

THE RESTORATION INITIATIVE

Impacts of a multi-county Forest and Landscape Restoration Programme united in support of the Bonn Challenge

2 PROJECT BENEFICIARIES

BACKGROUND

Ecosystems around the world are faced with the serious threat of degradation: approximately 30 per cent of the Earth's agricultural land is degraded¹ and over half of the world's tropical forests have been destroyed since the 1960s, affecting 1 billion of the world's poor.² Ecosystem degradation altogether impacts 40 per cent of the world's population, or around 3.2 billion people, and amounts to 10 per cent of global annual economic output caused by the loss of ecosystem services.³

Since 2018, [The Restoration Initiative](#) (TRI) has united nine countries and three leading institutions (IUCN, FAO, and UNEP) to implement 10 projects across Africa and Asia, with support from the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The main goal is to overcome existing barriers to restoration and restore degraded forests and landscapes in support of the Bonn Challenge.

- 1 United Nations Environment Programme (2021). *Becoming #GenerationRestoration: Ecosystem restoration for people, nature and climate*. Available at: <https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/36251/ERPNC.pdf>
- 2 IUCN. "Deforestation and forest degradation," *IUCN Issues Brief* (2021), <https://iucn.org/resources/issues-brief/deforestation-and-forest-degradation#:~:text=Over%20half%20of%20the%20tropical,forests%20to%20provide%20essential%20services>
- 3 IPBES. (2019). *Summary for policymakers of the IPBES Assessment Report on Land Degradation and Restoration*. Available at: https://files.ipbes.net/ipbes-web-prod-public-files/spm_3bi_ldr_digital.pdf

Pugu Kazimzumbwi Nature Forest Reserve, Tanzania © FAO/ Caterina Marchetta



THE RESTORATION INITIATIVE

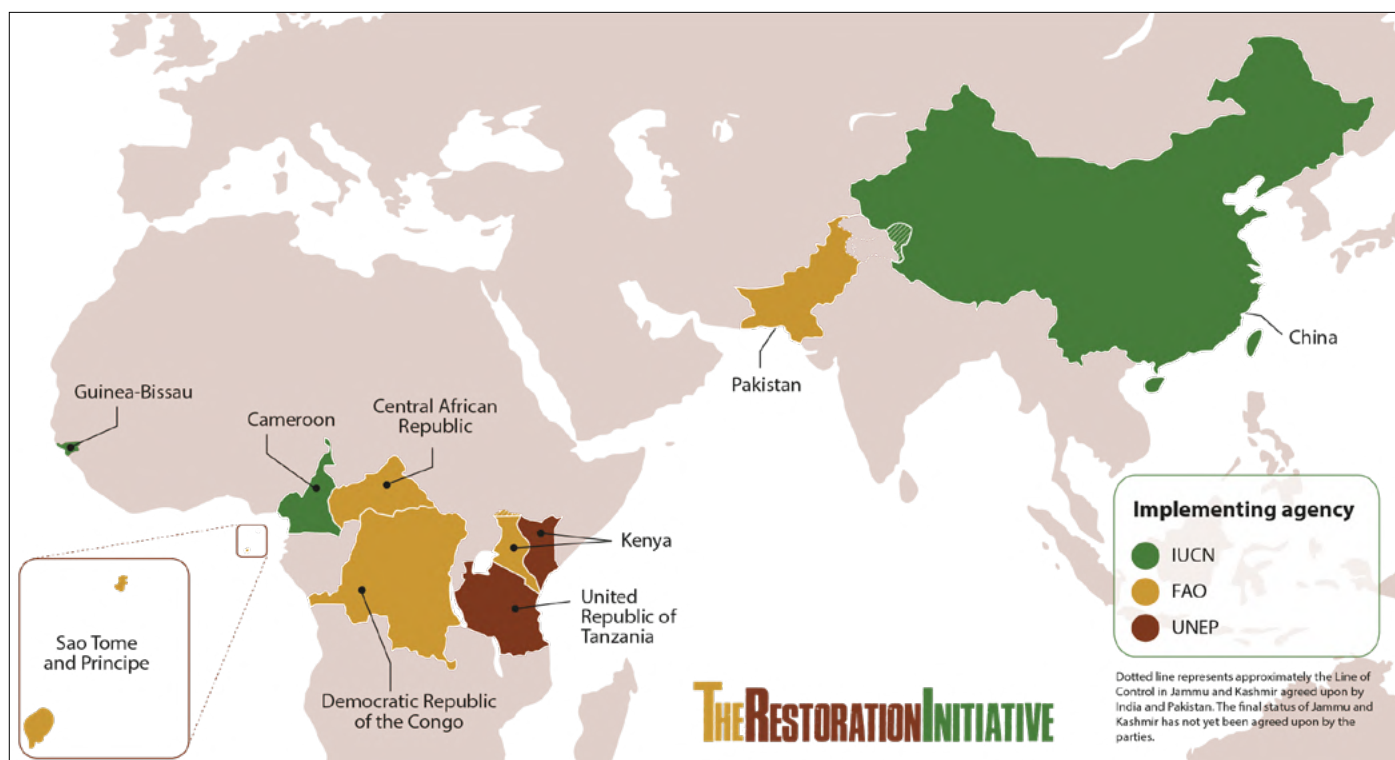


Figure 1: TRI participating countries. The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations. Adapted from: Freepik. 2021. Earth map linear composition. Cited on 7 October 2021. [www.freepik.com/free-vector/earth-map-linear-composition_9386670.htm#page=1&query=world%20-The Myanmar project has been suspended since November 2021 due to the political situation](https://www.freepik.com/free-vector/earth-map-linear-composition_9386670.htm#page=1&query=world%20-The%20Myanmar%20project%20has%20been%20suspended%20since%20November%202021%20due%20to%20the%20political%20situation).

To ensure long-term sustainability and ecological integrity, TRI restoration activities are guided by the Forest and Landscape Restoration (FLR) principles, developed by IUCN and further updated in 2018 by the Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration (GPFLR) (See Figure 2).⁴ Informed by on-the-ground implementation, these FLR principles, along with others tailored for specific ecosystems, helped shape the *Principles for Ecosystem Restoration to Guide the UN Decade 2021-2030*⁵ (hereafter UN Decade Principles). TRI is an outstanding example of large-scale ecosystem restoration that quickly aligned with the global restoration movement led by the UN Decade, as it integrates both UN Decade and FLR principles to restore, enhance, and sustain essential ecological and social functions in priority degraded and deforested landscapes, supporting long-term resilience.⁶

Underpinning these FLR principles is the **landscape approach**. This holistic perspective on restoration considers ecological connections, socioeconomic factors, and stakeholder alignment central to all restoration activities. Instead of focusing on individual sites, this

approach seeks to restore entire landscapes through a continuum of integrated activities across diverse, interacting land uses. This ensures long-term sustainability for the benefit of both nature and people. Additionally, inclusive governance that incorporates Indigenous Peoples and local communities (IPLCs) who own, govern, manage, and/or rely on these resources and territories is a crucial component of the landscape approach.⁷

A successful FLR intervention using the landscape approach would not only involve tree planting but also consider the needs of diverse stakeholders in the planning phase, develop restoration interventions for surrounding ecosystems beyond deforested areas, support local and national policy adoption to strengthen future FLR implementation, address economic drivers of degradation through activities such as income diversification, and prevent future deforestation. TRI provides actionable insights on how a landscape approach can enhance biodiversity, climate resilience, and sustainable development, reinforcing global restoration goals.

4 The Global Partnership on Forest and Landscape Restoration. (n.d.). 'Our Mission.' Available at: <https://www.forestlandscaperestoration.org>

5 UNEP, FAO, IUCN, Society for Ecological Restoration (SER). (2021). *Principles for Ecosystem Restoration to Guide the United Nations Decade 2021-2030*. Available at: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b234f058-9f77-4481-b870-a7fa2e7ad5f8/content>

6 TRI. (n.d.) 'Restoring Landscapes.' Available at: <https://www.therestorationinitiative.org>

7 Campese, J., Mansourian, S., Walters, G., Nuesiri, E., Hamzah, A., Brown, B., Kuzee, M. and Nakangu, B. (2022). *Enhancing the integration of governance in forest landscape restoration opportunities assessments. Analysis and recommendations*. Available at: <https://portals.iucn.org/library/sites/library/files/documents/2022-032-En.pdf>

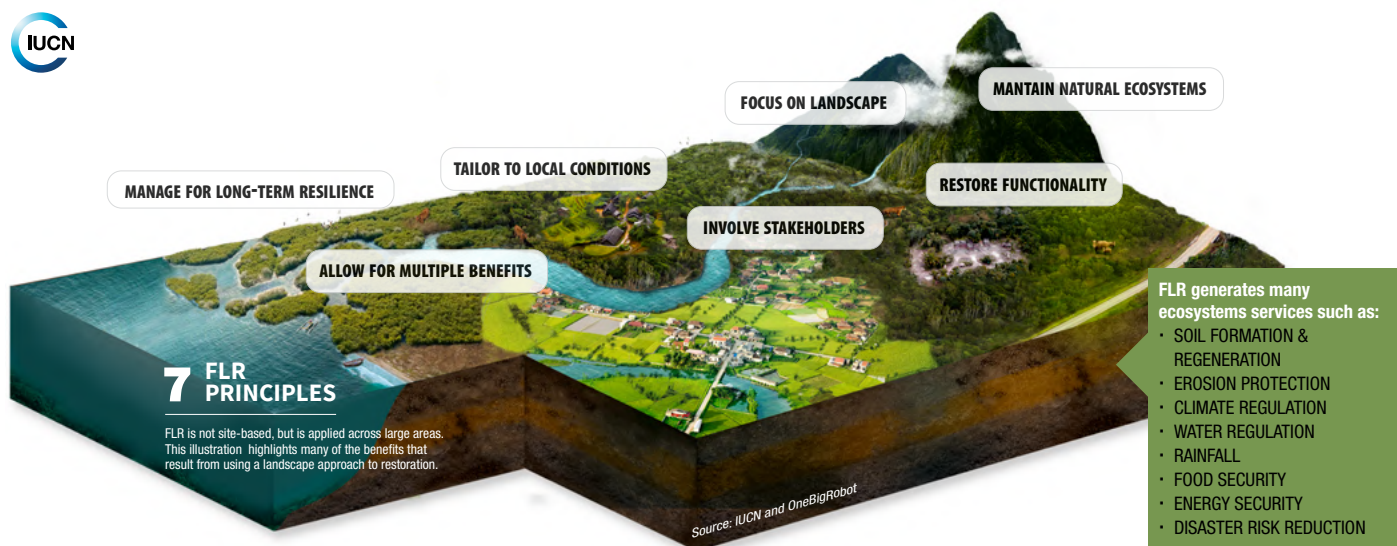


Figure 2: Principles of forest and landscape restoration (FLR). Source: IUCN and OneBigRobot

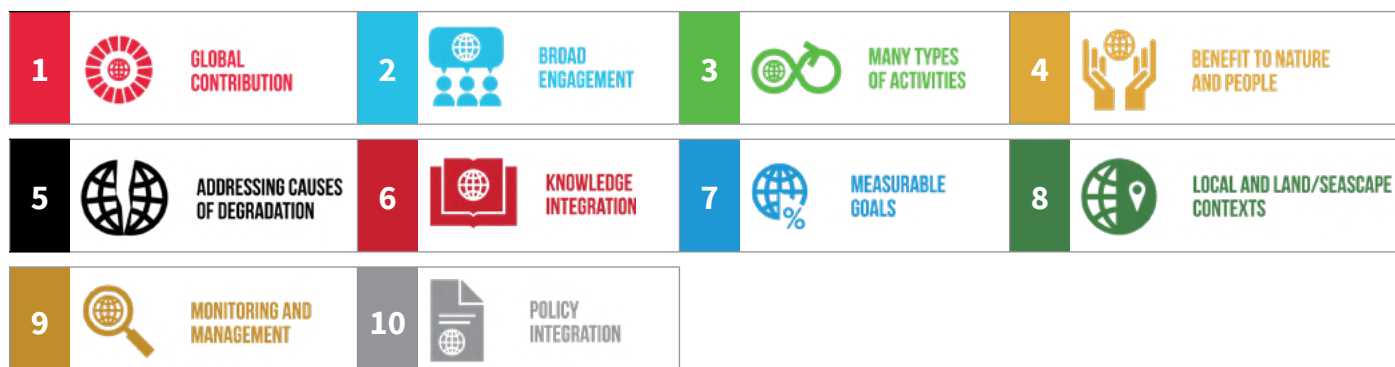
PURPOSE OF THIS BRIEF

This brief series highlights The Restoration Initiative’s multi-level, long-term impacts. For more than 5 years, TRI has implemented large-scale forest and landscape restoration, uniting nine countries across ten projects in Africa and Asia.⁸ Using the FLR and UN Decade Principles as a framework, this brief series explores TRI’s impacts.

This second brief outlines the impacts of TRI country-level projects on local stakeholders. By doing so,

it illustrates the practical application of FLR and UN Decade principles related to project beneficiaries. Although the ten principles of the UN Decade are complementary – meaning they should all be considered together when designing and implementing restoration interventions – this impact brief specifically focuses on Principles 2, 6, and 8. The key aspects of these principles are reflected in TRI’s work, as summarized in the boxes below and described in greater detail in the following section.

THE TEN PRINCIPLES OF THE UN DECADE OF ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION



8 Cameroon, Central African Republic, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea Bissau, Kenya, Pakistan, São Tomé and Príncipe, and Tanzania.



PRINCIPLE 2

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROMOTES INCLUSIVE AND PARTICIPATORY GOVERNANCE, SOCIAL FAIRNESS AND EQUITY FROM THE START AND THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

UN Decade Principle 2 highlights the need for inclusive and participatory governance and equity throughout restoration initiatives. This involves (among other things):

- All stakeholders, rights-holders, and particularly underrepresented groups being equitably and inclusively provided with **meaningful and accessible opportunities to actively engage** in ecosystem restoration;
- Encouraging **inclusive participation throughout the restoration process**, from planning to monitoring;
- Providing **equal access to information**;
- **Empowering under-represented groups**;
- **Prioritising free, prior, and informed consent**;
- Creating mechanisms for **benefit-sharing**;
- Fostering **tenure security**;
- Promoting **inclusive and transparent governance** with effective conflict-resolution mechanisms.



PRINCIPLE 6

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION INCORPORATES ALL TYPES OF KNOWLEDGE AND PROMOTES THEIR EXCHANGE AND INTEGRATION THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS

Principle 6 ensures ecosystem restoration incorporates all types of knowledge, including Indigenous, traditional, local, and scientific ways of knowing, and promotes knowledge exchange and capacity building. This involves (among other things):

- **Consensual decision-making** throughout the ecosystem restoration process and ensuring FPIC in the incorporation of Indigenous, traditional and local knowledge in restoration;
- Enabling **full participation of stakeholders** and rights-holders;
- **Capacity-building** focused on promoting **mutual learning**;
- **Knowledge-sharing** among stakeholders and communities of practice at local, national and global levels;
- Systematically documenting and sharing knowledge regarding effective practices and innovative approaches in ecosystem restoration;
- **Identifying knowledge gaps** to prioritise strategic research and capacity-development;
- **Developing platforms and networks** for documenting, integrating, and sharing knowledge and information;
- **Creating widely available, easily accessible, and culturally appropriate** communication and dissemination channels.



PRINCIPLE 8

ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION IS TAILORED TO THE LOCAL ECOLOGICAL, CULTURAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXTS, WHILE CONSIDERING THE LARGER LANDSCAPE OR SEASCAPE

Principle 8 ensures ecosystem restoration considers the ecological, cultural, and socio-economic contexts throughout the process. This involves (among other things):

- **Aligning project objectives and goals with local needs**;
- **Addressing land- and seascape-level factors**;
- **Using spatial planning** processes to facilitate the tailoring of projects, programmes, and initiatives to the larger landscape, seascape, or ecoregion.

Source: <https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/b234f058-9f77-4481-b870-a7fa2e7ad5f8/content>

Since TRI's inception in 2018 to June 2024, 422,497 individuals in project countries have received targeted support from TRI project activities and used specific resources maintained or enhanced through TRI activities. TRI has established and strengthened 55 cross-sectoral planning mechanisms and frameworks incorporating and supporting restoration at national

and sub-national levels in TRI project countries. These numbers will likely increase as projects that began at different times continue to progress toward their targets, with many still on track to meet their goals by their respective end dates.⁹ The case studies in this brief showcase how TRI has achieved these impacts on both local and national levels.

WHAT ARE THE SOCIAL IMPACTS OF TRI?

The local context in TRI's projects across the ten countries varied based on the social development and environmental challenges encountered by each community. Factors included the community's relationship with the landscape, their approach to resource management, the number of affected stakeholders in the TRI project area (which influences the number of project beneficiaries), local capacity for engaging in ecological restoration, and the expectations and needs that the communities had regarding the objectives and goals of the TRI project. Despite these differences, there were some common priorities in each TRI project. These included building local capacity and ensuring the participation of multi-sector stakeholders across different sectors throughout the TRI project process, balancing the economic security and the well-being of communities with biodiversity restoration, and empowering underrepresented groups in restoration decision-making and implementation, particularly women, Indigenous Peoples, and youth.

This section outlines how TRI supported social development outcomes and engaged with local stakeholders. It begins by discussing the number of project beneficiaries and the impact of TRI projects, highlighting the outcomes and effects on those involved. It then examines the practical implementation of the Decade and FLR principles concerning project beneficiaries, demonstrating how TRI achieved these outcomes and aligned its efforts with UN Decade Principles 2, 6, and 8. The section also explores TRI's impact on developing cross-sector planning mechanisms, focusing on the outcomes of its activities in fostering cross-sector coordination groups. Finally, it addresses the practical application of the Decade and FLR principles in these mechanisms, showcasing TRI's success in their implementation and alignment with Principles 2, 6, and 8.



Reforestation in Bayanga area CAR © FAO/Benjamin DeRidder

The Number of Project Beneficiaries

Since its inception, TRI has measured progress on the number of project beneficiaries. This measurement refers to the number of individuals receiving targeted support from TRI project activities and/or using the specific resources the project maintains or enhances. Targeted support is defined as intentional and direct assistance provided by the project to individuals who know they are receiving this support and/or are actively using the designated resources. Support may include,

⁹ The respective end dates of the TRI child projects are as follows: Cameroon (July 2024), Central African Republic (December 2025), China (December 2023), Democratic Republic of Congo (August 2024), Global Support Project (December 2024), Guinea Bissau (November 2024), Kenya ASAL (March 2025), Kenya Tana Delta (June 2025), Pakistan (December 2024), Sao Tome and Principe (May 2025), Tanzania (December 2026).

but is not limited to, training and capacity building, in-kind support, financial grants, knowledge sharing, and employment (including short-term positions). Beneficiaries are reported as individuals. In some cases, beneficiaries can be reported as households; however, this only applies when the implemented activities benefit the entire household directly.¹⁰ For most projects, TRI disaggregates this reporting by sex to better understand how activities respond to gender dynamics.¹¹ The number of project beneficiaries is measured against end-of-project targets, which vary according to the length and nature of the project.

From 2018 to June 2024, 422,497 individuals have received targeted support from TRI project activities and/ or used specific resources maintained or enhanced through TRI activities. Countries achieved these impacts through effective collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and local communities while supporting sustainable livelihoods.

As shown in Figure 3, as of June 2024 and independent of the projects' start and end date, 6 of the 10 TRI projects have exceeded their end-of-project beneficiary targets: Cameroon, China, Guinea Bissau, Kenya (Tana Delta and Arid and Semi-Arid Lands (ASAL) projects), and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

Cameroon surpassed its target by more than double. It benefited 5,009 individuals (4,087 men and 922 women), exceeding its target of 2,000 people through trainings on bamboo and non-timber forestry products (NTFP) agroforestry, value chains, and plantation establishment. Likewise, TRI in China directly benefited 63,000 individuals from the project, exceeding the target of 35,000. The Kenya Tana Delta project had the highest number of beneficiaries, totalling 85,464. This included support for crop and livestock farmers, fishers, beekeepers, agroforesters, and individuals in the tourism industry.

The DRC was also successful in its support, reaching 57,086 beneficiaries against a target of 30,000. Significantly, the DRC was the only project with gender disaggregate data that has benefited more women than men – 33,964 women (59% of the total beneficiaries) compared to 22,615 men and 507 youth, reflecting its targeted support for women. Other country projects that have taken a gender-responsive approach have also shown significant results. For instance, São Tomé and Príncipe benefited 8,089 women, Guinea-Bissau supported 4,979 women, and China benefited 4,490 women. Additionally, Pakistan supported 2,143 women, the Central African Republic (CAR) supported 1,684 women, and Cameroon assisted 922 women.



CAR nursery in Bayanga area managed by partner WWF © FAO/Benjamin DeRidder

10 In the latest progress data from June 2024 Kenya Tana Delta reported in terms of households. Household reporting is multiplied by four to compare to individual project beneficiary reporting.

11 In some case gender disaggregated data is not reported. In the latest progress data from June 2024, gender disaggregated data was also not complete for China, Kenya ASAL and Kenya Tana Delta.

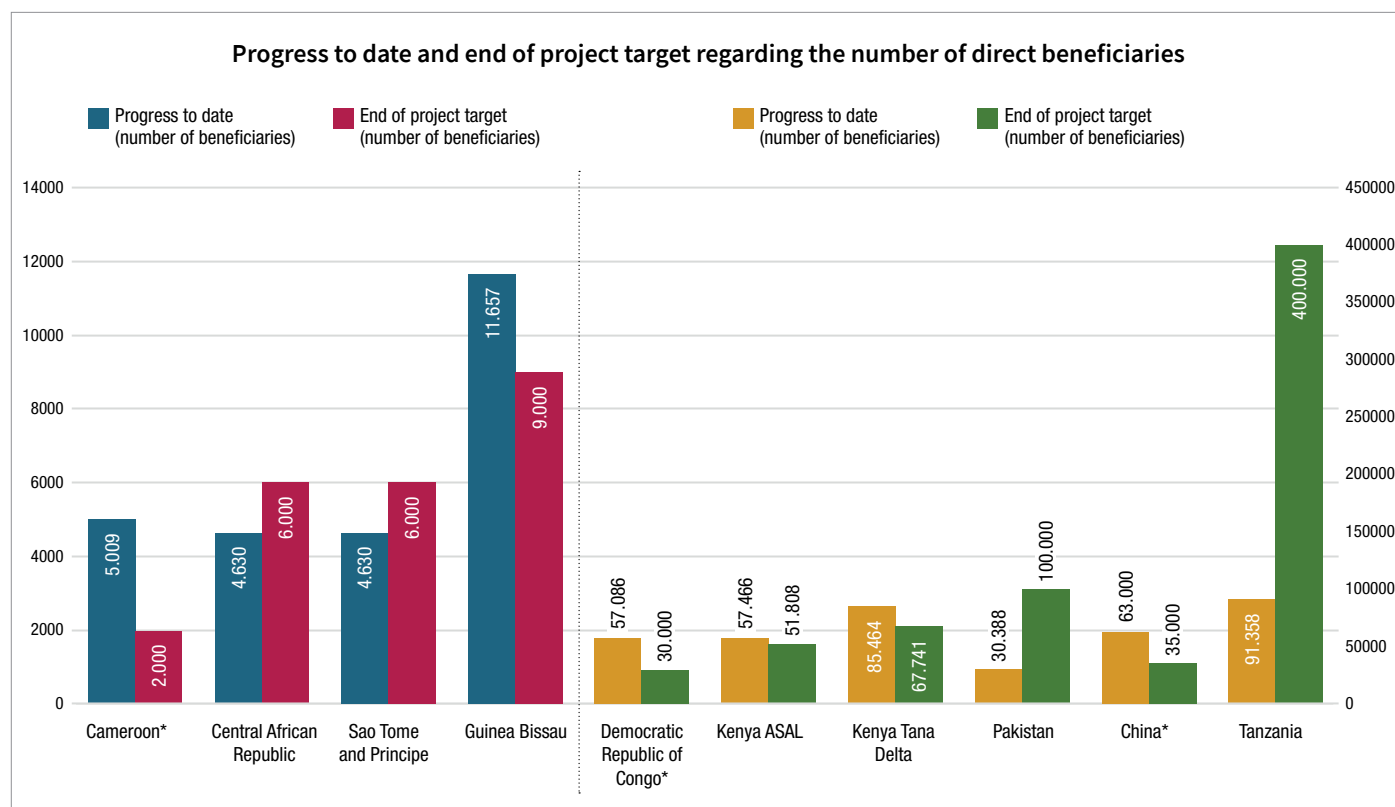


Figure 3: Progress to date and end of project target regarding the number of direct beneficiaries
*Represents that the country project has been completed.

| TRI COUNTRY PROJECT | PROGRESS TO DATE (NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES) | END OF PROJECT TARGET (NUMBER OF BENEFICIARIES) |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Cameroon* | 5,009 | 2,000 |
| Central African Republic | 4,630 | 6,000 |
| China* | 63,000 | 35,000 |
| Democratic Republic of Congo* | 57,086 | 30,000 |
| Guinea Bissau | 11,657 | 9,000 |
| Kenya ASAL | 57,466 | 51,808 |
| Kenya Tana Delta | 85,464 | 67,741 |
| Pakistan | 30,388 | 100,000 |
| Sao Tome and Principe | 4,630 | 6,000 |
| Tanzania | 91,358 | 400,000 |
| TOTAL | 325,224 | 707,549 |

Table 1: End of project targets and progress to date of regarding number of project beneficiaries for each TRI country project.
* Represents that the country project has been completed.

Practical implementation of the Decade and FLR principles related to project beneficiaries

A key component of the support provided to project beneficiaries in TRI projects is capacity-building and training that enables the community to play a key role in forest landscape decision-making and restoration, particularly in empowering underrepresented groups

(Principles 2 and 6). In the DRC, for example, TRI provided support for individuals through Dimitra Clubs, which are voluntary and informal groups for women, men, and youth. These clubs allow members to discuss shared challenges and find collective solutions. TRI in DRC used Dimitra Clubs to promote knowledge exchange and training in sustainable land management. A particular focus of the TRI project was to empower local women through targeted capacity-building pro-



Iringa, Tanzania © IUCN

grammes in restoration and developing income-generating activities.¹² This brief's case study provides more information on the DRC project. In Cameroon, the TRI project has trained local communities on establishing and managing nurseries and plantations, planning and implementing agroforestry systems, and transporting seedlings. The project also offers direct support by supplying seedlings and other necessary materials. As a result of this training, local residents are empowered to take a leading role in restoration efforts.

TRI projects have been designed to enhance sustainable livelihood, pursue a fair and equitable distribution of benefits and responsibilities, and align project outcomes with local needs and concerns (Principles 2 and 8). In Guinea-Bissau, for example, during the project year 2023-2024, 1,709 individuals benefited from TRI initiatives aimed at diversifying income sources. For example, TRI supported 728 men and 143 women in rice production, improving food security for households involved in the project and enabling them to sell surplus produce. This brief's case study provides more information on the Guinea-Bissau project.

Cross-Sectoral Coordination Mechanisms

TRI also monitors the number of cross-sectoral planning mechanisms and/or frameworks incorporating and supporting restoration established or strengthened at national and sub-national levels in TRI countries. This indicator measures the number of government-led cross-sector coordination groups that meet regularly to promote policy alignment and coherence for FLR. These groups ideally include representatives from the parliament, government agencies, civil society organisations (CSOs), and donors. Coordination activities can range from information sharing to developing shared action plans and policies. Such government-led mechanisms are essential for ensuring the sustainability of FLR initiatives beyond the specific projects' duration. Reporting includes tracking the number of government-led or government-supported cross-sector meetings, dialogues, and information-sharing sessions organised to facilitate the coordination and promotion of restoration activities at national and sub-national levels and the number of participating organisations.

¹² 'Rural Women Transform Communities through Forest and Landscape Restoration in DRC.' The Restoration Initiative. (May 2024). Available at: <https://iucn.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/tri-newsletter-aug-to-may-2024.pdf>

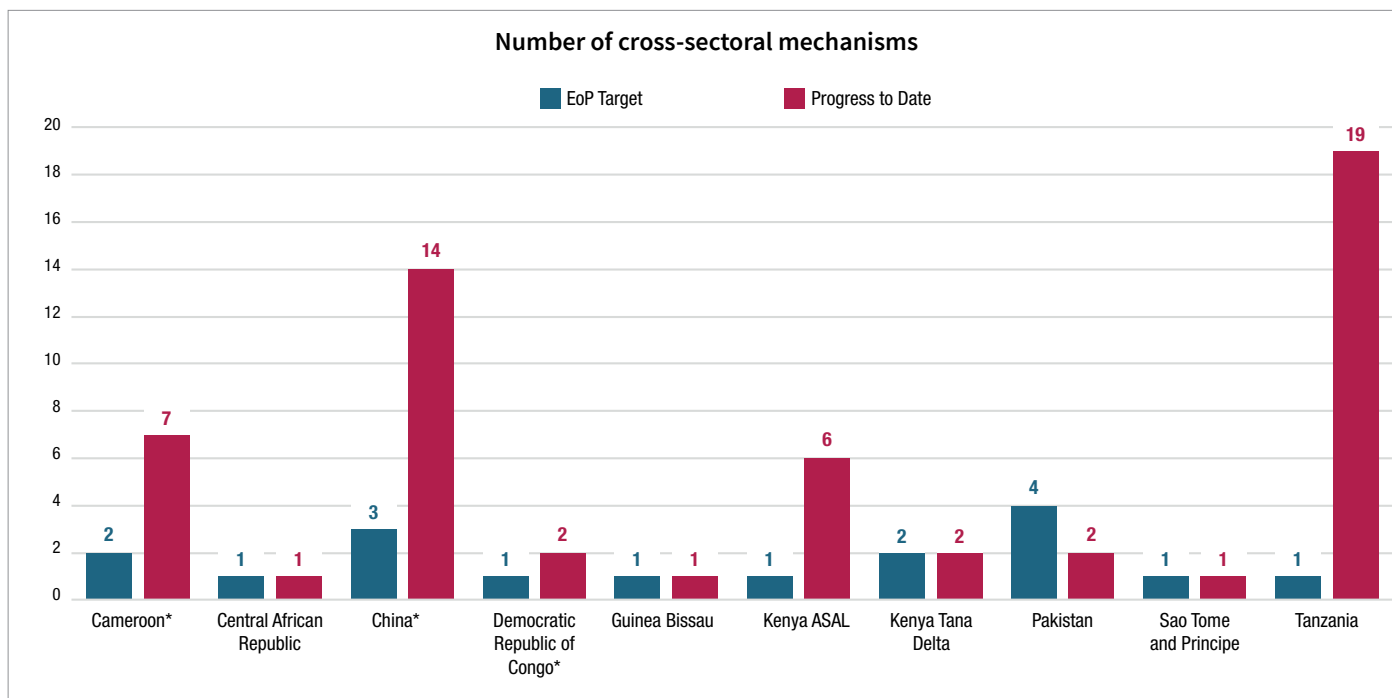


Figure 4. Child project targets and progress to date on establishment/strengthening of cross-sectoral planning mechanisms and/or frameworks on FLR

TRI has established and/or strengthened 55 cross-sectoral planning mechanisms and/or frameworks incorporating and supporting restoration at national and sub-national levels in TRI countries. These cross-sectoral mechanisms use participatory approaches that enable affected stakeholders to engage in the project activities actively.

As of June 2024, independent of start and end date, 9 of the 10 TRI projects have met or exceeded their targets for establishing or strengthening cross-sectoral mechanisms on forest and landscape restoration. Significant progress has been made with the TRI project in China, which has surpassed its target by more than four times. As part of this initiative, FLR planning groups were established in Bije City and Fengning County, involving over ten sectors. Likewise, the TRI project in Tanzania has made impressive progress, surpassing its target 19 times. Progress includes ten cross-sectoral Sustainable Landscape Restoration (SLR) working groups to help the country achieve its restoration goals. These groups consist of 1 National SLR Working Group, 2 Basin SLR Working Groups, and 7 District SLR Working Groups. Tanzania project has also set up seven cross-sectoral district project implementation teams to coordinate the execution of project activities at the local level.

TRI projects utilised cross-sectoral planning mechanisms to identify the interests and priorities of various sectors. They created forums for these different stakeholders to negotiate, develop policies, and integrate restoration efforts into their agendas.

Practical implementation of the Decade and FLR principles related to cross-sectoral planning mechanisms

TRI have developed cross-sectoral mechanisms in all project countries that enable a range of stakeholders to engage actively in the restoration process and enhance the inclusiveness and effectiveness of restoration initiatives (Principle 2). In Tanzania, for example, the TRI project established landscape-level multi-stakeholder platforms to address competing land use interests and enhance local decision-making and implementation of sustainable landscape restoration initiatives that contribute to Tanzania’s efforts to support biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and local livelihoods.

Likewise, intersectoral mechanisms developed through TRI projects created platforms and networks for documenting, integrating, and sharing knowledge and information (Principle 6). In the Kenya ASAL project, TRI supported the creation of a national FLR advisory committee, steering committee, and technical committee complemented by county environmental committees at the landscape and county level. These committees have supported FLR planning, resource mobilisation, implementation, and monitoring. TRI in Kenya ASAL has also strengthened the capacity of some of the mechanisms through mutual learning (Principle 6). For example, TRI strengthened the three environment committees at the county level, expanding their knowledge of the Environmental Management and Coordination Act 2015 and their capacity to identify and effectively address restoration issues.

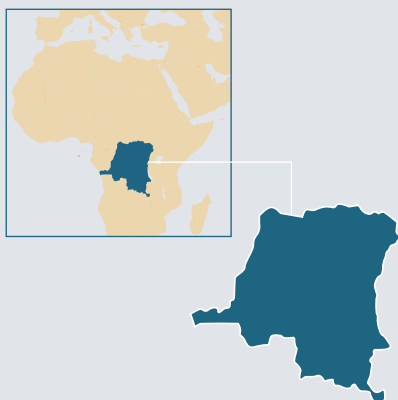
HOW DID TRI ACHIEVE THESE IMPACTS?

TRI adopts a holistic approach to restoration, tailoring strategies to local contexts, combining modern science with traditional knowledge, and ensuring interventions benefit ecosystems and local communities, particularly those underrepresented in restoration planning and implementation. By tackling the root causes of degradation while maintaining sustainable local livelihoods, TRI aims to foster long-term environmental and social resilience, benefiting nature and people. Beneficiaries are essential to the success of the project. They are individuals or groups who receive targeted support such as training, capacity building, in-kind assistance, financial grants, knowledge sharing, and employment opportunities. The effects of this support can extend well beyond the project's

completion, ensuring that FLR provides lasting benefits for the community. Likewise, cross-sectoral mechanisms ensure long-lasting impacts by creating policy alignment and coherence of policies, plans, legislation and regulation, coordination and diverse stakeholder engagement.

These three case studies – from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Guinea-Bissau, and Tanzania – highlight TRI's approaches to empowering women and Indigenous Peoples in their projects. Additionally, they show how TRI projects have ensured communities economically benefit from restoration initiatives and the development of strong cross-sectoral mechanisms that utilise inclusive and participatory approaches.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)



Nursery establishment with local communities in South Kivu © FAO/ Benjamin DeRidder

OUTCOMES

The TRI project in the Democratic Republic of Congo focused on protecting the cultural heritage of the Congolese Pygmies, incorporating their Indigenous knowledge into its restoration activities, engaging communities through culturally relevant platforms, and enhancing the sustainable livelihoods of local communities alongside restoration efforts in the Kabaré and Ngweshe Chiefdoms of the South Kivu region. This approach has proven to be highly effective. As of June 2024, **3,145 hectares of land are under improved management, and 2,163 hectares are undergoing restoration, benefiting 57,086 individuals.**

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INTERVENTIONS

1. Tailoring stakeholder engagement and interventions to the local context

TRI in the DRC has actively engaged community members through culturally relevant platforms such as Dimitra Clubs and Agro-Pastoralist Field Schools (APFS), which are **tailored to the local context (Principle 8)**. Through these platforms, TRI expands access to education and raises awareness about the importance of restoring forested areas and natural landscapes. In total, 90 Dimitra Clubs have been supported by the project. The initiative also provides essential support for the effective implementation of restoration practices. TRI has backed 65 micro-restoration projects, which were financed and executed in the two chiefdoms, with beneficiaries contributing 12% of the total.

2. Upholding Indigenous ways of life and integrating Indigenous knowledge

Land degradation in the Kabaré and Ngweshe Chiefdoms undermines the way of life and traditional practices of the Congolese Pygmies, who are among Central Africa's oldest Indigenous Peoples. TRI recognised the importance of sustaining Pygmies' way of life and integrating their knowl-

edge as essential guardians of biodiversity in the project's restoration efforts. TRI protected their traditional way of life, including hunting, trading bushmeat, and collecting non-timber forest products (NTFPs). These practices typically face increasing scrutiny due to environmental concerns and declining animal populations. To provide sustainable alternatives, the project distributed tools like rakes, hoes, and watering cans, along with seeds for various vegetables, to 424 Pygmies in villages such as Muyange and Buyungule to establish vegetable gardens for food supply diversification. Additionally, the project set up honeybee hives, promoted fruit tree planting, and supported the breeding of rabbits to offer new sources of lean meat.

3. Addressing socioeconomic disparities

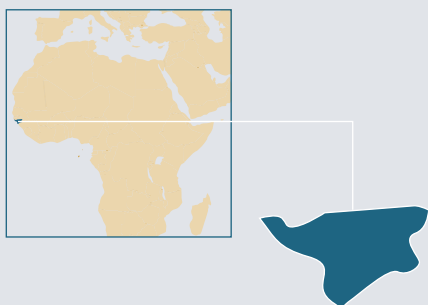
The TRI project in the DRC also addressed socioeconomic disparities between communities. On average, Pygmy individuals earn about USD 0.12 per day, while the Congolese Bantu communities earn around USD 0.50.¹³ Drawing on their expertise in forest stewardship, the TRI project compensated Pygmy communities for collecting and propagating native tree seedlings at five nursery sites.



Nursery establishment with local communities in South Kivu © FAO/Benjamin DeRidder

13 'The Restoration Initiative: A Democratic Republic of the Congo story.' The Restoration Initiative. (5 December 2024). Available at: <https://iucn.org/story/202212/restoration-initiative-democratic-republic-congo-story>

GUINEA-BISSAU



Transplanting propagules in Elalab, Guinea Bissau © IUCN/IBAP

OUTCOMES

TRI has adopted a **gender-responsive, participatory, and cross-sector approach** to restoring and rehabilitating degraded mangroves in Guinea-Bissau, aligning with principles of inclusive governance and equity (**Principle 2**). TRI in Guinea-Bissau supports ten villages across the Cacheu, Quinara, and Tombali regions. Most of them are located in mangrove forests, which cover 9% of the country – the highest proportion in the world.¹⁴ Since 1940, the total area of mangroves has declined by 32%, primarily due to conversion from agriculture, especially rice cultivation, and coastal development.¹⁵ These mangroves provide essential benefits for local communities, from the protection of storm surges and nurseries for wildlife and natural resources needed to sustain local livelihoods. As of June 2024, 2,533 ha of land is under restoration, and 1,600 ha is under improved management. The project has also **benefited 11,656 individuals, exceeding its end-of-project target (9,000) by almost 30%**. The project sought solutions that were led by and for local women, **aligning with local needs (Principle 8) and benefiting 4,979 women to date**. These benefits included easing unpaid domestic burdens disproportionately experienced by women and creating income-generating activities.

The project has benefited 11,656 individuals, exceeding its end-of-project target (9,000) by almost 30%

The TRI project in Guinea-Bissau also developed **strong cross-sectoral** mechanisms to ensure policy coherence in the mangrove strategy and improve restoration interventions' inclusiveness, long-term sustainability, and effectiveness.

INTERVENTIONS

1. Ensured local participation in restoration initiatives

The TRI project team worked closely with local community members to identify rice fields that could be rehabilitated to enhance food security and support sustainable livelihoods. They also collaboratively pinpointed fields that could be restored to mangrove ecosystems. The team reinforces dikes and improves hydraulic management to rehabilitate the rice fields. Meanwhile, mangroves are restored naturally by flattening the dikes in abandoned rice fields.

¹⁴ 'The Restoration Initiative: A Guinea-Bissau Journey.' The Restoration Initiative. (2024). Available at: https://therestorationinitiative.org/infographics/TRI_Infographic_Guinea-Bissau_FA.pdf

¹⁵ Ibid.

2. Adopted a gender-responsive approach

The TRI project team recognised the crucial role of women in the ten villages across the Cacheu, Quinara, and Tombali regions. Most local women manage household responsibilities, which include essential resource management activities such as transplanting seedlings in rice fields and harvesting and threshing grain. They also spend a significant amount of time fetching fresh water, often requiring a 5—to 6-hour round trip using a dugout canoe. Additionally, women collect dead wood from mangrove forests and tend to gardens for food crops.

To support these women, the TRI project teams focused on reducing their domestic workload and the pressure on natural resources. They developed women-led income-generating activities, including horticulture, solar salt farms, oyster farming, and vegetable gardens. By introducing

improved clay stoves and enhancing solar salt production, the project helped decrease the demand for firewood, thus reducing the time women spend collecting fuelwood and cooking salt. Likewise, installing six rice huskers alleviated the labour of pounding rice, while motorised dugout canoes made it easier for women to access drinking water and local markets.

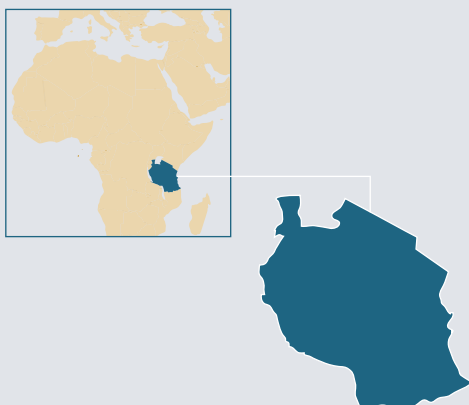
3. Creation of cross-sectoral mechanisms

The TRI project in Guinea-Bissau created the National Platform for Mangrove Restoration (PLAN-TA), which included both national and international partners involved in mangrove ecosystems, such as the Institute for Biodiversity and Protected Areas, the Directorate General for Forest and Fauna, and the Ministry of Agriculture. Members of PLAN-TA contributed valuable feedback and technical insights to inform the national mangrove strategies and strengthen their effectiveness.



Women in row canoe, in Elalab, Guinea Bissau © IUCN/IBAP

TANZANIA



Iringa District, Tanzania © IUCN

OUTCOMES

TRI's project in the United Republic of Tanzania developed new frameworks that promote a **more integrated approach** to bring together stakeholders and different sectoral ministries, and the private sector (**Principle 2**). The project created nineteen cross-sectoral planning mechanisms at differing governance levels. Through these mechanisms, the TRI project was also to **address local concerns** and cross-cutting issues such as good governance, resource mobilisation, and gender in their restoration efforts (**Principle 8**).

INTERVENTIONS

1. Creation of cross-sectoral planning mechanisms at different levels

Tanzania faces competing and conflicting conservation and socio-economic priorities. Therefore, enhancing the national enabling environment, including improving policies and frameworks for sustainable landscape restoration, was critical. To do this, the TRI project in Tanzania created robust cross-sectoral planning mechanisms to facilitate collaboration among government departments, ensuring policy and framework coherency while promoting long-term sustainability and resilience in landscape restoration efforts. TRI project in Tanzania has made impressive progress in this regard, surpassing its target 19 times.

The project created nineteen cross-sectoral planning mechanisms at differing governance levels.

TRI in Tanzania established a National Working Group to integrate various sectors and guide the implementation of Sustainable Landscape Restoration (SLR) programmes. This is one of 10 cross-sectoral SLR working groups formed to help the country achieve its restoration goals. In addition to the National Working Group, 2 Basin SLR Working Groups are focused on the Great Ruaha and Lake Rukwa basins and 7 District SLR Working Groups. The Tanzania project set up seven cross-sectoral district project implementation teams to coordinate the execution of activities at the local level. TRI Tanzania has also created multi-stakeholder platforms at the landscape level to address competing land use interests. These initiatives aim to improve decision-making and support implementing SLR efforts that enhance Tanzania's biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and local livelihoods.



Community member in São Tome and Príncipe at one of the nurseries established by TRI © FAO

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