

# UPDATE



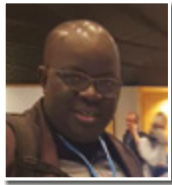
2019 ISSUE 14



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- **YOUR QUESTIONS FROM THE SUPPORTER SURVEY ANSWERED!**
- **TREE AID IN MALI – A BRIEF HISTORY AND NEW REGREENING PROJECT**

TREES MEAN LIFE TREES MEAN LIFE TREES MEAN LIFE



Dear supporters,

I recently visited the UK to present at the Institute of Chartered Foresters' National Conference.

I was proud to stand

before a crowd of colleagues from across the international foresting community and discuss the impact of TREE AID's work.

While visiting I also worked with UK-based colleagues on TREE AID's strategy. I was able to share insight from our project partners and the communities that we work so closely with on a day to day basis, and what TREE AID means to them.

We also discussed the recent supporter survey, and it was fantastic to hear how enthusiastically you as supporters speak about the impact you're having in the drylands of Africa.

The feedback received in the survey was used to decide what to focus on in this edition of Update, and you can find some of your questions answered on pages 6-7. I hope you enjoy reading about the life-changing work we're able to achieve thanks to your support.

Georges Bazongo,  
Director of West Africa Operations

Front cover image: Ramatou Diarra, a future member of a TREE AID project in Mali

## Highlights in this issue

- 4** Restoring Koulikoro and a history of Mali projects



- 6** Your questions from the supporter survey answered!



- 8** The Forest-Farm Interface project



Get the latest news and insights about our work on our website [www.treeaid.org.uk](http://www.treeaid.org.uk)

Sign-up to receive TREE AID email updates for the latest news, insights and information on how to get more involved. [www.treeaid.org.uk/subscribe-to-our-email-newsletter/](http://www.treeaid.org.uk/subscribe-to-our-email-newsletter/)

Please get in touch if you would like to stop or change the information you receive from us.



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# NEWS

## SUPPORTER SURVEY

In the March edition of Update we asked you to tell us a bit more about yourselves, and why you support TREE AID. We found out:

- The issues that are most important to you are reforestation and protecting and regenerating the environment.
- You are most driven to support TREE AID because of our practical and holistic approach to helping people and the environment.
- You'd like to receive more in-depth information on our projects and approaches.

We hope you'll find our feature on page 8 interesting, and we would be interested in your feedback.

As part of your responses, many supporters had a few specific questions on our approach to projects. Turn to page 6 for a survey-inspired Q&A with the TREE AID Operations team!

If you have any more feedback about the work you help make possible, please do get in touch and let us know.

## DELIVERING SOCIAL BENEFITS FROM THE WORLD'S FORESTS



In April we attended the Institute of Chartered Foresters National Conference. Pictured are CEO John, West Africa Director Georges, Lead Technical Advisor Pietro and Fundraising Manager Clare. The team had a fantastic couple of days speaking to individuals across the forestry sector, and were particularly enthused to meet many people at the beginning of their careers. This year's conference focused on the UK's role in global forestry, and we were delighted that Georges was invited to present on the impact your support is having on global forestry and the lives of communities in West Africa.

## WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY EVENT IN BRISTOL

With the help of Professor Alice Roberts, Badminton School and 300 members of the public, TREE AID spread the word that now is the TIME to act, to re-green the planet and slow down the effects of climate change.

TREE AID celebrated World Environment Day by encouraging the people of Bristol to transform our white 'TIME' sculpture by painting on their own green



saplings of hope. The collaborative art piece was made from reclaimed wood from Bristol Wood Recycling Project by local artist Jay Roerade.

**UPDATE**

# PROJECT RESTORING KOULIKORO

April 2019-March 2022

## OBJECTIVES:

- Plant 10,000 trees
- Regenerate 140,000 trees
- Restore 2,000 hectares of degraded land
- Train 300 farmers in Assisted Natural Regeneration

# TREE AID IN MALI



## - A BRIEF HISTORY

TREE AID has worked in Mali since 1997. TREE AID's programme of work in Mali has been around restoring degraded land in the central-south of the country including the Segou and Mopti regions. TREE AID has targeted this area because of the severe degradation from high levels of poverty and climate change.

The Restoring Koulikoro project will build on our previous 'regreening' programme of work, in the region of Mopti as well as the towns of Segou, Samine and Sakoiba. This programme aimed to restore degraded land between Mopti and Segou through tree planting and assisted natural regeneration (ANR).

# PROJECTS COMPLETED

'Regreening Mopti' Oct 2012 – Dec 2015 saw the implementation of local management agreements for timber resources covering 15 municipalities, and planting and regenerating more than one million trees.



'Regreening Segou' Mar 2013 – Feb 2017 planted and regenerated almost 400,000 trees and developed three forest management groups protecting 23,760 hectares of land.

'Regreening Samine and Sakoiba' Jan 2016 – Dec 2018 project came to a close last December. The project planted and regenerated nearly 175,000 trees, restoring over 2,700 hectares of degraded land.



## Assisted Natural Regeneration (ANR)

ANR is a method used to enhance and encourage tree growth from degraded land and shrub vegetation by protecting seedlings. With ANR, forests grow faster than they would without this intervention.

# NEW PROJECT: BRINGING THIS APPROACH TO THE NEARBY KOULIKORO REGION

This new project aims to reverse the devastating effects of deforestation and natural resource degradation in the Koulikoro region of Mali. We will increase tree cover in the region and train local people to sustainably manage and restore their land. By planting trees that can be used by local communities, we will help relieve pressures on the existing tree resources. And in doing so, we will strengthen the resilience of rural families to climate shocks, whilst increasing food security and contributing to poverty alleviation. We also aim to increase the productivity of farmland for 200 rural families, through improved management of the natural resources they rely on to survive. This enables a holistic and long-lasting approach to sustainability and change in these areas.



## CASE STUDY: RAMATOU DIARRA



**Ramatou is 55, and lives in the village of Bouanidjé in the Koulikoro region.** Like so many others in her community, Ramatou earns her income from

the land. But this has become more difficult in recent years. She says:

*"From my childhood to today, there have been a lot of changes. In the environment, everything is heading towards reduction; the trees, the fruits, the wood.*

*Processing non-timber forest products is a source of income, and trees enrich our farmland. [But] urban pressure has a bigger and bigger impact on our*

*environment as excessive tree-felling and overexploitation of forest products affects our agriculture and the income we get from trees."*

The Restoring Koulikoro project will work to combat this deforestation, by planting trees and restoring trees and soil in the area. This will restore the communities' ability to process non-timber forest products as a sustainable source of income. This won't come a moment too soon for Ramatou and her community.

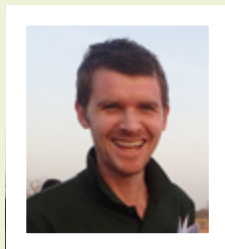
*"I can tell you, I fight every day for the well-being of my children. To find food for them, to care for them, to clothe them. Human pressure on the trees, excessive tree-felling. These are the reasons for the lack of money."*

# YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

## A Q&A WITH THE OPERATIONS TEAM



Georges Bazongo  
Director of West Africa  
Operations



Sean McGough  
Programme Manager



Becky Graham  
Programme Funding Officer



Pietro Carpena  
Lead Technical Advisor

We had a great response to our recent supporter survey, and many supporters took the chance to ask us their burning questions. Some of these will be used to guide content of future Update magazines, but in the meantime we put some questions to the TREE AID Operations team to answer immediately. You may even recognise one of your questions below!

### **Q. How do trees fight against drought? How do small trees affect water table, local climate, other vegetation?**

**A.** Forests are essential for human well-being and provide a wide range of ecosystem services, including 'water retention' – the water absorbed or used by forests. Forests can soak up excess rainwater, preventing run-offs and damage from flooding.

People do not often associate forests with arid areas, yet they are critical in terms of soil protection, mitigating climate change and maintaining biodiversity.

The incorporation of trees into farming systems has enormous potential to mitigate the effects of drought, prevent desertification and restore degraded soils. This is called agroforestry, and can help to boost food production (for humans as well as animals) and provide alternative sources of nutrition or income when crop yields are low.

Agroforestry systems increase soil organic

matter and available nutrients, improving the fertility of soils and increasing productivity of the land. Trees also provide erosion control, improve water infiltration, provide land cover and shade and act as windbreaks. Trees provide food, fuel, shelter and income during times of hardship.

### **Q. How do you choose where to work and with which partners?**

**A.** Where we choose to work is based on numerous factors: the needs of the local population is central but we also consider how and where our approaches will have the biggest impact. We focus on those below or near the poverty line who can benefit most from the use of trees in their livelihoods.

Where to start a project is decided in collaboration with numerous stakeholders including our own staff, partner staff and government departments. We often follow up with discussions with the community to get a deeper understanding of how they work

now and how our programmes could better improve their lives and their environment.

Our project partners are often local civil society organisations who are embedded within the communities they serve – giving them a greater capacity to support the communities drive for change. We also work with local government to support their capacity to serve their constituents and with international partners who can provide additional skills and experience to compliment our work.

**Q. What failures do you encounter, and how do you manage risk? When problems arise, what is learnt by them?**

**A.** As in all projects – especially those working in vulnerable and sometimes volatile areas – we experience setbacks and challenges. These risks are monitored through regular reporting and communications between our country offices and the UK. An example of an issue we've faced recently is flooding on planting sites on our river restoration project in Ghana last year. In order to make the most of the available water, trees were planted nearer the river first. But unprecedented heavy rains caused the first flooding in 15 years and some trees were lost. We were able to supplement the planting and still grew more than 1 million trees in one year. However, this year we will not plant next to the river first – rather starting further away from the river and moving inwards as the rainy season comes to a close. In the design stage of projects, our assumptions are challenged and the project design amended where necessary.

**Q. How do you track a project's progress over time?**

**A.** The projects we run are monitored on a regular basis through monthly and three monthly reports. These reports track progress by activity and allow for issues to be raised. They also provide

information on progress against our project targets.

In order to understand the impact of the project we use participant surveys that are usually undertaken at the beginning and end of a project. These surveys will look at relevant characteristics of the targeted households or local environment to see how they change over time. This may be looking at household income, fuel-wood usage, farm productivity, vegetation cover or the number of different species in a given forest space. We regularly check in against our impact targets through discussions with the project participants – understanding how they are benefitting from the project and what challenges they are facing helps us to adapt where necessary to improve our results.

**Q. Do you ever join up with other charities?**

**A.** One of our targets for this strategy period is to grow TREE AID's influence. This is achieved in a number of ways, including building partnerships with other non-profit organisations. We have worked with other organisations in order to use our respective experience to achieve greater impact. For example, we were part of the Building Resilience and Adaptation to Climate and Environmental Disasters (BRACED) project in Niger that was led by CARE International. We also collaborate with other major forestry groups such as (Centre for International Forestry Research) CIFOR and (World Agroforestry Centre) ICRAF. Most of our work is delivered with local NGOs, who are able to work directly with communities. We help develop these local NGOs through training and other support.

**You can read more about a partnership project on the next page**



# THE WEST AFRICA FOREST-FARM INTERFACE PROJECT (WAFFI)

RESEARCH  
PROJECT



The project aims to strengthen smallholder food security, income and gender equity. It's a collaborative effort by the Center for International Forestry Research (CIFOR), the World Agroforestry Centre (ICRAF) and TREE AID. In this article we explain what WAFFI is, and the approach that was taken to the project.

## What is the West Africa Forest-Farm Interface?

In Northern Ghana and the south of Burkina Faso, people have managed multi-use landscapes for generations. These include forests, pastures, farmland and agroforestry parklands. This is the 'forest-farm interface,' where it is difficult to separate agricultural land from trees and forests.

The functions of these diverse multi-use landscapes are not always apparent to outsiders, and local people often lack tools and opportunities to explain these systems or articulate the challenges they face.

Existing government policies treat forests and agriculture separately, focusing on scaling up agriculture or the conservation of forests. What they don't do is work on strengthening and improving the existing smallholder systems.

## What are the aims of the project?

The project is trying to understand how people use and manage resources, and the challenges that they face. Priority actions are then agreed by everyone involved, with the ultimate goal of improving the income and food security of communities. All community members are given a voice to help identify the problems.

Integrating forest management systems that are good for the environment and for people helps contribute to:

- a more sustainable management of natural resource assets
- poverty alleviation
- gender equity
- greater wellbeing of communities





## The WAFFI project and participatory action research

The project uses a method called Participatory Action Research (PAR) which places villagers at the centre of influencing future activities.

It is also called 'learning by doing together'. Through PAR, researchers and local people learn together and collaborate to solve problems. In this way it accesses indigenous knowledge to build understanding of local perspectives and expertise.

PAR helps find answers to questions that community members have about their trees, forest and farms. Technicians and PAR participants work together to decide on key issues and research questions, then they decide what information to collect to help them learn more about the issue and how to collect it. The information collection activities might include mapping, group discussions, or writing down information on data sheets. Then, in a group setting, villagers share the information, discuss it, and decide on next steps. These steps are repeated, sometimes in a single day, every week, or once a month.

## Example of a 'learning by doing together' process

From February to May 2018, PAR participants in the Wombio village in Ghana worked on an issue that they identified with WAFFI team members – access to firewood. Specifically the difficulty in collecting firewood and the long distances covered to find it. They then implemented activities to collect information related to the issue, and met regularly to reflect and decide on next steps. Representatives then presented the results at a Village Exchange Workshop in June 2018. PAR participants were able to learn from other villages and discuss key issues that were common to all villages and how these were approached within each village.



# FANTASTIC

## THANK YOU!

The fundraising support we received during our *She Grows* appeal was truly amazing and we cannot thank our wonderful community of fundraisers enough for such incredible commitment and involvement. All the money raised will have double the impact as it will be doubled by the UK government to help 1,000 women in Mali to grow their way out of poverty. Without this support we would not be able to continue our vital work, planting trees and alleviating poverty across the drylands of Africa.

### They danced and *She Grows*

In April, Louise Bracey, organised a charity ballet class to raise money for the *She Grows* appeal. Louise, an ex-professional ballet dancer and founder of Bristol Adult Ballet Classes, has always been passionate about protecting the environment. She said: *"It was the perfect way for me to help support a charity that's values are so close to my heart. We all had a great time and a good dance which was made even better by knowing we were helping to make a difference for women in Mali!"*



**TREE AID would like to extend a huge thank you to Louise and everyone who donated and took part!**

### School support!

Thank you to Badminton School in Bristol for amazing commitment to and support for our *She Grows* appeal. After kindly choosing TREE AID to be their charity for the Summer Fete on Sunday 6th June, the school raised an incredible £1,500.46! This will be doubled by the UK government and will help transform the lives of women living in Mali. Not only did they raise an amazing amount for our appeal, the school got involved on World Environment Day in helping us to raise awareness about our work and the importance of planting trees in a time of environmental degradation. Teachers and 11 students, including members of the Environment Committee, came to join us on College Green, Bristol to take part in our interactive art installation – see page 3. With Professor Alice Roberts present, sixth form students gave an interview about the importance of being involved with environmental campaigning and why they felt passionately about our *She Grows* appeal.



# FUNDRAISING



## RUNNING TO TRANSFORM LIVES!

In May, our amazing TREE AID team of runners took to the sunny streets of Bristol to run in the Bristol 10k. All six runners smashed their times and we were overwhelmed by their incredible fundraising efforts, which currently stand at **£2,700!** A huge thank you to the whole team and all who sponsored them!

## VOLUNTEER FOR TREE AID!

Looking for a way to get more involved with our work, meet people in your community or learn new skills?

Join the TREE AID team by volunteering with us. You can have fun and try something new while helping to change lives in the drylands of Africa.

We have many events throughout the year and are always looking for wonderful supporters to come along and help out. If you would like to get involved or find out more then we would love to hear from you!

Please contact us at: [info@treeaid.org](mailto:info@treeaid.org) for more information. Or visit our TREE AID Facebook page and join the TREE AID volunteering group.

## 100 Trees event

Thank you to Patrick Forbes and everyone at the parish of St. Nicolas, Hinxworth for coming together to fundraise for communities across dryland Africa in May. In their 100 Trees event, the parish hoped to raise £1,000 for the *She Grows* appeal and they succeeded raising an amazing £1,267. This will be matched by the UK government, going twice as far in helping the communities we work with to transform their lives. We are so grateful to everyone who donated and took part in this fundraising event.

Contact the **Supporters Team** to request a copy of our brilliant fundraising guide.

Call us on **0117 909 6363** or email [info@treeaid.org](mailto:info@treeaid.org)

# Leave a gift in your Will to TREE AID

Leave a lasting legacy of hope to people living in some of the poorest places in the world.



**T**rees are an essential element in the battle against poverty, hunger, and of course desertification. Their fruits, nuts, seeds and leaves provide nutrition and income and they are crucial for healthy environments.

Gifts in Wills have a huge impact on our work. Once you've taken care of your family and friends in your Will, could you consider leaving a gift to TREE AID in your Will? However big or small, your gift will help us expand our projects in the drylands of Africa and help more

communities in need, long into the future. Legacies have a truly transformative effect on communities across dryland Africa.

If you don't have a Will, one option is to use the free online Will writing service Bequeathed. They make writing a Will simple and offer expert advice, highlighting any complicated issues that you may want to speak to a solicitor about. You can start writing your will today by visiting: [www.bequeathed.org](http://www.bequeathed.org)

*“Trees do everything – give jobs, sequester carbon, moderate climate, protect soil. Global South equality and the environment are the two issues closest to my heart, and so I was very happy to put TREE AID in my Will.”*

Nikki Jones, TREE AID supporter

If you would like to know more, please contact us on: 0117 909 6363, email [info@treeaid.org](mailto:info@treeaid.org) or write to us at TREE AID, Brunswick Court, Brunswick Square, Bristol, BS2 8PE for a 'Gifts in Wills' pack.