio-economic)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Same issue with lack of investment in knowledge management and communications in projects – partnerships need to be a core pillar – and at national level this needs to be a central engagement area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ministry of Environment – that advances project initiative. Ministry plays role of coordinator – fully responsible for aspects of GGW implementation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs to have more national engagement fora to break silos and have functioning. Need to have investment into clear partnership engagement activities and pillars in national decision making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need official partnerships regulated by partnership agreements (MOUs and LOIs). This is at national and continental level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Critical to make headway to vision of GGW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look at national objectives for partnership development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Most of the policies are sector based – do not stress complementarity and synergies and integrated approaches – need strategies that are cross sectoral. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deeper co-ordination – Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Land, Ministry of Decentralisation so projects under GGW are owned by the key ministries for objectives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take into account and stock taking of existing initiatives – this doesn't happen with sector-based approaches – need better support for national dynamics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmers are critical partnerships and custodians of huge tracks of land. Both local communities and farmers are dealing with organised structure and local communities are recognised
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The AU strategy – partnership should not be impromptu. There is a need for long term official partnerships driven by the need of the programme of the GGW 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Projects should not be project-based, needing a longer time line. There is an issue of resource competition between different entities in the landscape.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not just institutions but all partners such as NGOs and private sector actors in terms of restoration and carbon. Key is bringing broader actors together and coordination of this. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage off mobilisation capacity of the local community and farmers' organisations and networks



FUNDING MECHANISMS AND ALIGNMENT

The Funding Mechanisms and Alignment working group highlighted the inability to capitalise on project activities, as funding tends to remain within the ministries, with very little coordination among the silos. Furthermore, the GGWI is generally viewed as having so far **failed to deliver the large-scale change** that was originally envisaged, and therefore not only has this resulted in a lack of commitment from sectoral ministries to coordinate finances, but any available funding is being prioritised elsewhere. This is compounded by a switch of priorities to **regional security issues** and the onset and subsequent management of **COVID-19**.

Table 3. Discussion notes for Funding Mechanisms and Alignment working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON FUNDING MECHANISM AND ALIGNMENT	
• Pledged money is channeled through Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Agriculture. Where does the GGW come in, unless the GGWA steps up efforts to claim the funds meant for the GGW	
• Should the GGW agencies focus on coordination, on implementation or on both?	
• Nobody talks about financing the GGW. Government talks to financing partners about other subjects. Even government focal points do not have full visibility	
• Visibility and design of GGW are key issues	
• A key issue is coordination	
• 3 bottlenecks of finance: COVID is the highest priority, engagements of the SDA are poorly monitored, coordination of partners is weak	
• Lack of capitalisation and synergy	
• Mauritania lack of coordination between the different sectors. Finance remains at the level of sectoral departments.	



POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

GGW member states are in need **land use policies and governance structures** to enable communities with ownership or tenure to successfully restore degraded lands and avert recurrent droughts and loss of livelihood. Other challenges include the **lack of synergy at the national level**, and the issue of ministries working in silos. Communities often do not believe that they will receive the benefits of the GGWI, particularly in the initial phase where they do not readily see the benefits. **Government support is critical** to help encourage communities to participate in GGWI activities, until such a time where benefits of the initiative are more visible.

Table 4. Discussion notes for Policy and Enabling Environment working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	
• Lack of land use policies on the ground is a major challenge in Ethiopia – land for urbanisation/agriculture – no guiding policy for where to cultivate or not	<p>Some of the underlying causes considered were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policies to support local populations because they do not feel immediate benefits • Communities must feel that they get a benefit in the long term to engage in land restoration. Commitment of communities is key to scaling up • Support from the government like providing seedlings, reducing taxes for planting trees, for people to commit to land restoration • Safety causes • Specific conflicts between pastoralists and farmers
• Lack of investments	
• No application of land restoration laws to encourage investments	
• Not enough inclusion of the GGW in the existing environmental policies	
• Lack of synergy between the sectoral departments lies at the GGW	
• Lack of capitalisation and synergy	
• Mauritania lack of coordination between the different sectors. Finance remains at the level of sectoral departments.	



RESEARCH AND ACADEMIA

One of the main challenges identified in this working group is the **lack of availability and sharing of information between sectors** as well as across different levels of society. This is associated with the lack of funding available for research, as well as the **absence of clear communication pathways to share knowledge, particularly indigenous knowledge**. While it is critical that science is linked to policy, it is equally critical that indigenous knowledge is taken into consideration when policies are developed and updated.

Table 5. Discussion notes for Research and Academia working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON RESEARCH AND ACADEMIA	
• There is a lack of overarching research agenda	• At the technical level we need to focus on numerous success factors for the GGW (water, energy, soil health, community engagement- supported by territorial development)
• Lack of evidence and lack of incentive to use data	
• Lack of information flow back to the ground, information should be translated in relevant languages	• Science-policy linkage is key to understand the usefulness of research
• Scientific evidence is lacking – need more information on outcome and cost effectiveness to flag what needs to be scaled	• Lack of synergies between institutions – synergise databases and best practices (Ethiopia)
• Data is locked within government institutions and also between government departments. Often governments have data but do not share because of funding or competition for resources – it is necessary to foster synergy	• Lacking interlinkages between various research initiatives with progress on the ground
	• M&E of scaling up of the GGW from the ground and from the sky
• Building off Indigenous knowledge – are we leveraging off what communities are doing (resilience systems, water systems, energy for domestic use)	• Adapt and scale up Regreening App and Regreening Africa Dashboard (e.g., land irrigation database). This has already been developed and we need to build on this.



PROMOTING PRACTICE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Working group participants identified that **effective technologies exist but are not always accessible**, particularly at the grassroots level. The GGWI needs to move away from designating implementation to certain government institutions and instead **reach out to civic society and the private sector to mobilise resources** and enhance the resilience of communities. Local community ownership is fundamental to the incentives and final outcome of the GGW projects.

Table 6. Discussion notes for Promoting Practice and Capacity Development working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON PROMOTING PRACTICE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT	
• Knowledge exists about soil technologies or sustainable technologies, but is not accessible	• Challenges are linked to technical capacity of staff. There is a low contribution to large objectives.
• Knowledge is now available but support measures are needed for widespread adoption	• Communication is the issue, reporting, data management, soft skills, capacity (interpersonal)
• Training is done but feels insufficient, but lacks incentives (e.g., Zai pits exist but what poses the adoption)	• There is no coordination of actors, adoption in general will be at the end of the project. There is a lack of time, project design must take into account this dimension.
• Water gestation, solar pump irrigation – technologies and best practices	• Commercialisation is important. Agriculture needs to reflect the income generation and wealth aspect, part of the market
• Access to finance to make water available, investments are needed for access	• Need for monitoring and evaluation mechanisms and capitalisation
• Solutions for the ground needed, looking at strategic thinking for environment and natural resource management	• Awareness raising on the vision and objectives of GGW

Examining Solutions

Series 2 Outputs and Main Messages

24 November 2022

SERIES 2 VIRTUAL EVENT

1. Setting the stage
2. Bridging the divide in restoration solution cases
 - Bolstering inter-institutional relationships
 - Science and information at multiple scales
 - Scaling nature-based landscape practices
3. Working groups on solutions
4. Closing remarks

The second virtual event built upon the bottlenecks raised during the first virtual event and featured successful case studies with an emphasis on 'bridging the divide' for restoration in terms of institutional relationships, science and information across scales, and scaling nature-inspired practices.

Setting the stage

Dr. Elvis Tangem, AU Focal Point for the GGWI, formally opened the second series. He began his opening remarks with the positive feedback on the GGWI that came out of COP 27, in which there were 15 side events on the GGW and a series of pledges totalling USD 2.5 billion dollars. Given the serious concern of drought, particularly in the Horn of Africa, Dr. Tangem mentioned that the GGWI was extremely attractive, with countries such as Somalia expressing their interest to join the Initiative.

Figure 6. To initiate the event, participants were asked to name one innovation or transformative action that they would recommend be put in place at regional or national scale to accelerate and scale up GGW Impact.

With this in mind, it is critical that solutions to GGWI's adaption are not only accelerated but also innovative and contextually suited. On this point, Dr. Tangem urged participants to consider how to engage diverse actors and create partnerships that will result in sustainable financial and technical capacity development.

"Recommend one innovation or transformative action to be put in place at regional or national scale to accelerate and scale up GGW Impact"

- Common policies
- Regional policies
- Reform of policies
- Political awareness of the importance of the GGWI

- Assisted natural regeneration
- Agroforestry

- Good governance
- Partnerships
- Networks

- Awareness creation
- Coalitions
- Integration
- Synergy
- More coordination, harmony with other initiatives

- Exchange between countries
- Share experience and pilot small projects
- Increase capacity building and connect within others successful experiences in the countries
- Capacity building of GGW actors
- Capacity building

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE FOR RESTORATION

Bolstering inter-institutional relationships



FOSTERING SHARED EVIDENCE AND EXPERIENCES

The first panel discussion explored inter-institutional relationships of the GGW and how to bolster them. Ms. Mieke Bourne Ochieng (Project Manager of Regreening Africa, CIFOR-ICRAF) opened the panel with a presentation on the Regreening Africa project. Ms. Bourne Ochieng emphasised the importance of **science, practice and policy working together** and of sharing real achievements related to the interventions. She attributed Regreening Africa's success in this regard to the project's unique approach of working across policy, practice and science. The project uses the **Stakeholder Approach to Risk Informed and Evidence Based Decision Making (SHARED)** in order to bring different stakeholders and sectors together, while fostering the use of

shared evidence and experiences for adaptive planning and implementation.

Regreening Africa recognises that evidence comes from different sources and, to leverage this, has designed **a unique stakeholder engagement process** that includes Joint Reflective Learning Missions (JRLM). She mentioned that the purpose of JRLMs is to integrate evidence and support adaptive management, incorporating perspectives from communities and NGO partners with scientific data. The project structure ensures high level government oversight as well as oversight from policy advocacy institutions, and ensures collaboration among CBOs, NGOs, government, research and donor support.

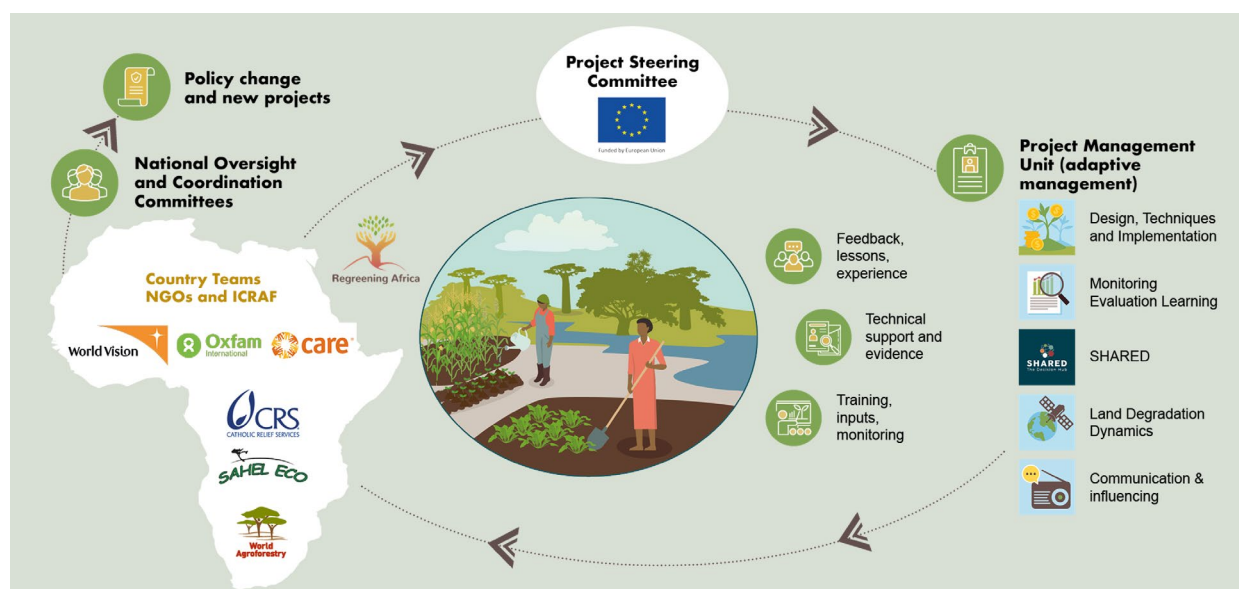


Figure 7. Regreening Africa's programme structure

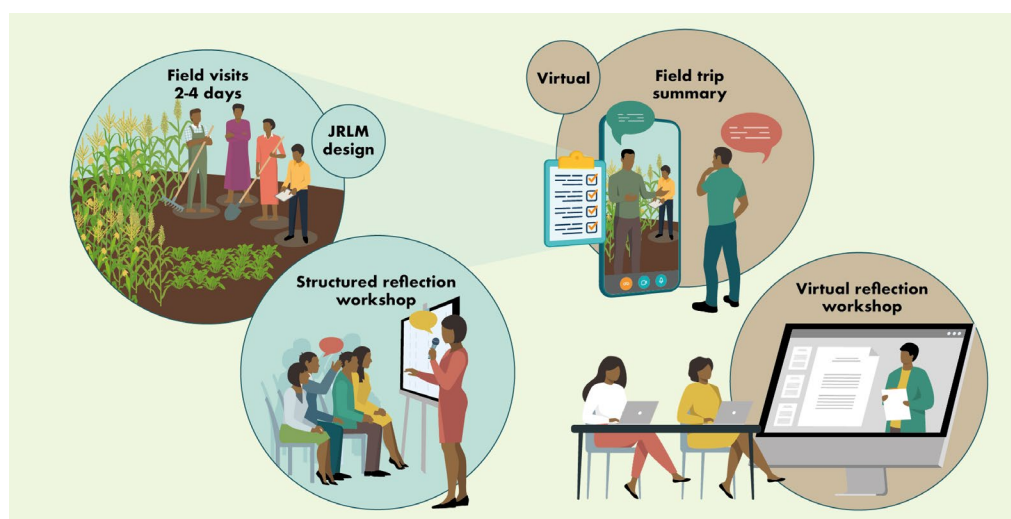


Figure 8. Process flow of the Regreening Africa Joint Reflective Learning Mission



PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Dr. Abdrahamane Wane (Economist and Principal Scientist at ILRI) presented on **public-private partnerships (PPP) to foster impact in the GGW at the national and regional level**. Working with communities and private sector, a recent study has demonstrated that public-private partnerships in Senegal have been able to identify particular plant species that are able to produce oil with minimal labour and generate a high income and return on investment.

Given the positive private sector investment in East African countries, the technical capacities of local communities are increasing at a faster

rate. The return on investments is not as high in West Africa, given the lower rate of private sector involvement. Dr. Wane noted that the two key barriers to effective public-private partnerships to foster impact in the GGW include the **lack of integration of many GGW initiatives into private sector budgets** and that many GGW initiatives have **not developed business models** (Figure 9). Increased PPP is needed to help boost the sustainability of GGWI and to do so, increased technical capacities of actors involved in the GGW must be ensured, including training on budgets and developing effective business models.

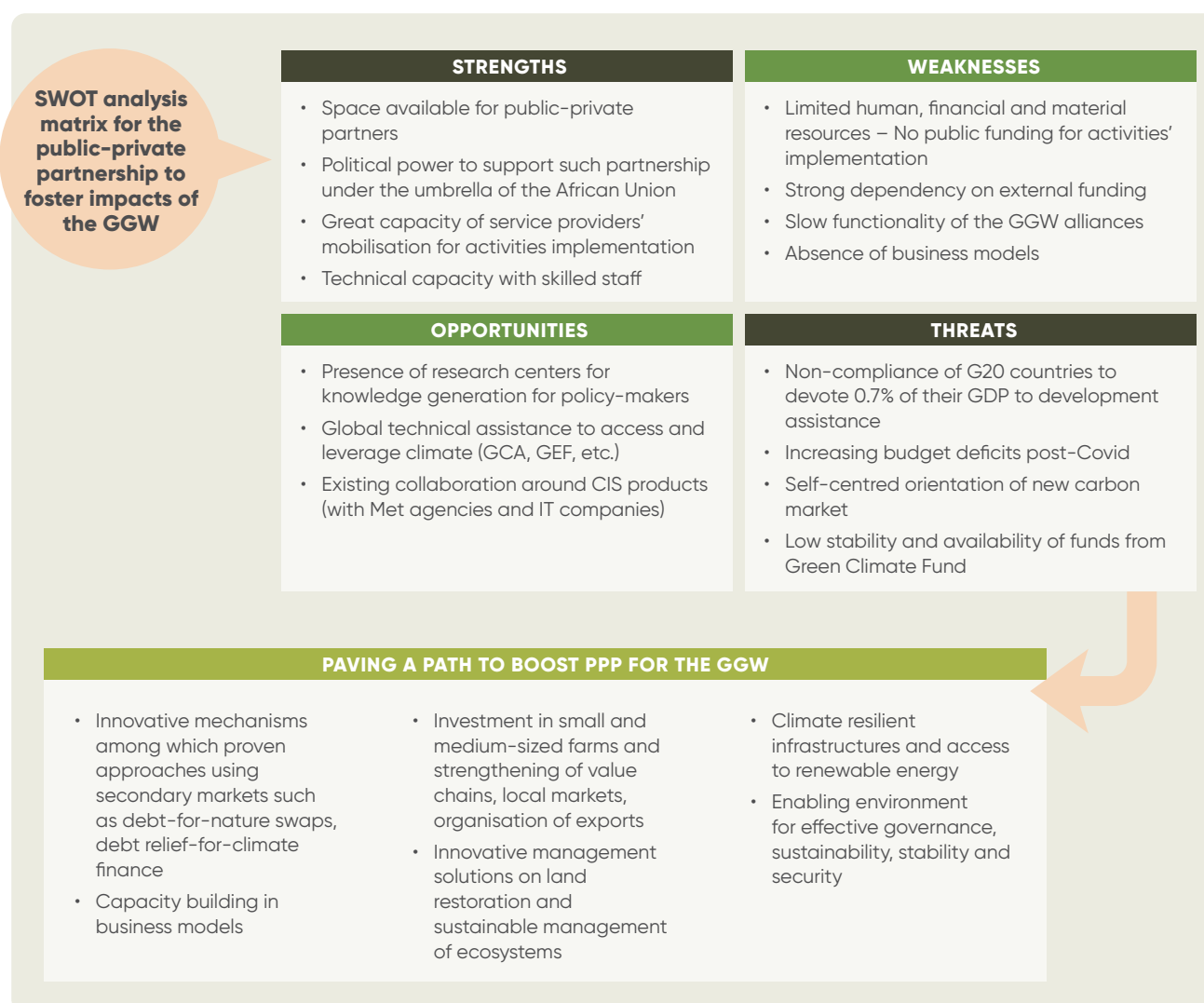


Figure 9. SWOT Analysis Matrix for the Public-Private Partnership to Foster Impacts of the GGW



BUILDING ADVOCACY CAPACITIES ACROSS COUNTRIES

Dr. Mawa Karambiri (Policy and Technical Engagement Specialist, CIFOR-ICRAF) presented on **building synergies and capacities in advocacy across countries**.

Sharing the outcomes of a recent exchange and learning visit to Niger in September 2022, Dr. Karambiri shed light on how cross-country advocacy dialogues for restoration can effectively facilitated. Policy actors and implementers from Senegal and Mali joined the learning exchange visit, which focused on important lessons learned on Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) or Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR) in Niger, including the influence of supportive land restoration policies.

The event sought to strengthen dialogue between partners and countries, **exchange experiences with stakeholders in the countries**, explore the possibilities for policy influence and create an opportunity to initiate a similar advocacy processes in Mali and Senegal in favour of

land restoration, FMNR and agroforestry. It further sought to develop an operational plan for the advocacy process, using Niger as an example, for influencing policy that support FMNR and agroforestry in other countries. A key recommendation that came out of this learning exchange trip was the critical importance of translating laws and policies into local languages so that more people can understand them. Other recommendations that Dr. Karambiri presented included:

- The need for a **simple advocacy plan** in Mali, Senegal and Burkina Faso;
- **Regulatory mechanisms to govern ANR** and governance policies and the need for a network of partners/stakeholders; and
- **Legal frameworks that clearly define the status of farm trees**, how they can be exploited, and how the profits can be shared regarding the use of these trees.

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE FOR RESTORATION

Science into information



SOCIO-ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS THINKING

Mr. Alex Benkenstein (Head of Governance of Africa's Resources Programme, South African Institute for International Affairs) presented on the importance of **thinking and engaging in terms of socio-ecological systems**, in which natural systems are no longer separated from social systems. He advocated for a **socio-ecological framework** that recognises that we are all part of one system. Operating within such a framework, we are more easily able to identify opportunities for change within and across systems.

Mr. Benkenstein called for a deeper focus on the co-production of knowledge and the **reframing of the research process as a dialogue** (given that for the co-production of knowledge to be developed, there needs to be a dialogue between two or more parties). He stressed the importance of:

- language and sensitivity to social and political contexts within which the research is being produced
- the means by which we share the knowledge (including the tools we use); and
- mutuality (the relationships we create, thinking carefully about our inherent biases).

Mr. Benkenstein mentioned that there are many different tools available to help us engage with different groups among and between the different levels of society, on which we need to capitalise. He ended his presentation emphasising the importance of thinking about the **science-policy-impact nexus at multiple scales**.



REGREENING AFRICA DATA TOOLS

Dr. Muhammed N. Ahmed (Spatial Platforms Technical Lead, CIFOR ICRAF) shared his work in **bridging the existing divide in data collection, monitoring and evaluation with the Regreening Africa App**. Dr. Ahmed highlighted the importance of **participatory approaches and citizen science** and demonstrated the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to build an evidence base around restoration projects, transforming previously paper-based tools to apps that are easily accessible and not heavily reliant on cellular data/WIFI connection. Using apps to collect data not only enables farming communities on the ground to be involved in the data collection, monitoring and evaluation process, but also enables project managers and other stakeholders to **access data on restoration practices in real time**. Regreening Africa's SPACIAL team has created a data reporting system that is available to everyone. Dr. Ahmed stressed that stakeholders can create better interventions using the tools such as the **Regreening Africa Dashboard** which captures all the data collected by the App.



Figure 10. Connecting science to decision makers and practitioners on the ground using the Regreening App and Dashboard



FORESIGHT ANALYSIS

Dr. Constance L. Neely (SHARED Lead, CIFOR-ICRAF) shared the recent work of the **AICCRA foresight experts**, who are increasingly using foresight analysis to help scientists and other stakeholders better **plan and prepare for uncertainty**. Using foresight analysis has proven to effectively help groups build upon evidence, take into account uncertainty and explore alternative futures. Dr. Neely provided an overview of the foresight framework (Figure 11) developed with Sabrina Chesterman (CIFOR-ICRAF) and the training work they had undertaken with CCARDESA and CORAF in Southern and Western Africa, respectively, with a focus on preparing for climate change impacts.

Foresight analysis enables stakeholders to become **comfortable with complexity** and uncertainty, work with creativity and agility, and consider transformative pathways. It is also key in **developing shared understanding**, shared vision, shared scenarios, and a shared transformative roadmap with a diverse group of stakeholders. While foresight analysis incorporates tools and processes, it is also about the **human dimension**, developing a new mindset, a new way of thinking about planning for the future and facilitating the emergence of innovated and richer ideas and planning approach. The foresight tools and processes enable **cohesion and respect between the diversity of voices** in a

room; it is transformative for the stakeholders in the way they listen from each other, learn from each other and work together towards a common vision.

Dr. Alice Ngouambe (Cameroon Youth Initiatives for Rural Development) shared her experience of applying foresight analysis. Dr. Ngouambe is an active member of the The West and Central African Council for Agricultural Research and Development (CORAF) Regional Foresight Community of Practice (CoP), who recently participated in the foresight training in Dakar, Senegal (October 2022). Dr. Ngouambe discussed how it is increasingly important for **foresight analysis to be mainstreamed in agricultural research and development** as a process for identifying uncertainty-informed transformative pathways. Such pathways are key to responsive research and development planning for climate change adaptation.

CORAF has named foresight analysis as a pillar of its programming and is supporting regional mainstreaming through a capacitated CoP of Expert Foresight Facilitators. The training of the Community of Practice of Expert Foresight Facilitators was designed and carried out based on a needs assessment on skills needed for foresight analysis and the identification of priority themes for its application.

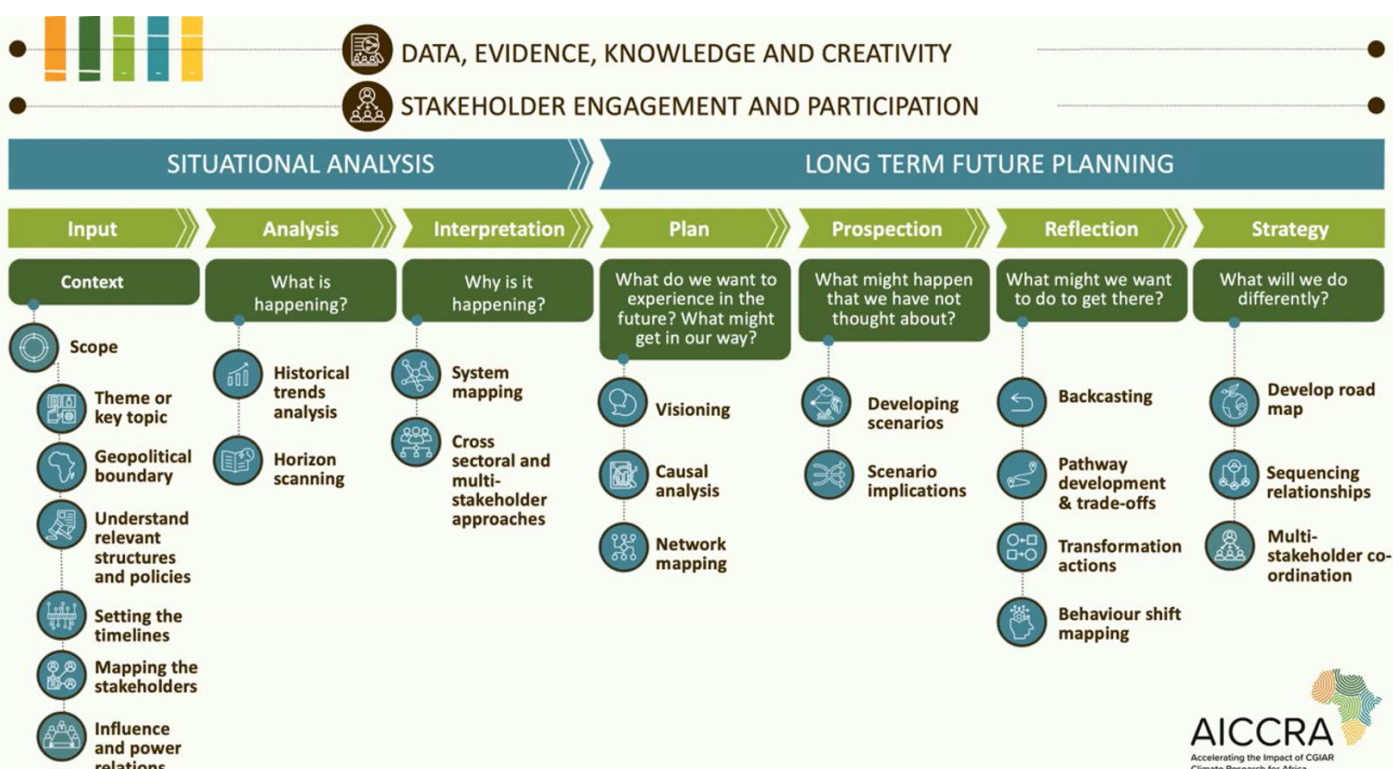


Figure 11. AICCRA Foresight Framework



BRIDGING THE DIVIDE FOR RESTORATION

Scaling nature-inspired landscape practices

Ms. Fiona Flintan (Senior Scientist on Natural Resources, Land Governance and Pastoralism, ILRI) opened the panel on bridging the divide for restoration: scaling nature-inspired landscape practices. Ms. Flintan shared lessons from communities in Tanzania that have come together to manage grazing lands through integrating **participatory rangeland management**. This is a process that helps to build capacity as land managers and strengthen policy, while conserving and improving natural landscapes and grazing practices, and has proven to be very successful in East Africa. ILRI is working on an approach to scale up participatory rangeland management in West Africa, particularly in Senegal and Mali.

Mr. Hamed Tchiboza (Programme Manager and Regreening Africa Project Coordinator for World Vision, Niger) presented Regreening Africa's

success in restoring almost 200 million ha of land through different methods and practices with a focus on **women and youth inclusion**. Mr. Tchiboza mentioned how Regreening Africa, in partnership with World Vision, has made youth welfare and ecosystem services a critical component of their work in Niger, particularly given the extremely high demand on wood in the country (almost 80% of the population rely on wood for energy). World Vision intend to reduce the pressure on wood while increasing production and enhancing tree-based value chains, generating **revenue for communities**. Mr. Tchiboza shared that World Vision is currently developing a strategy to support producers and farmers that includes **gender sensitive capacity building** for farmers, the youth and traditional leaders.

WORKING GROUP FEEDBACK

Reflections on solutions

In working groups, the participants reflected on **solutions to thematic challenges**:



scaling nature-inspired landscape practices;



science and information across different scales; and



bolstering institutional relationships.

Working groups were invited to reflect on their own experience and consider recommendations to accelerate impact in GGWI.



SCALING NATURE-INSPIRED LANDSCAPE APPROACHES

When it comes to scaling nature-inspired landscape approaches, one of the main issues is the sustainability of these projects, largely owing to the issue of **sustainable financing**. With results of nature-based solutions often slow, project financing timelines tend to fall short of the

timeframe required to achieve results. Trying to secure funding for a project where the results are not immediate is therefore challenging. A possible solution to this is **contextualising the strategy** to these projects, and **creating projects that are self-financing**.

Table 7. Discussion notes from Scaling Nature-Inspired Landscape Practices working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON SCALING NATURE INSPIRED LANDSCAPE PRACTICES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> People are not satisfied with negotiations and commitments coming out of COP27. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Sudan, there is a lack of government support and there are challenges to convert that picture. Good governance is important for implementing practices. Pilot work is good but after multiple failures, sustainability of projects depends on the donor. After the project ends, activity stops.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contextualised strategies are needed. The Sahel has a common reality but there remain differences between countries (e.g., in Mali the political context has changed a lot in the last 5–10 years). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to plan beyond the project life span (agroforestry and intercropping) activities and co-design of the best fit practices.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policies and security are an issue – again a contextualised strategy with an inclusive debate with a quality process and gender transformative approach among all stakeholders (inclusive of women and youth). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need a scientific framework that integrates traditional knowledge with scientific practices that improves sustainability of practices, leading to more research.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordination is important in Niger. Having met the GGW and all of the authorities, we have commitments and we do not know where we are in terms of achievements and data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Funding and financing need to be improved and enhanced. A national body can have a grants office for looking for and coordinating funding (big to small funding) and can link with private sector opportunities such as carbon markets. Carbon offset programmes with the GGW and private sector.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cost benefit analysis on FMNR shows \$5–15 spend while it is \$200–400 dollars on tree planting, and everyone is still looking at tree planting as a main solution. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data platforms in Sudan are poor. A good relationship with regional institutions helps to increase efficiency.



SCIENCE AND INFORMATION ACROSS DIFFERENT SCALES

When considering science and information across different scales, it is very important to **localise the findings of project work** – including translation into local languages. There needs to be increased investment in making science and

information more accessible. **Foresight analysis** was identified as a valuable tool and associated capacity development needs to be supported and upscaled. Additional reflections can be found in Table 8.

Table 8. Discussion notes from Science and Information Across Different Scales working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON SCIENCE AND INFORMATION ACROSS DIFFERENT SCALES	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In an example from Sudan, there is a gap between government and institutions in terms of research and delivery of research findings. It is important to find ways to link these. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foresight is a tool that can help with prioritising interventions which can be used as a decision-making tool.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GGW experience – country peer learning is being created more can be done. A recommendation is to create more opportunities for local level stakeholders to visit counterparts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Companion modelling – make evidence on return on investment for the GGW. Foresight analysis can be used. Scientists bring evidence and facilitate the discussion.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICT can be used for data dissemination for going the last mile. When building these tools, it is important to go the last mile and disseminate useable information. Update the community in their language with farmers and extension agents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How do we make evidence more accessible? To generate evidence needs more investment. The community of practice for modelling and foresight. Gaps can be filled with evidence. Look into Earth Futures and CIRAD.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information sharing and ICT can be used for sustainability as a learning practice. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In Ethiopia, integrating of science (CIFOR-ICRAF) with World Vision on practices and monitoring and evaluation is a practical approach (JRLM).
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape approach is necessary for multiple stakeholders, the integration of livestock and crops. Within an overarching agenda and joint research setting is needed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Data platforms in Sudan are poor. A good relationship with regional institutions helps to increase efficiency.



BOLSTERING INTER-INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS

A key solution reflected among the working group that focused on bolstering institutional relationships was the need for **coalitions to be developed between projects, programmes, and partners**, as well as enhanced collaboration to avoid the duplication of work and efficientise resource management. Linked to this, there needs

to be an increased effort towards **leveraging collaboration with private sector and international organisations**. At the institutional and partnership levels, one of the root causes of the dispersion of efforts is the profound lack of knowledge that actors and partners have of each other.

Table 9. Discussion notes from the Bolstering Inter-Institutional Relationships working group

DISCUSSION NOTES ON BOLSTERING INTER-INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the GGW, AU gives mandate to Regional Economic Commissions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leverage collaboration with private sector and international organisations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key tools – regional steering committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financing partners have a big role to play at all levels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regional level – need alliances we can leverage to talk about all aspects of initiatives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financing is a challenge because of the lack of synergy, coordination, and collaboration in financing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need alliances at the national level to tackle technical and political aspects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need greater representation of international and regional organisations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is a challenge of lack of coordination. Coalitions can be complementary and are important for avoiding duplication. 	



Closing remarks

Gilles Amadou Ouedraogo and Sarah Toumi (UNCCD, GGW Accelerator) closed the second series. In his closing remarks, Mr. Ouedraogo mentioned that the importance of **collaboration and coordination** cannot be stressed enough, as an effective means of upscaling and achieving GGWI goals. He urged participants to take stock of where and how change is happening, and identify the changemakers.

Building on from what Mr. Ouedraogo said, Ms. Toumi emphasised that what this event has demonstrated clearly is the need to **share current successes in restoration**. Ms. Toumi encouraged all participants to join coalitions of the GGWI in order to share their knowledge and experiences of the programmes in which they have been involved in, and learn from others' experiences, so as to reach restoration goals.

Summary and Conclusions

The first virtual event identified bottlenecks across a set of broad categories including funding mechanisms and alignment, institutional relationships and partnerships, policy and enabling environment, research and academia, promoting practice and capacity. The **lack of coordination** was underscored as an overarching bottleneck, which emerged as:

- a. **a lack of coordination among funding sources** and ensuring the funding resulted in impact on the ground;
- b. **a lack of coordination across science, policy and practice dimensions;**
- c. **a lack of coordination across sectors, institutions and stakeholders;**
- d. **a lack of coordination to ensure that experience and knowledge is exchanged** across countries and capacity is built on successful restoration practices and processes; and
- e. **a lack of policy coherency and political will** that inhibits success across scales.

The second virtual event built upon the bottlenecks raised during the first virtual event and featured successful case studies with an emphasis on 'bridging the divide' for restoration in terms of institutional relationships, science and information across scales, and scaling nature-inspired practices. These success cases for institutional relationships featured processes for:

- a. **bridging relationships across scientists, NGOs, policy makers and communities** to scale up land restoration at an impressive scale using adaptive management;
- b. **enhancing public-private partnerships;** and
- c. **creating cross-country advocacy dialogues** for building policy support for restoration practices.

The success cases for science and information across scales underscored the importance of ensuring that **data and evidence are shared in**

an accessible and easily used format that can be used by communities; how citizen science can be integrated into scientific data using **apps and dashboards** and subsequently influence practices on the ground and build databases for learning; and how **evidence and uncertainty can be brought together using foresight analysis** to explore alternative futures in a participatory process and to identify preferred futures for planning.

For scaling up nature-inspired restoration practices, an opportunity was taken to focus on practices beyond tree planting, such as **participatory and regenerative grazing management** and **farmer managed or assisted natural regeneration of trees**.

Discussions across these success cases reinforced the message that processes and practices that promote massive restoration will require coordination among a wide range of stakeholders and sectors at different scales. It will be critical to ensure that financial mechanisms support the necessary partnership building processes, evidence-based decision-making processes, the integration across the science-practice-policy interface and coordinated and robust knowledge sharing approaches, and a sustained commitment to land restoration actors who can make a difference on the ground.



Annex 1

Agenda for Series 1 and Series 2 Virtual Events

Series 1 – 25 October 2022		
TIME	ACTIVITY	LEAD
10.00–10.05	Introductions, Objectives, Principles of Engagement, Flow of Events	Facilitators (CIFOR-ICRAF): • Dr. Constance L. Neely • Ms. Sabrina Chesterman • Dr. Emilie Smith Dumont
10.06–10.15	Formal Open	Dr. Elvis Tangem, AU Focal Point for the Great Green Wall Initiative (5 min)
10.15–10.35	Stage Setting Panel: From your perspective, what do you see as critical barriers to be to achieve massive scaling and accelerate impacts of the Great Green Wall Initiative?	• Director Sawsan Abed Elrahim Sudan, Great Green National Agency, Sudan (3–5 min) • Dr. Robert Zougmore, West Africa Lead, AICCRA, Alliance of Biodiversity International and CIAT (3–5 min) • Mme Anna Daba Ndiaye, Project Manager Regreening Africa, World Vision, Senegal (3–5 min)
10.36–11.05	Overview of Study and Preliminary Results	• Ms. Sabrina Chesterman, CIFOR-ICRAF (3 min) • Professor Ganawa Eltaib, University of Khartoum, Sudan (5 min) • Dr. Gezahegn Ayele, Managing Director, AGRIBILCHA, Ethiopia (5 min) • Ms. Sasha Mentz Assessment, Senegal and Mali (5–7 min)
11.06–11.10	Introduction to Barriers and Root Causes Working Groups	Facilitators
11.10–11.40	Working Groups: • Funding mechanisms and alignment • Policy and enabling environment • Institutional relationships and partnerships • Research and academia • Promoting practice and capacity development	Facilitators for Discussion Groups • Mr. Patrick Worms • Dr. Florence Bernard • Dr. Emilie Smith Dumont • Ms. Sasha Mentz • Ms. Sabrina Chesterman • Dr. Constance Neely
11.40–11.50	Feedback	Facilitators and Groups
11.50–12.00	• Closing remarks • Next Event Reminder	Facilitators

Series 2 – 22 November 2022		
TIME	ACTIVITY	LEAD
10.00–10.10	Introduction, objectives, flow of event	• Dr. Constance Neely • Dr. Emilie Smith Dumont
10.11–10.26	Opening remarks	• Dr. Elvis Tangem (AU-GGW) • Dr. Abakar Mahamat Zougoulou (PAAGGW) • Dr. Director Gora Diop (GGW Agency Senegal)
10.27–10.47	Bridging the divide in restoration: Bolstering inter-institutional relationships	• Ms. Mieke Bourne (Regreening Africa, CIFOR-ICRAF) • Dr. Abdrahamane Wane (CIRAD-ILRI) • Dr. Mawa Karambiri (CIFOR-ICRAF)
10.47 – 11.07	Bridging the divide in restoration: Science and information at multiple scales	• Mr. Alex Benkenstein (SAIIA) • Dr. Muhammed Ahmed (CIFOR ICRAF) • Drs. Constance Neely/Alice Ngouambe (CAMYIRD)
11.07–11.17	Bridging the divide in restoration: Scaling nature-based landscape practices	• Ms. Fiona Flintan (ILRI) • Mr. Hamed Tchibozo (World Vision)
11.18–11.48	Break out groups	Facilitators : E. Smith Dumont, F. Bernard, S. Mentz, M. Karambiri, C. Neely, M. Bourne
11.48–11.55	Feedback	Facilitators
11.55–12.00	Closing Remarks	Sarah Toumi and Gilles Ouedraogo (UNCCD, GGW Accelerator)



ClimBeR: Building Systemic
Resilience Against Climate
Variability and Extremes

Alliance

