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Global Landscapes Forum



Rooted in restoration

Youth-led transformative change for regreening Africa

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Acknowledgement

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For a detailed list of all contributors and groups, please see at the beginning and end of the document.



Glossary

CBD: Convention on Biological Diversity

CIFOR-ICRAF: Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry

FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

FPIC: Free, Prior, and Informed Consent

GLF: Global Landscapes Forum

GLFx: Global Landscapes Forum community-led chapters

GYBN: Global Youth Biodiversity Network

IFSA: International Forestry Students Association

IMFN: International Model Forest Network

IUFRO: International Union of Forestry Research Organisations

NBSAPs: National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans

NDC: Nationally Determined Contributions

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

UNCCD: United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification

UNFCCC: United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

WUR: Wageningen University and Research

Y4N: Youth4Nature

YIL: Youth in Landscapes Initiative

YPARD: Young Professionals for Agricultural Development

Disclaimer

All views captured are freely shared by individuals but do not as such reflect the official position or endorsement of the GLF, Regreening Africa program or its funders.

Report overview

Currently, African landscapes are being degraded at alarming rates. Two-thirds of the continent has been degraded by expanding agriculture frontiers, foreign market pressures, deforestation, and the climate crisis. In an attempt to address this worrying scenario, restoration efforts can be found across the continent, however, many frameworks to restore African landscapes are created and disseminated by those who don't live on these territories. Often, vertical approaches to restoration and conservation in the continent are consolidated without considering the knowledge of local communities, including youth, Indigenous peoples, and other minorities. Despite this, many youth and community-led efforts are successfully contributing to the efforts of regreening the continent.

This report synthesizes the shared experiences, challenges, and solutions suggested by several dozen young landscape practitioners and experts across Africa who participated in a series of consultations centered on the restoration of African ecosystems.

Co-written by several experts in the field, this report covers gaps and solutions across policy, finance, capacity building, and communication to show how landscape restoration can be scaled for long-term impact on people and the planet.

The report identifies 4 opportunities for transformative change:



Finance: create flexible financing and resources for community-led restoration.



Policy: commit to a paradigm shift, ensuring youth and excluded groups are meaningfully represented in decision-making.



Capacity development: support the capacity of young experts and restoration practitioners across Africa.



Communications: use clear, culturally appropriate methods and platforms to co-create and communicate about restoration.



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What is Regreening Africa?

Regreening Africa is a recognized [world restoration flagship](#) of the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, working on large-scale restoration to manage one million hectares of land in Africa sustainably. The program is currently working on reversing land degradation through implementing agroforestry in Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, and Somalia. Between 2017 and 2023, Regreening Africa's first stage of restoration focused on research, policy, and implementing locally adapted agroforestry techniques to over 600,000 households. Regreening Africa emphasizes the need for meaningful involvement of all stakeholders in transformative restoration work. As such, the second stage of impact seeks to center the voices and unified action of young people and other systemically silenced, excluded, and marginalized groups.



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A consultation series on youth-led ecosystem restoration in Africa

About 65 percent of Africa's agricultural land is degraded, a staggering number that impacts the health of landscapes and their communities. Despite this, private and public sectors continuously invest in the activities that are driving this devastation, such as mining, industrial agrarian expansion, and other forms of extractivism, feeding an economic system prioritizing profit over people and the planet. Even as entire economic systems are consolidated around the continuous extraction of natural resources, most often for foreign markets, many youth and locally-led initiatives are sprouting throughout the continent in hopes of restoring these degraded lands. Challenges across social, political, and financial systems often delay or halt restoration efforts from grassroots and local communities, youth-led initiatives, and ambitious policymakers. This is also true of other innovations championed by civil society actors concerned with social inclusion and environmental sustainability. While rhetoric for a greener future for Africa is widespread, there is a disproportionate focus on symbolic efforts or tokenism such as

focusing on attention-grabbing numbers for activities including, for instance, the number of trees planted, which can undermine long-lasting land restoration.

However, many youth and community-led restoration actions are part of a growing network of approaches, pathways, and visions. As of 2024, young people aged 15 to 24 make up almost 20 percent of Africa's total population and are critical actors for the continent's future. Scaling their work can create prosperous livelihoods, restore soil health, support biodiversity, and contribute greatly to climate mitigation and adaptation efforts, and myriad other social and environmental benefits. Through the Restoration Stewards program, the Iris Project, the Land Heroes, and other awards, young Africans are recognized internationally for their environmental passion and practice. But while these awards spotlight a few exceptional individuals, questions remain about the system change needed to better facilitate youth leadership in greening the continent.

How can young Africans be supported as leaders of restoration and of holistic sustainable development practices rooted in their own needs and vision for Africa?

What are the opportunities for transformative change that can shape restoration work as a viable option for prosperous livelihoods and a green future for Africa's landscapes and seascapes?

To answer these questions, the Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) Youth Team, in collaboration with the Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL), under the umbrella of Regreening Africa, embarked on a consultation journey with youth and local experts¹ and restoration practitioners across Africa. Among the restoration experts and practitioners in the consultation, are members from several GLFx Chapters, GLF Restoration Stewards, members of the Youth in Landscapes Initiative, including from the International Forestry Students Association (IFSA), the Young Professionals for Agricultural Development (YPARD), the Global Youth Biodiversity Network (GYBN), Youth for Nature (Y4N), and other regional partners across Africa and other regional groups².

All participants shared their knowledge and experiences from their landscapes and seascapes with free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC). The consultation process encompassed two live digital sessions in October 2024, a month-long co-creating effort for the final report with a small group of regional experts and the GLF team, and an invitation to all participants for feedback on the drafted report. The two live sessions were carefully designed to ensure a safe space for all participants to share their views, facilitate conversations among peers, and spotlight the expertise of practitioners leading restoration work. The authors and experts behind this report hope to disseminate the spirit and knowledge from the live sessions and highlight the work of young Africans across the continent.

1 The authors recognize that this report does not represent all African youth.

2 For a detailed list of all contributors and groups, please see at the end of the document.

Opportunities for transformative change

The consultations surfaced several big-picture themes for policy, finance, inclusive framing, and engaging communications. We break down these themes, highlighting related challenges, solutions, and recommendations. These ideas source conversations from the live sessions and include ideas from young landscape leaders, examples of great youth-led restoration work, and examples of legal policies and government mandates already moving these efforts forward across Africa.

Finance for the frontlines: supporting landscape visionaries & stewards

Underfunding, restrictive financing requirements and minimal financial resources allocated to youth-led climate action create significant barriers for young leaders who aspire to contribute to ecosystem restoration in Africa. Holistic landscape restoration often requires a long-term perspective, as community engagement, land preparation, and planting can take years to yield results. *“Long-term funding is crucial to sustain ongoing restoration efforts and ensure proper monitoring,”* said Mawa Karambiri, policy and technical engagement specialist for the Sahel in the Regreening Africa Project. Unfortunately, traditional funding timelines rarely align with these needs. Participants highlighted that dependence on external funding within an exploitative economic system undermines the sustainability of restoration efforts. This reliance risks projects only being implemented when external resources are available, hindering long-term progress and self-sufficiency. To break this cycle,

the system must use equitable financing models that prioritize local ownership, build capacity, and enable communities to drive restoration efforts autonomously. This requires reimagining funding mechanisms to support long-term investments rather than short-term outputs.

Participants also stressed that youth-led initiatives often face restrictive eligibility requirements, such as age limits, extensive paperwork like needing audited accounts, bureaucratic administrative processes, and unrealistic project deliverables and timelines. Furthermore, youth are often not compensated for the restoration projects they lead, which serves as a disabling factor for others to join the restoration movement. Moreover, reliance on intermediaries can complicate and increase financing costs, distancing resources from those who need them most. Lastly, it was also highlighted that there is an urgent need to redirect harmful subsidies. This shift in priorities, however, requires robust civil society mobilization and strong political will to transform relevant policies. Advocacy for transparent subsidy redirection frameworks and inclusive stakeholder consultations were underscored as necessary steps to drive restoration action across landscapes and seascapes in Africa.

Diving into ways to make restoration finance fairer and more accessible, participants suggested prioritizing and streamlining knowledge-sharing between funders and communities. Developing clear, transparent learning modules that detail financing options, application processes, and financial management skills can boost the confidence and capacity of young leaders and



Youth-led action in Madagascar

[Taniala Regenerative Camp \(GLFx Menabe\)](#) focuses on regenerative agroforestry through forest gardens. The camp was founded by Tahina Roland Frédéric, 2023 Dryland Restoration Steward. Tahina, with the support of the GLF, has created a forest garden model, planted over 10,000 tree seedlings, and gained leadership skills to continue his landscape work and impact.

"Lack of access to financial services for farmers and insufficient property rights for local communities hinder their ability to restore and maintain forest landscapes. These barriers, coupled with insufficient technical capacity and inadequate infrastructure, complicate scaling efforts," said Tahina.

Here is one example of how Tahina's work with the Taniala Regenerative Camp is [unlocking funding success](#) by dedicating fundraising staff, networking at events, and bolstering team capacity building.

Watch [Voices of the Landscape, a journey through the Taniala Regenerative Camp](#).

local groups to navigate the funding landscape. This skill-building enables communities to establish structures tailored to their needs and explore existing avenues like crowdfunding, giving them practical experience managing and scaling funds. To bridge language barriers, it is essential that funding opportunities are communicated in local languages and that local communities serve as cultural facilitators, acting as intermediaries between donors and grassroots groups. This ensures that critical information reaches all intended recipients, fostering inclusivity and understanding.

Youth and others can improve their chances of acquiring funding if provided with adequate training in proposal writing, financial management, and project reporting. Simultaneously, funders should recognize, appreciate, and leverage the unique strengths and knowledge of the communities for effective engagement. In other words, close collaboration and mutual learning are essential: funders and donors should [co-design financial plans with local stakeholders](#), aligning them with realistic timelines and outcomes. This approach can foster trust and shared commitment, significantly enhancing the likelihood of restoration project success. Participants proposed more accessible funding mechanisms, including financial incentives such as scholarships, stipends, and grants tailored to youth-driven projects, crowdfunding to diversify funding sources, simplified application processes, and mentorship programs for young leaders. Furthermore, participants strongly suggested that the focus should shift to scaling trust-based funding that seeks to address the inherent power imbalances between funders,

grantees and the communities they serve. Grants and relevant mechanisms should at least be about changing the locus of control to partnerships and collaborations, and rally behind the notion that grantees are experts in their fields.

Additionally, participants stressed that a tailored flow of information about financial opportunities, such as grants, should be straightforward and inclusive to expand access to resources to those historically left out. This is particularly important for rural and systemically oppressed or excluded groups. Direct access to grants and loans enhances community control over their project. Participants also highlighted the importance of local resource mobilization and partnerships, which can help youth-led restoration projects thrive. Suggested strategies include forming pooled resource hubs among local organizations, advocating for policy changes that incentivize local funding, and establishing networks that connect young leaders with alternative, non-institutional support. These community-driven networks could reduce reliance on external funding and bolster autonomy.

Opportunity for Transformative Change:

Funders, policymakers, and organizations actively collaborate with youth leaders and local communities to co-create flexible financing models and accessible resources that enable independent, community-led restoration efforts to support livelihoods and landscapes.

Policy for impact: amplifying meaningful youth participation

There is a lack of opportunities and resources for [meaningful representation and participation](#) for Indigenous Peoples, rural communities, minority tribes, youth-led landscape practitioners, children, women, and other systematically excluded groups in many of the world's crucial environmental dialogues, including the negotiations for the three Rio Conventions ([CBD](#), [UNFCCC](#), and [UNCCD](#)). This perpetuates the disconnect between the most affected communities and the global decisions that impact their lives and livelihoods through international policies that may translate to national strategies such as the [NBSAPs](#) and the [NDCs](#). African youth is particularly harmed by this exclusionary reality, with many young experts and practitioners [facing](#) obstacles from lack of resources to language barriers, visa issues, and tokenization. For example, participants highlighted how inviting a few well-known youth representatives to important conversations isn't enough.

Across all levels of policymaking, a policy can be evaluated as effective only if it gets to be implemented effectively. For ecosystem restoration efforts in Africa to be effective, inclusive, fair, and sustainable, frontline voices must be at the heart of climate, biodiversity, and land decisions, not sidelined or co-opted by external actors or top-down policymakers. True inclusivity in policy development means bringing together all stakeholders at the grassroots level—community leaders, youth-led restoration initiatives, environmental and agricultural ministries, and others with a vested interest, and traction in land restoration. To improve inclusivity, governments must strengthen and

expand youth-led participation in decision-making and policy-making processes. Furthermore, government officials should be sensitized and trained to support youth-led restoration initiatives. These officials can then support capacity building by creating actionable frameworks to positively impact communities. It is worth mentioning that this effort does not have to start from scratch: instead governments can learn from and build upon the work of youth-led organizations such as [YPARD](#) and [GYBN](#), to ensure that policies reflect the perspectives and needs of youth.

Given the relevant spaces, resources, and time, youth and community-led projects can bridge local people

and relevant and responsive policy development. Participants suggested that radically inclusive policy-making can help foster trust among different actors, alleviate conflicts, address land tenure issues, and strengthen local communities. It was also highlighted that without local perspectives, restoration policies risk not serving the realities of the landscapes and seascapes they aim to restore, ultimately compromising their effectiveness and longevity. Grassroots-level participation and involvement of Indigenous communities are essential in steering restoration policies and work. Many participants pointed out a gap between global decisions and local needs. This is especially true when restoration policies overlook alternative

Why is regreening Africa relevant for youth-led restoration?

“Young people are at the heart of change and can help challenge top-down approaches to implementing projects by connecting with their communities and creating trust and buy-in for restoration work,” says Mawa Karambiri, the policy and technical engagement specialist for the Sahel CIFOR-ICRAF in Burkina Faso.

“The enthusiasm, tech-savvy nature, and hard work ethic of young Africans can make a big difference in restoration work, especially in schools where young people are already gathered. And as they age these passionate young people can benefit from capacity development and job opportunities hired in greater restoration efforts, paving the way toward a greener future.”

The [Regreening Africa](#) app also plays a key role in restoration, especially for tech-savvy youth, as it is an effective monitoring tool that helps track milestones and capture real-time, relevant data reliably.



livelihoods for farmers and pastoralists who fear economic loss when prompted to opt for restoration-friendly alternatives. It was also suggested that policy frameworks, financial incentives, and ecopreneurship opportunities anchor on grassroots dynamics, and align with the national, regional, and global frameworks. This can look like subsidies for land protection, tree planting, or transitioning to sustainable and regenerative farming practices like agroforestry, as well as smaller efforts, such as providing people with incentives like free seeds and beekeeping materials. Participants seemed to agree that creating [alternative livelihood opportunities](#), particularly for women and youth can transform landscapes.

Participants also highlighted that inclusive representation in global and local decision-making spaces is not just about having a seat at the table—it's about having a different table built with the premise that local voices are valued. Platforms like global events, national summits, and local forums can provide essential spaces for dialogue and networking, creating opportunities for leaders to connect, collaborate, and amplify their impact across landscapes. Furthermore, these dialogues can open avenues for funding and collaboration with investors. It is suggested that these spaces must be designed to foster inclusion, where the contributions of all stakeholders, especially those from the ground up, are integrated into the broader narrative of restoration. Policymakers and funders need to acknowledge the immense potential of youth and local experts and practitioners to drive meaningful change. This requires backing financial, institutional, and capacity-building work to scale existing restoration from the landscapes.

Opportunity for Transformative Change:

Policymakers commit to a paradigm shift for meaningful representation and participation of youth and other systematically excluded groups in decision and policy-making, ensuring that their needs, aspirations, and expertise guide the design and implementation of restoration strategies.

Governments create policy mechanisms and financial incentives to link ecosystem restoration with livelihood opportunities for youth, especially for young women and those in rural and degraded landscapes, and biodiversity hotspots.

Capacity development that addresses real needs

During the consultation, participants referenced many systemic issues such as lack of access to land, conflict, resource scarcity, and foreign development narratives that make life difficult for people in rural landscapes. One participant said, "Soon there will be almost no hands to do restoration." Furthermore, many pointed out that the rural exodus of youth across Africa is increasing – many young people are moving or wish to move closer to urban areas in search of job opportunities and a better life. Furthermore, many young African experts entering the field of

Youth-led action in Nigeria

[Anna Obi Akpe](#), 2024 Wetland Restoration Steward works with the [Biodiversity Rescue Club](#), which has successfully established mangrove nurseries and worked with local communities to plant over 3,000 mangrove saplings.

“Our restoration journey began with a meeting with the community’s heart and soul, the traditional chiefs and youth leaders. We discussed the importance of these wetlands and how crucial their support is for the restoration’s success,” said Akpe. **“The warm welcome we received solidified our belief in the power of community engagement. Together, we are fostering a shared commitment to protecting the environment and the well-being of local people.”**

The Biodiversity Rescue Club also looks to the future and involves young students in these efforts by visiting schools and promoting conservation education.

Learn more about Youth-led action in Nigeria and watch the GLF Africa session [Community stewardship: Bridging local realities and global processes](#).



ecosystem restoration might not find restoration a viable career opportunity as international experts are often hired for large-scale restoration projects.

While some systemic issues are addressed elsewhere in this report, capacity development for restoration is an important aspect of supporting youth-led projects and initiatives. Educators can instill restoration knowledge at an early age by integrating subject matter related to the environment, and green careers in school learning curriculums and syllabi in Africa: widespread and shared knowledge can make it easier to overcome systemic challenges. However, it was noted by participants that governments should provide a conducive environment for educators, experts and landscape practitioners to create, and recommend appropriate curriculums that focus on restoration.

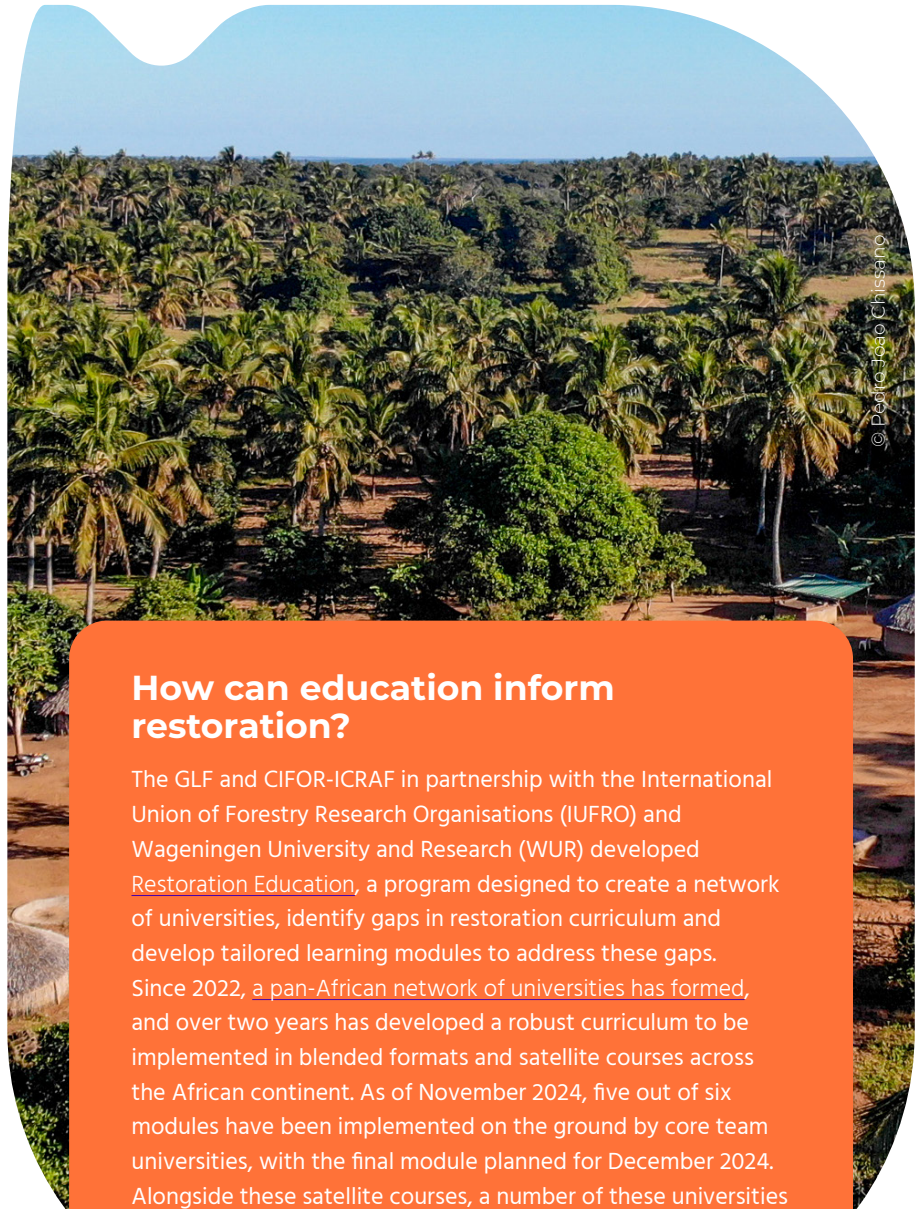
Some participants pointed out that while academic training provides a strong knowledge foundation, the gap between theory and practice can leave individuals uncertain about how to apply their knowledge in real-world restoration efforts. Participants suggested an expansion of pathways that provide direct work experience, such as mentorship programs and internships with environmental organizations. Others raised the idea of creating dedicated environmental ministries equipped with the personnel

Opportunity for Transformative Change:

Environmental organizations and institutions dedicate resources to support the capacity development of youth and restoration practitioners across Africa to contribute to or implement restoration projects.

Rooted in restoration

Youth-led transformative change for Regreening Africa



How can education inform restoration?

The GLF and CIFOR-ICRAF in partnership with the International Union of Forestry Research Organisations (IUFRO) and Wageningen University and Research (WUR) developed Restoration Education, a program designed to create a network of universities, identify gaps in restoration curriculum and develop tailored learning modules to address these gaps. Since 2022, a pan-African network of universities has formed, and over two years has developed a robust curriculum to be implemented in blended formats and satellite courses across the African continent. As of November 2024, five out of six modules have been implemented on the ground by core team universities, with the final module planned for December 2024. Alongside these satellite courses, a number of these universities have begun accrediting these modules as part of a larger curriculum on restoration. The Restoration Education program is now being rolled out in Asia with support from the International Model Forest Network (IMFN).

and resources to support youth-led and community-led restoration initiatives. Workshops and training sessions should focus on essential skills such as data monitoring, program management, and project evaluation. These skills are vital for equipping young people with the expertise to lead successful restoration projects. For example, YPARD Uganda's first Farm Day Out and Agribusiness Training is a practical and collaborative

model for youth engagement in agriculture, emphasizing knowledge acquisition, inspirational storytelling, and peer-to-peer collaboration.

However, accessibility remained a key consideration for participants. Those in remote or underserved areas, or without reliable internet access, require alternative methods of training and capacity-building to ensure that

all aspiring restoration practitioners, regardless of their geographical location or technological limitations, have the chance to build their skills. For example, resources could be allocated to support in-person gatherings, such as community council meetings or hands-on workshops, where older generations share traditional ecological knowledge with youth. Contributing to existing community structures and face-to-face interaction, could mitigate the dependence on unreliable internet access and support local communities to take ownership of restoration efforts.

Communications to co-create a new narrative for restoration

Effective communication about ecosystem restoration faces considerable challenges and often hides behind large, institutionalized campaigns that ignore or silence local context. Participants stated that challenges include language barriers, complex or inaccessible terminology, top-down and (neo) colonial narratives, tokenization, one-size-fits-all approaches, and the tendency for information to circulate primarily within specific platforms. The monopoly of communication about ecosystem restoration by institutions rooted in the Global North often excludes or even takes advantage of many potential allies, including

young people, Indigenous people, rural communities, and local leaders. Additionally, since large parts of Africa are not fully digitalized, relying solely on digital communication methods can limit reach. To broaden engagement, communication strategies must evolve to reach beyond established networks, holding space for diverse conversations around landscapes and ecosystem restoration.

To truly democratize restoration as a practice, participants emphasized that it is essential to co-create the narrative of ecosystem restoration with local stewards and community leaders. Their firsthand experiences, cultural knowledge, and ongoing stewardship are vital to shaping restoration narratives and practices that resonate with and reflect the realities of those greatly impacted by environmental degradation. Collaborative storytelling through interviews, community-led documentaries, research, or public dialogues can spotlight the voices of these stewards, weaving their insights into the broader discourse and inspiring a co-owned, landscape-rooted, and bottom-up vision for restoration. Indigenous and local storytelling traditions also play a crucial role in engaging communities. Supporting Indigenous and local voices in restoration communication honors their deep-rooted environmental and landscape knowledge, such as ecological mapping and using seasonal calendars, while enriching the restoration narrative with context-specific insights that international experts usually overlook. Moreover, integrating traditional knowledge and intergenerational knowledge with scientific methods enhances the adaptability of restoration strategies by creating innovative solutions that are resilient to environmental challenges.

Youth-led action in Kenya

Levis Sirikwa, 2023 Oceans Restoration Steward and GLFx Mombasa Coordinator works with Ceriops and Casina Farms with a focus on environmental conservation and community development to restore the mangroves in Kenya.

“To overcome challenges and build a greater capacity for meaningful and long-lasting restoration work there must be a foundation of community trust,”

said Sirikwa.

Clear communication and resolution can be achieved by conducting thorough environmental needs assessments to guide equitable project distribution, diversifying initiatives to avoid community fatigue, engaging communities in the planning process with clear goals, and implementing effective monitoring and evaluation frameworks to ensure the consistency and reliability of ongoing projects.

Learn more about Youth-led action in Kenya and watch the GLF Africa 2024 session How landscapes communities seed lasting change for people and nature



Youth-led action in Rwanda

Claudine Kamanzi, 2024 Drylands Restoration Steward, works with the [Forest4Life](#) project to reforest Rwanda's Bugesera district. Kamanzi and her team restore land through agroforestry and reforestation.

“Witness the harmonious coexistence of trees and crops in our agroforestry systems. Here, maize thrives beneath the sheltering canopy of Indigenous native trees, while beans wind their way up sturdy trunks. This integrated approach not only restores biodiversity but also enhances soil fertility and secures livelihoods,” says Kamanzi.

Involving the community through knowledge sharing and workshops is key to her efforts to have these newly planted trees and nurseries serve local communities for generations to come.

through governmental efforts and initiatives such as [Kenya's Mazingira Day](#), [Ghana's Green Ghana Day](#), and [Tanzania's Soma na Mti](#) campaign, which translates to “read with a tree.” Finally, there was a consensus that communication must break down knowledge barriers and adapt to each community's linguistic and cultural contexts. This can involve translating materials into local languages, creating audio-visual resources, and replacing technical jargon with frameworks that resonate with diverse audiences. Such inclusive communication meets people where they are by acknowledging that many potential contributors, including youth, women, and rural inhabitants, may face educational or language-related obstacles.

As a constant over the last decade, the GLF is learning from youth and local partners across Africa that the most impactful communication is creative, community-centered, and culturally relevant. For example, elements that bring joy to everyday life such as art and sport, seem to resonate with many people; [organizing events where trees are planted for every goal scored in a local soccer match](#) or developing campaigns that [celebrate African discourses and narratives](#) through visual art and poetry can transform restoration into a community-wide effort.

Participants mentioned other solutions such as connecting with rural and offline populations using non-digital approaches such as local radio broadcasts, community theater, and local events. Photography competitions focused on nature, apps for land monitoring [and sharing information to farmers offline](#), and short-format videos on Tik Tok, Instagram Reels, YouTube Shorts, and WhatsApp are yet more ways to make restoration messages accessible and engaging. Some mentioned that public engagement can be furthered

Opportunity for Transformative Change:

Change: International environmental organizations and actors use clear, culturally appropriate methods, language, and platforms, to co-create, strengthen, and communicate the narrative of bottom-up and landscape-rooted ecosystem restoration for Africa.

Rooted in restoration

Youth-led transformative change for Regreening Africa

A vision for Regreening Africa

This report seeks to inspire, inform, and ignite action for ecosystem restoration across Africa and beyond by amplifying the voices, insights, and priorities of youth across the continent. It underscores that African landscapes, though under immense pressure, hold the power to heal when restoration is rooted in local knowledge, community leadership, and intergenerational collaboration. Looking ahead, Regreening Africa will take the findings of this consultation further, initiating in-country dialogues across the program's landscapes to explore how youth can be meaningfully engaged in shaping restoration efforts. These conversations will aim to translate insights into action, creating pathways for youth to lead, innovate, and drive transformative change.

Finally, this report is an invitation. Whether you are a scientist, policymaker, community leader, educator, or practitioner, use its findings as a tool to challenge conventional approaches, foster collaboration, and amplify the work of local stewards and youth leaders already driving regreening efforts. Together, we can co-create a future where restoration is inclusive, impactful, and enduring—grounded in the lived realities of the communities and landscapes it serves. Let this report be the beginning of a shared journey—one that transforms restoration into a movement of hope, resilience, and renewal for generations to come.



Global Landscapes Forum

The Global Landscapes Forum (GLF) is the world's largest knowledge-led platform on integrated land use, dedicated to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and Paris Climate Agreement. The Forum takes a holistic approach to create sustainable landscapes that are productive, prosperous, equitable and resilient and considers five cohesive themes of food and livelihoods, landscape restoration, rights, finance and measuring progress. It is led by the Center for International Forestry Research and World Agroforestry (CIFOR-ICRAF), in collaboration with its co-founders UNEP and the World Bank and Charter Members.

Charter members: CIAT, CIFOR-ICRAF, CIRAD, Climate Focus, Conservation International, Crop Trust, Ecoagriculture Partners, The European Forest Institute, Evergreen Agriculture, FAO, FSC, GEF, GIZ, ICIMOD, IFOAM - Organics International, The International Livestock Research Institute, INBAR, IPMG, IUFRO, Rainforest Alliance, Rare, Rights and Resources Initiative, SAN, TMG-Think Tank for Sustainability, UNCCD, UNEP, Wageningen Centre for Development Innovation part of Wageningen Research, World Farmer Organization, World Bank Group, World Resources Institute, WWF International, Youth in Landscapes Initiative (YIL)

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