



Annual Report

2023/24



Cynthia Magrobe,
Chakundo, Ghana

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Africa's remarkable biodiversity and abundant natural resources are a beacon of opportunity and offer solutions for a resilient and prosperous future. Today, deforestation is not only destroying my home's environment, but due to the effects of climate change, it is becoming harder and harder to reverse forest loss and land degradation. It is time to prioritise people and our planet over short-term profits.

**Elizabeth Wathuti,
Kenyan environmental activist**

Message from the Chair & CEO

Tree Aid's mission is simple: to empower local communities living in the drylands of Africa to unlock the potential of trees to reduce poverty and protect the environment. By growing trees, restoring land, and building sustainable businesses, communities can mitigate the disastrous impacts of the climate crisis.

But the challenge is also growing.

Rising temperatures

Mali recorded the hottest day in its history (48.5°C) during an extreme heatwave in the Sahel region earlier this year, leading to heat-related deaths. The climate crisis is no longer a threat in the distant future – it's here, and we're accelerating our work in response.



Djékouma village, Mali

Responding to crisis

With increasing insecurity and conflict, fuelled by climate breakdown, millions of people in and around the Sahel are being forced to leave their homes, settling in communities where poverty and hunger are already widespread.

In response, we are working with a growing number of internally displaced people by providing emergency food kits from value chains we support. We are also working with both displaced and host communities, supporting them to access land, and develop the skills, knowledge, and networks they need to restore their landscapes, grow nutritious food and generate an income.

Scaling up our work

Despite these challenges, we have seen many successes this year. We grew the most trees we've ever grown in a single year. We also launched our largest-ever programme, Tond Tenga, unlocking private finance at the scale needed to support communities to adapt to the effects of the climate crisis. We're scaling up our advocacy and influencing work to amplify the voices of people living in Africa's

drylands and to promote community-led restoration, nationally, regionally and globally.

We are only able to achieve this work through the incredible efforts of our staff, partners, trustees, supporters, and, most importantly, the communities we work with. Our work has never been more important or more urgent, and it would be impossible without the passion and drive of everyone working together, so thank you. With your continued support, we can continue responding to the challenges and support more people living across the drylands of Africa.



Tom Skirrow
Tom Skirrow
Chief Executive



Elizabeth Davis
Elizabeth Davis
Chair of Trustees



Sinthiou Fissa village, Senegal

The year in numbers

2,569,584
trees grown
with a 67% survival rate

1,068%
increase in income
from NTFPs

1,701,380
people supported
across the drylands

83%
increase in income
per household on average

14,209
hectares of new land
sustainably managed

61%
of people supported
were women

13,972
hectares of new land
benefited from restoration

1,274
new communities
worked with

785
new enterprises
established & supported

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

Burkina Faso

1,266,654 trees grown
1,601,708 people supported
2,243 hectares of land under restoration
514 new enterprises supported

Ethiopia

47,441 trees grown
12,474 people supported
17 new enterprises supported
250 new hectares of land under sustainable management

Senegal

144,710 trees grown
680 people supported
67 hectares of land under restoration

Mali

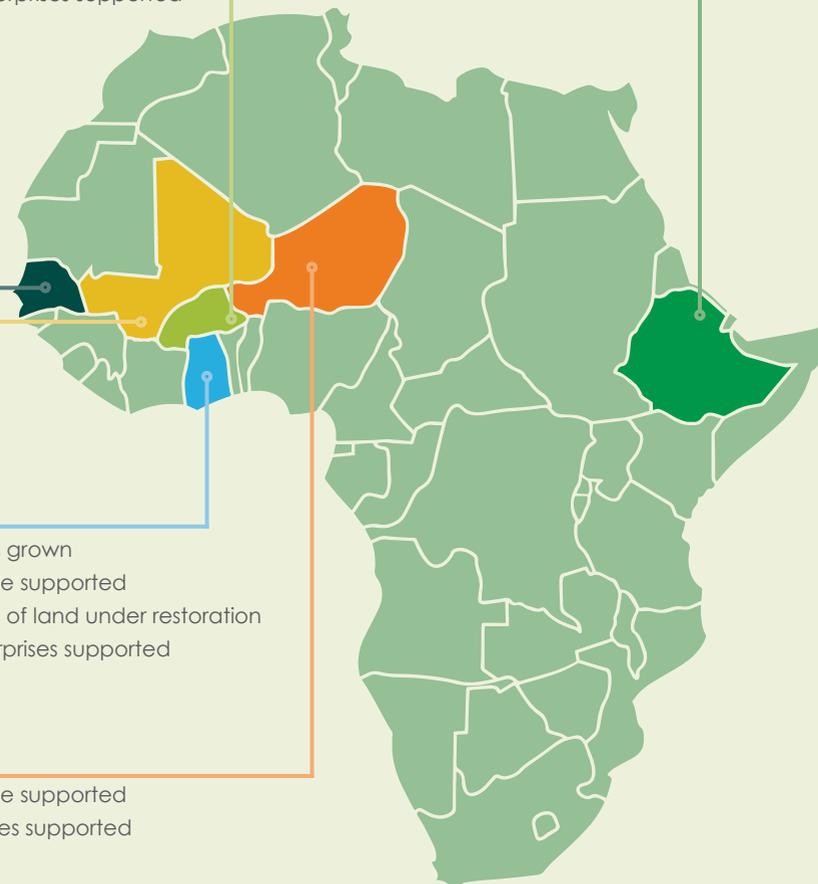
348,842 trees grown
39,879 people supported
11,259 hectares of land under restoration
9,584 hectares of land under sustainable management

Ghana

761,937 trees grown
27,013 people supported
398 hectares of land under restoration
78 new enterprises supported

Niger

19,626 people supported
179 enterprises supported



Growing our influence

Tree Aid's work is part of a broader movement across the Sahel. As an organisation with a long history working in this context, we are uniquely placed to bridge the gap between policy and practice. We are committed to challenging decision makers and demanding systems change to empower

communities and families to restore their landscapes and lift themselves out of poverty.

This year we significantly enhanced our visibility and connections. Our advocacy efforts have gained substantial momentum, allowing us to effectively disseminate our achievements, present our work on the ground, and

represent Tree Aid and African drylands on both national and international platforms. We have strengthened our in-country staff's advocacy capacity, accelerating the development and delivery of our strategies.

Our international advocacy became more strategic and effective in targeting and influencing decision makers through international fora.

Our involvement in large-scale collaborative initiatives like the Great Green Wall continued to be a key part of our approach. By participating in yearly regional planning committees and events like the Great Green Wall Weeks at the African Union HQ, we can ensure that sustainable land management and reforestation efforts are inclusive and beneficial to local populations.



Neyedo village, Ghana



At the Dubai Climate Change Conference (COP28), Tree Aid's largest-ever delegation played a broader role in climate discussions, supporting Burkina Faso in hosting a national pavilion for the first time in many years, and organising two successful side events. This presence not only elevated the concerns of dryland communities but also positioned them as crucial stakeholders in global climate conversations.

Additionally, Tree Aid's active participation in regional and international forums, such as the Accelerating Nature-Based Solutions Conference in Zambia, and the International Emissions Trading Association (IETA) workshop in Côte d'Ivoire, provided an avenue to influence carbon policies that directly impact these communities, and showcase our carbon investment model as an example that other actors could, and should, replicate elsewhere. This model has been featured as a best practice case study in USAID's Carbon Model Playbook, highlighting our innovative approach to benefit-sharing with communities.



Fatimata Ilboudo, Koulpellé village, Burkina Faso

We will continue sharing this model and have set ambitious goals aimed at securing better access and control over natural resources for dryland communities, improving accessibility of international public and private funding for community-led restoration in the African drylands, and showcasing the evidence of what impact work like ours can have for communities.

We are guided by this evidence, which is grounded in research, the technical expertise of our teams and the lived experiences of the communities we work with.

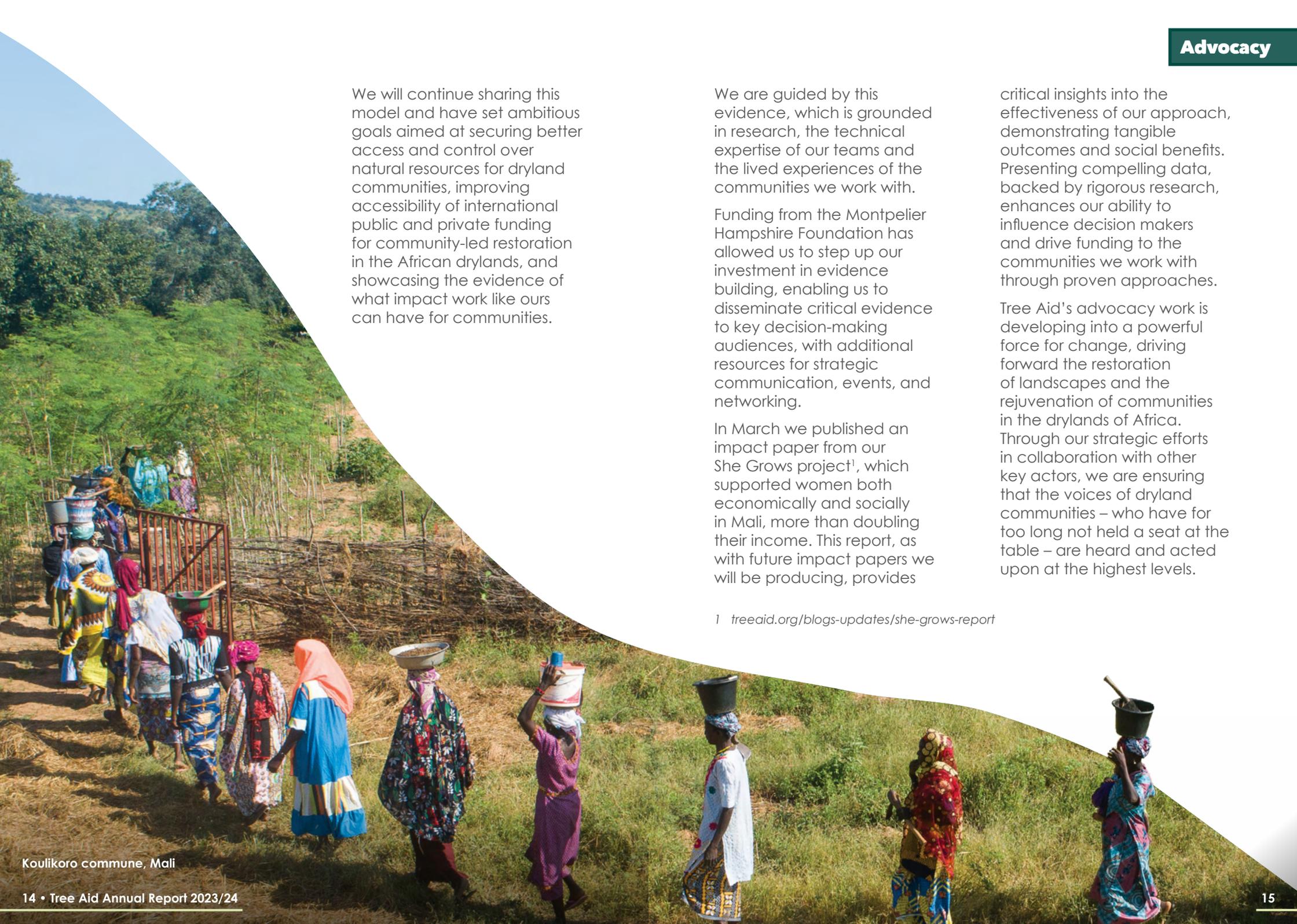
Funding from the Montpelier Hampshire Foundation has allowed us to step up our investment in evidence building, enabling us to disseminate critical evidence to key decision-making audiences, with additional resources for strategic communication, events, and networking.

In March we published an impact paper from our She Grows project¹, which supported women both economically and socially in Mali, more than doubling their income. This report, as with future impact papers we will be producing, provides

critical insights into the effectiveness of our approach, demonstrating tangible outcomes and social benefits. Presenting compelling data, backed by rigorous research, enhances our ability to influence decision makers and drive funding to the communities we work with through proven approaches.

Tree Aid's advocacy work is developing into a powerful force for change, driving forward the restoration of landscapes and the rejuvenation of communities in the drylands of Africa. Through our strategic efforts in collaboration with other key actors, we are ensuring that the voices of dryland communities – who have for too long not held a seat at the table – are heard and acted upon at the highest levels.

¹ treeaid.org/blogs-updates/she-grows-report



Koulikoro commune, Mali

Burkina Faso



In Burkina Faso, over 70% of people live rurally and depend on the land to grow food and make money. But the climate crisis and deforestation are rapidly reducing soil fertility. As a result, over a third of the population are living in extreme poverty and hunger.

Insecurity has meant that more than two million people have been displaced within the country.

We've been working with communities in Burkina Faso since 1994, growing and protecting trees to tackle poverty and the effects of the climate crisis.

“

The forest is life... trees protect the environment against climate change and help us to get many things. Shea nuts and baobab leaves come from the forest and help us to have good health and food.

Awa Convolbo, 37

17 years of strengthening forest governance

Our longest-running programme, focused on promoting forest governance in Burkina Faso², entered its final year. Known locally as Weoog-Paani ("new forest" in Mooré and Gourmantché), the project has supported 238,000 households, established the sustainable management of more than 30,000 hectares of forest, and

grown more than three million trees, with local communities at the centre of this restoration and protection process.

The project's experience has led to the development of a model for local governance of forest resources that is recognised by the government of Burkina Faso as a tool for decentralisation in the forestry sector.



With tree planting through this project, the environment is beginning to improve. The forest is beginning to come back.

Assetou Dipama, 38

Our impact from 2019-2024:



1,541%

increase in average household income from selling NTFPs



61%

decrease in people living below the poverty line, from 88% to 27%



454

enterprises established & now earning around \$1,000,000

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

² treeaid.org/projects/burkina-faso/forest-governance-phase-two



Koanken village, Burkina Faso

Establishing roots in carbon income for communities

Building on our forest governance work, Tond Tenga³ will continue to work in the same 37 forests with the same communities to grow more than six million trees in the first four years and gain carbon certification.

The trees will help restore land, protect forests, and provide incomes for the surrounding communities, with additional income derived from payment for the carbon that the trees store.

Our impact in 2023/24:



FPIC = Free Prior and Informed Consent (a process to ensure community empowerment and participation)

³ treeaid.org/projects/burkina-faso/tond-tenga

Improving NTFP value chains

This project⁴ aims to support women, young people and internally displaced people (IDPs) who are often the most vulnerable to hunger and poverty. Nutrition gardens are being created and people are being trained to grow and care for moringa and baobab trees. This will help to improve their resilience to climatic

and security shocks through diversified and sustainable food production systems.

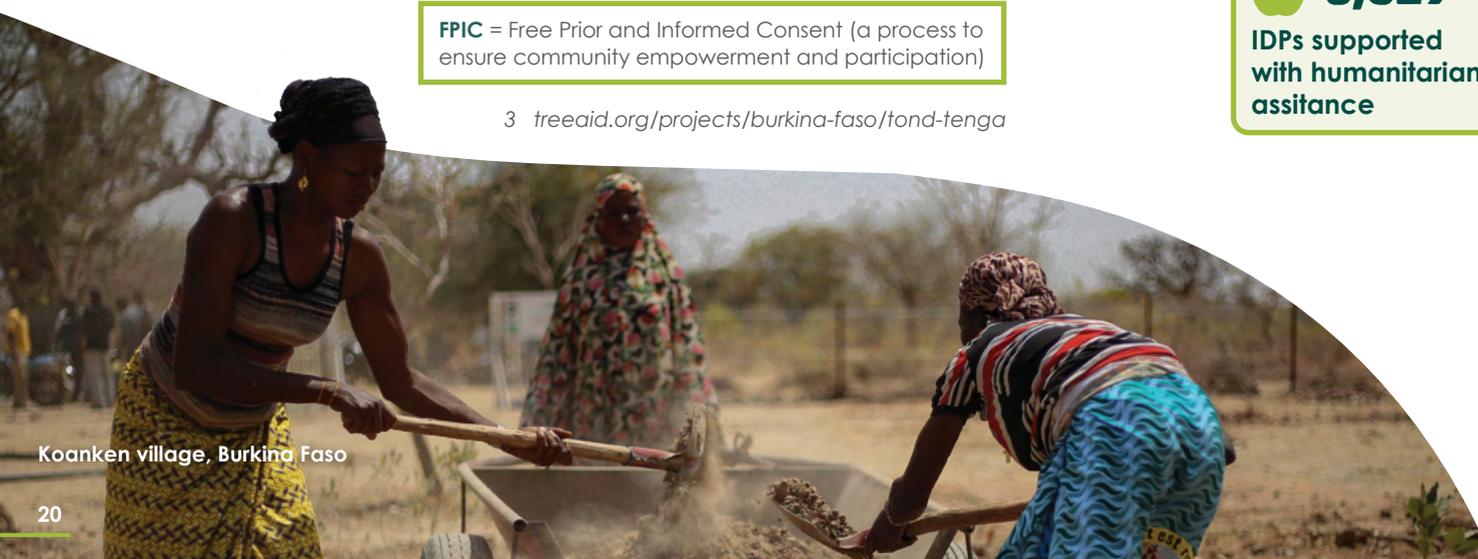
The project has further supported IDPs by providing emergency tree-based food kits with products sourced from project groups, to strengthen the food and nutritional security of both displaced and host communities.

Our impact in 2023/24:



IDPs = internally displaced people
 NTFPs = non-timber forest products

⁴ treeaid.org/projects/burkina-faso/growing-food-and-incomes-phase-two



Koanken village, Burkina Faso

Ethiopia



Between 1993 and 2016, Ethiopia lost 2.2 million hectares of forest cover – equivalent to 1.5 million football pitches. Without trees, the land is losing its fertility – two billion tonnes of fertile soil is lost each year.

This is making it hard for people to grow enough food. As a result, over 37 million people are living in extreme poverty.

“

Because of deforestation, illegal cutting and expansion of agriculture, the forest is declining, and the temperature is becoming very warm. I am very proud to be part of the cooperative. With the support of the project, the jobless youth are gaining a lot of money and changing their lives through the production of frankincense, which I am contributing to.

Birtukan Gebeyehu, 29

Protecting the Metema forest

Ethiopia's Metema forest is the last green belt before the desert. But the climate crisis and deforestation threaten its existence, and without action, it could disappear in 20 years. Our Future Forest⁵ and Developing Rural Resistance⁶ projects partner with communities to protect

and govern their land while addressing the climate crisis. This work has also supported communities to become more resilient in the face of insecurity in the area which has reduced household income, typically derived from farming.

Our impact in 2023/24:



296%

increase in average income from selling NTFPs



2,560

hectares of forest protected from bushfires and other intrusions



10%

increase in tree density in monitored forest sites

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

⁵ treeaid.org/projects/ethiopia/future-forest-project

⁶ treeaid.org/projects/ethiopia/developing-rural-resilience-and-restoring-land



Solomon Habte, Metema region, Ethiopia

Ghana



In northern Ghana, where we've been working since 1994, a drastic reduction in fertile land and the climate crisis have devastated people's lives. Rainfall is unpredictable and drought

and floods are becoming more frequent and severe.

8 in 10 people living in northern Ghana are multidimensionally poor. Our projects are working to change this.

Restoring the Daka River

The Daka River is a vital source of water for drinking, eating, washing and farming. But a rapid loss of trees and soil fertility, and rising temperatures, mean the river can dry out for months on end.

Working with local people, this project⁷ is supporting them to grow trees to provide food and incomes, and restore the river and land.



Ecosia is proud to be a long-time partner of Tree Aid in Ghana. Since 2018, our tree planting team has observed significant restoration progress around the Daka River catchment. This success is thanks to Tree Aid's holistic approach, strong community engagement, and diligent field monitoring.

Melissa de Hertogh,
Ecosia Tree Planting Officer



FMNR = farmer-managed natural regeneration

Our impact in 2023/24:



600,000+

trees grown by communities along the Daka River



875

farmers trained in FMNR and are now restoring land



345

people employed in tree nurseries & nutrition gardens

⁷ treeaid.org/projects/ghana/restoring-the-daka-river-phase-two

Harnessing the power of shea trees

Almost eight million shea trees are lost across West Africa each year due to deforestation. Shea trees produce nutritious fruits, and nuts which can be processed into butter, presenting a great opportunity for rural communities to become

involved in the local shea value chain and increase household incomes.

This project⁸ supports communities to restore shea parklands, develop cooperatives and strengthen shea value chains.



When I was young there were more trees than as I stand here now. As the project came here and provided water, everyone can take some, even other communities. In the dry season we now have vegetables to eat and sometimes sell which we didn't before.

Gmanyi Mbingbi, 55

Our impact in 2023/24:



56,577

shea seedlings raised in tree nurseries



3,256

shea trees restored by in-situ grafting



1,616

shea trees restored by using FMNR



30

village enterprises established & supported

FMNR = farmer-managed natural regeneration

⁸ treeaid.org/projects/ghana/harnessing-shea-trees-to-tackle-emissions-and-restore-land/



Lakaldo village, Ghana

Mali & Senegal

Mali is one of the poorest countries in the world, with almost half the population living in severe multidimensional poverty. In the south of Mali where we work, most people rely on farmland for food and income. But the climate crisis is making farming difficult and life tough. This year marks our 30th year of working with communities to tackle this.

It is a similar situation in neighbouring Senegal, where more than half the population are multidimensionally poor. Many people face insecurity over their rights to natural resources.

In 2021, we began working in Senegal for the first time.

“

The trees are very useful. This one is called tamarind – if you are exhausted you can mix it with the bissap and you will get better. And [they provide] a place to rest. When the rainy season arrives, it becomes full of leaves and beautiful, and the house gets cooler.

Fatou Niang Diop, 32

Growing the Olympic Forest

Our work in Mali and Senegal continued through the Olympic Forest⁹, where we are growing thousands of trees and restoring huge areas of land across both countries, contributing to the Great Green Wall.

Our impact in 2023/24:



200,000+

trees grown by communities in Senegal and Mali



9,584

hectares of land under better management



~1,000

hectares of land now under restoration

⁹ treeaid.org/projects/mali/olympic-forest



Djékouma village, Mali

Strengthening local enterprise

We also revisited communities we had worked with previously in the Ségou region to continue building on the work and strengthening their ability to earn incomes.

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

Successes included:



118,297

trees grown on forest sites



~ 85,000

trees grown on agroforestry sites



33%

increase in income from NTFPs*

*Annual profits grew from \$7,786 to \$10,225 per group since 2019



Djindiebougou village, Mali

Promoting forest governance in Ségou

The Ségou region of Mali has been hit particularly hard by deforestation and the effects of the climate crisis. Through our project¹⁰ there, we have been promoting good governance and management of forests, improving lives for 3,000 rural households.

Building on this work, we are strengthening decentralised forest management at the local and national level. Anw ka Siguida¹¹, which means “Our Land” in Bambara, is working with communities to restore and protect 10,000 hectares of vital land and supporting them to grow incomes from non-timber forest products.



I have positive expectations for my future and that of my children, grounded in a thorough understanding of the work we are engaged in. When one comprehends the nature of their work, it can lead to positive outcomes.

Mah Diarra, 49

Our impact in 2023/24:



90,965

trees grown across Ségou by local communities



2

new forest management cooperatives established



1,033

hectares of degraded land under restoration



8

village enterprises established & supported

¹⁰ treeaid.org/projects/mali/promoting-forest-governance-in-segou

¹¹ treeaid.org/projects/mali/local-governance-of-forest-resources



Djékouma village, Mali

Niger



Niger is one of the world's poorest countries. The climate is very hot and dry, and most of the country is desert. As a result, over two-thirds of the population are living in extreme poverty. Since 2013, Tree Aid has been supporting communities there to tackle poverty and improve the environment.

Insecurity in the region impacted our ability to deliver projects in Niger this year. Despite the challenges, we were able to start two new projects.

Supporting women's enterprises in Falmey

The first project supported new women's enterprises in Falmey, providing five village tree enterprises with the necessary training and equipment to improve their production and marketing, particularly of shea butter, peanuts and other NTFPs.

Our impact in 2023/24:



256

women supported to establish enterprise groups

Empowering women in Dosso and Tahoua

The second focused on the economic and financial empowerment of women.

The overall aim is to reduce the vulnerability of the poor, particularly women, in target communes of Dosso and Tahoua.

Our impact in 2023/24:



4,229

women already benefitting from the project

The project aims to strengthen the capacities and organisation of women's groups, while promoting the development of village savings and loan associations (VSLAs) and income-generating activities.

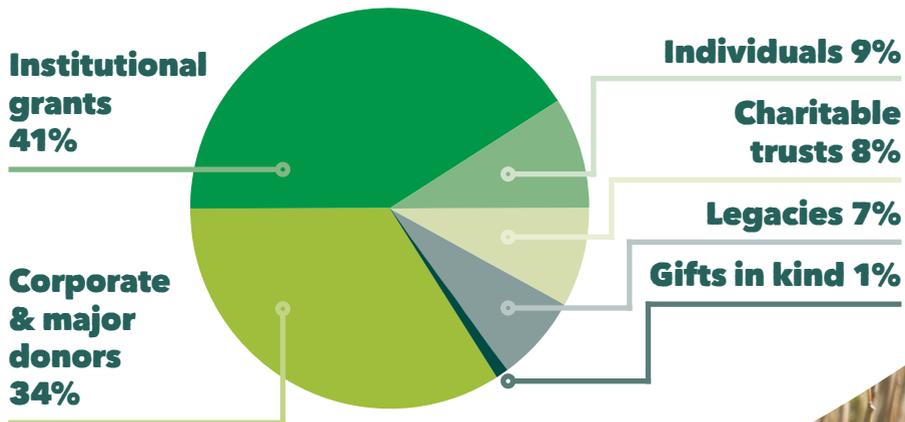
Financial summary

Our income

In 2023/24 our income remained steady at £10.8 million mainly due to the timing of receipts of restricted grants. However, the composition of our income sources shifted significantly, with our reliance on institutional income

decreasing from 72% in 2022/23 to 41% in 2023/24. This change was largely due to the introduction of Tond Tenga, a corporate-funded project in Burkina Faso.

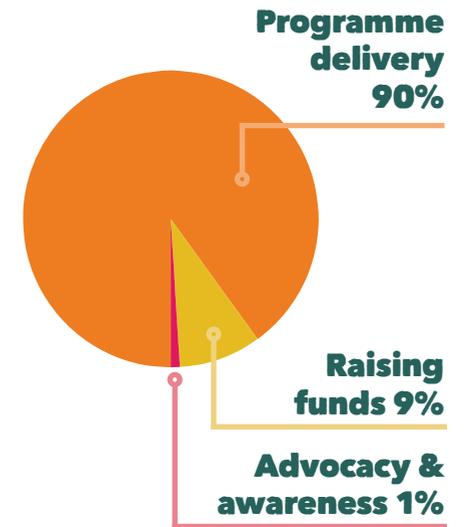
This chart shows where our income came from:



Our expenditure

Our total expenditure rose because of increased project activity in most areas of our operations, to £10.6 million, compared to £8.8 million in the previous year.

A breakdown is shown in this chart:



Korsimoro village, Burkina Faso

Looking ahead



The work we do is needed now more than ever. As we enter the third year of our strategy¹², we remain committed to reversing deforestation and land degradation in the drylands of Africa, and catalysing change across the

region to create resilient and thriving communities.

Our strategy focuses on three key areas to achieve our vision of a thriving future for Africa's drylands.

Our areas of focus



Empowered families

Thriving, resilient and empowered families are central to achieving long-lasting change across the drylands.



Empowered communities

Collective action is key for communities to achieve substantial local ecological restoration and poverty reduction.



Empowering systems

Our work is part of a broader movement, and the scale of the challenges is too great to tackle alone.

¹² treeaid.org/media/koxdcdcc/tree-aid_strategy-2022-27_long_final-web.pdf

We have grown over five million trees since 2022 and are on target to reach our goal of 12 million by 2027, with the aim of growing four million in 2024 alone – the most we have ever grown in a single year. We have already started several exciting new projects and have more in the pipeline for 24/25.

The local governance model for forest resources that we developed in Burkina Faso is now being adopted by a new project¹³ in Mali, supported by Darwin Extra. This project focuses on enhancing women's ability to manage their natural resources, reduce pressure on the forest and increase the income of village tree enterprises.

We have also launched new projects in Ethiopia's Central Rift Valley, aiming to grow half a million trees in the first year, as well as another project focused on scaling up agroforestry and biodiversity conservation in the Amhara region, in partnership with CIFOR-ICRAF.

In Burkina Faso, a new project has already begun, focused on strengthening the resilience of communities impacted by the security crisis in the country, with support from the EU.

In the coming year we will continue to raise the voices of the communities we represent, raise the profile of the issues faced by those living in the drylands of Africa,

and demand increased international climate and development funding focused on nature-based solutions and adaptation within the region.

¹³ treeaid.org/projects/mali/promoting-forest-governance-in-segou



Bassibri Zoundi, Koanken village, Burkina Faso

Thank you

On behalf of the 1,701,380 people we supported in the drylands of Africa in 2023/24, we would like to thank the corporate supporters, trusts, foundations, institutions and individuals who made our work possible.

We are extremely grateful for your support.

Institutional funders

Thank you to our institutional funders, including:

Alliance for a Green Revolution in Africa (AGRA)
 Challenge Fund for Youth Employment
 City of Ypres
 CIFOR-ICRAF
 Darwin Initiative
 Enabel
 European Union
 Global Shea Alliance
 International Olympic Committee (IOC)

Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA)
 Swiss Development Cooperation - Burkina Faso
 Netherlands Development Cooperation Burkina Faso
 Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO)
 Dutch Water Authorities
 United Nation Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)



Gaani village, Ghana

Trusts, foundations & corporate supporters

Thank you also to the following trusts, foundations, and corporate supporters for their support throughout the year:

- | | |
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| 2000trees Festival | The Rolfe Charitable Trust |
| A B. Pollen | The Roughley Charitable Trust |
| A J & B A Day Charitable Trust | The Souter Charitable Trust |
| Allan & Nesta Ferguson Charitable Trust | The Whitaker Charitable Trust |
| Alland & Robert | The Wyatt-Spearman Trust |
| Barton Hyett Associates Ltd | Travel Local |
| Carbon Underwriting | Treedom |
| Caterham Overseas Aid Trust | Trees for All |
| Cirque Furniture | Treework Environmental Practice |
| Converted Media Ltd (Software Path) | Unicorn Grocery |
| Dreaming Fish | Vegfam |
| Eamonn Wall & Co | Marsh Charitable Trust |
| Ecosia | Microsoft |
| Edwina Fenwick Will Trust | Miss K M Harbinson Charitable Trust |
| Eleos Compliance | Myrtle Charitable Trust |
| European Investment Bank (EU Climate Bank) | Nelsons |
| Forrest Brown | Ohh Deer Ltd |
| Harapan Trust | Palmstead Nurseries |
| J C J Eaton Charitable Trust | Prestige - Meyer Group Ltd |
| Joseph Rochford Gardens Ltd | Rhodes Charity |
| Juniper Trading | Roger and Sarah Bancroft Clark Charitable Trust |
| The Mullion Trust | Room Price Genie |
| The Patrick and Helena Frost Foundation | Saxham Trust |
| The Paul Foundation | Schroder Charity Committee |
| The Rest-Harrow Trust | Soroptimist International |
| The Roger Raymond Charitable Trust | St Bega Charitable Trust |
| | Stonewall Park Charitable Trust |
| | The 3 Ts Charitable Trust |

- The Bryan Guinness Charitable Trust
- The Cumber Family Charitable Trust
- The Frays Charitable Trust
- The Fulmer Charitable Trust

- The Gibbs Trust
- The Hedley Denton Charitable Trust
- The Leonard Laity Stoaite Charitable Trust
- The Morel Charitable Trust

Staff and volunteers

We recognise the huge and ongoing contribution made by staff in our offices in Addis Ababa, Bamako, Bristol, Niamey, Ouagadougou and Tamale, and in particular those staff working directly with our programme participants.

We extend our gratitude and acknowledge their energetic commitment to Tree Aid's mission, values and programmes. We are also extremely grateful to the volunteers who donated their time to Tree Aid this year.

Patrons

We would also like to thank Tree Aid's patrons, Adjoa Andoh, Hilary Benn MP, Joanna Lumley OBE, FRGS, and Zoë Wanamaker CBE, for their time and support.



Adjoa Andoh, Yendi district, Ghana



www.treeaid.org • info@treeaid.org • 0117 909 6363



Téwaka village, Burkina Faso

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