

CONTENTS

4-7
8-9
10-13
14-19
20-23
24-27
28-31
32-35
36-37
38-39
40-43
44-47



Our lives and livelihoods depend on nature. Nature is everything for us. It's our supermarket: it's our food, our medicine, our clean water. But nature is being threatened, and our lives are being threatened. The threat that countries in the Sahel are facing is enormous. We need to think differently. It's time to stop talking and take action.

Hindou Oumarou Ibrahim,

Chadian environmental activist, speaking on a Tree Aid panel at UNCCD COP16 in Riyadh

MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR AND CEO

In a growing climate crisis, our work with communities to build sustainable livelihoods and restore landscapes across Africa becomes more urgent every year.

Reflecting on our achievements in 2024/25, we our partners, our staff and volunteers, and Tree Aid's Board of Trustees, Thank across our programmes.

It is with great pride that we can report growing over 7 million trees and supporting over 1.2 million people across our programmes in the last year. Our projects continue to grow in scale and depth across all of our country programmes and we have set up new projects in Senegal,

The challenges remain stark in the environments and communities we serve: land degradation, drought and insecurity continue to hinder our efforts. Yet, the impact of our work continues to prove that solutions are very much at our fingertips. Forest and farmland restoration

- bringing real changes to people's lives and livelihoods across Africa – is vital work that gives incredible results for those facing the realities of uncertain rains, degrading lands and food shortages.





launched our papers on Forest experience and expertise can

Azerbaijan, we gained global Champion Award. This award building community resilience but, more importantly, that we do this hand-in-hand with communities – recognising their leading role in finding adaptive strategies that work for them.

Financially, Tree Aid grew stronger in 2024/25. Income rose to £11.3 million, up from £10.8 million the previous year. More importantly, we significantly increased our programme spending to £12.6 million, amplifying our reach and delivering lasting change across Africa.

Looking ahead, we are committed to delivering on our ambitious strategy and growing our impact in the vears to come. We couldn't do this without our dedicated supporters and funders. Thank you for helping us drive lasting change for communities on the frontline of the climate crisis.



Elizabeth FDan3 Elizabeth Davis Chair of Trustees



Tom Skirrow Chief Executive

THE YEAR IN NUMBERS



7,385,080 trees grown



1,205,616 people supported



24,692 ha of new land sustainably managed



new VTEs established and supported



7,726 ha of new land benefitted from restoration



new communities worked with



77% increase in income sourced from NTFPs



55% of people we worked with were women



increase in average household income

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

VTEs = village tree enterprises

ha = hectares

MALI

771,700 trees grown

65,675 people supported across **348** communities

859 ha of land benefitting from restoration activities

22,613 ha of new land benefitting from sustainable management

55 new enterprises supported

NIGER

27,820 people supported across **71** communities

31 new enterprises supported

ETHIOPIA

533,172 trees grown

14,924 people supported across **23** communities

678 ha of land benefitting from restoration activities

378 new enterprises supported

management

2.079 ha of new land

BURKINA FASO

848.059 people supported

across 1,354 communities 5,617 ha of land benefitting

from restoration activities

benefitting from sustainable

3,033,909 trees grown

SENEGAL

208,848 trees grown

6,530 people supported across **60** communities

247 ha of land benefitting from restoration activities

17 new enterprises supported

GHANA

2,837,451 trees grown

3,978 people supported across **114** communities

326 ha of land benefitting from restoration activities

8 • Tree Aid Annual Report 2024/25

GROWING OUR INFLUENCE

tCO₂e = tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent

In 2024/25, Tree Aid made significant strides in our advocacy and policy engagement to support communities on the frontline of the climate crisis. By working at both international and national levels, we've strengthened our voice, shared our expertise and championed locally-led solutions to land restoration and climate resilience across Africa.

Championing communities in restoration

We continued to make the case for placing communitybased organisations at the heart of restoration efforts. By engaging in international funding and policy discussions, we advocated for funding models that empower local communities and deliver greater long-term impact. In the last year, our work has helped shape thinking on how international finance can be better channelled to community-based organisations, ensuring those closest to the land have the resources and agency to restore it.

Advancing decentralised forest governance

A major milestone in 2024/25 was the publication of Forest Governance in Burkina Faso: Key Learnings¹. Drawing on 17 years of our experience, this landmark report demonstrates the vital role that decentralised governance plays in sustainable forest management. It provides robust evidence to demonstrate that, when local communities and governments work together, restoration efforts are more inclusive, effective and lasting. These insights are already across the drylands of Africa.

Unlocking carbon finance for dryland communities

The voluntary carbon market (VCM) presents a major opportunity to drive funding towards dryland restoration. In partnership with the World Economic Forum, we copublished The Untapped Potential of Great Green Wall Voluntary Carbon Market *Projects*², which highlights the region's potential to generate up to 1.8 billion tCO₂e in credits. The paper makes a compelling case for scaling investment that is high quality, equitable and community led.



VCM = voluntary carbon market

Building on this momentum, we have secured two large-scale VCM projects, with more in the pipeline. These projects are built around benefit-sharing mechanisms, which give communities both a direct share in carbon revenues and a leading role in restoring their land.

Making climate finance work for communities

In 2024/25, we published a detailed analysis of climate finance flows to the Sahel and Horn of Africa³, revealing that only a small portion of funding reaches the local level. This research shines a light on critical gaps in how agriculture and nature-based solutions are funded and strengthens our advocacy to reform climate finance systems, so they are more accessible and accountable to those most affected by the climate crisis.

Strengthening in-country influence

In 2024/25, we strengthened our advocacy impact by expanding in-country capacity and alianing efforts across programme and international teams. Country staff are now contributing to high-level policy consultations, while the international team supports global messaging. This joined-up approach is helping bring community voices into national and international spaces, championing locally-led restoration, fair climate finance and decentralised governance. Continued investment in staff skills, shared learning and partnerships will help grow our advocacy impact in the year ahead.

12 • Tree Aid Annual Report 2024/25

^{3 &}lt;a href="https://www.treeaid.org/analysis-trends-climate-finance-sahel-horn-africa/">https://www.treeaid.org/analysis-trends-climate-finance-sahel-horn-africa/

BURKINA FASO

Burkina Faso is a landlocked country in West Africa that is heavily reliant on rainfed agriculture. This makes it particularly vulnerable to climate shocks like droughts, floods and erratic rainfall.

Today, **64.5%** of people live in poverty¹ and **2.7 million** are facing acute food insecurity². The loss of **9,170** hectares of tree cover between 2000 and

2020³ has further undermined soil health and resilience. Meanwhile, escalating conflict has displaced more than **two million** people within the country⁴.

We've been working with communities since 1994, growing and protecting trees to tackle poverty and adapt to the climate crisis.

- 1 https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI2024/BFA.pdf
- 2 https://www.wfp.org/countries/burkina-faso
- 3 https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/BFA/
- 4 https://reporting.unhcr.org/operational/operations/burkina-faso



The project has brought me a lot of things, particularly in terms of a change of mindset. On top of that, with the reforestation work as part of the project's activities, we've had additional income. I used this income to buy the groundnuts I planted. These resources also enabled me to buy manure for my cowpea field. I'm really happy about that.

Alimata Tiendrébéogo, Kougrissincé village



GROWING CARBON INCOME

The Tond Tenga project (meaning 'Our Land' in Mòoré) is a new way of usina carbon funding that puts communities at the centre. Over 40 years, this largescale restoration project will support re-greening activities that are expected to remove more than 3.1 million tonnes of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. It will also bring real financial benefits to local people, with over \$30 million expected to be shared with participating communities.

At the same time, the project will improve people's livelihoods, protect biodiversity, and promote

gender equality across four regions in Burkina Faso. By integrating carbon finance with community-led land restoration, Tond Tenga offers a scalable model for addressing environmental degradation and poverty in Africa's drylands.

This year, we have scaled up activities on the project with **2.9 million** trees planted. The project was also the first in the world to be registered using a new, globally-approved standard for high quality carbon credits under Verra's VM0047 methodology¹, putting it at the forefront of best practice in the sector.

1 https://www.treeaid.org/blogs-updates/tree-aid-project-first-to-meet-global-standards-for-high-integrity-carbon-credits/



NEW PROJECTS

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

Our work in Burkina Faso is growing with four new projects underway. One project, with support from the Dutch Embassy, is creating a small green forest near the capital, Ouagadougou, to demonstrate how land restoration can succeed. Another project, supported by the World Bank, is focusing

on supporting vulnerable groups by developing nutrition gardens. Two other projects are focusing on creating sustainable farming jobs and supporting women and young people to earn more by selling NTFPs in the Centre Ouest and Hauts-Bassins regions of Burkina Faso, with funding from AGRA.



Access to food was sometimes difficult for us before we got involved in the project. With the project, we realised that NTFPs were more beneficial to us than cutting and selling wood or charcoal. With trees, we have NTFPs. On top of that, the trees fertilise the soil in the fields, increasing yields. As a result, we can easily meet our food requirements.

Awa Convolbo, Koulpellé village



ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia is a landlocked country in the Horn of Africa and has some very different terrain to West Africa but the complex challenges people experience are similar.

Between 2000 and 2020, Ethiopia lost **738,000** hectares of tree cover¹. Without trees, the land is losing its fertility,

https://www.wfp.org/countries/ethiopia

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20 • Tree Aid Annual Report 2024/25

https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/ETH/

https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI2024/ETH.pdf

which is making it harder for people to grow enough food. As a result, 69% of the population are living in poverty² and 10.2 million people, including over three million internally-displaced people, are severely food insecure³. We have been working with communities here since 1991 to address this.

GROWING SHEA'S POTENTIAL

In 2024/25, we launched a new project in the Gambella region of Ethiopia, focused on shea with the support of the Darwin Initiative. Shea is native to this part of Ethiopia and holds great potential for both environmental restoration and local livelihoods. The project is working with **four** communities in Itang, Abobo and Gambella Zuria to protect forests, restore nature and reduce poverty.

Together, we'll care for over **16,000** hectares of forest, restoring **3,000** hectares of degraded land by planting and nurturing trees, especially shea.

We've seen the incredible impact of shea in West Africa, where we've worked for years to build strong, sustainable value chains. Now, we're bringing that expertise to Ethiopia. Our teams across Africa are sharing knowledge and working together to make this new chapter a success – for communities, for nature and for the future



PROTECTING METEMA FOREST

Metema forest is the last green belt before the start of the desert. But the climate crisis and deforestation have taken hold and, without action, the forest could be extinct in 20 years. Our Future Forest and Developing Rural Resistance programme partners with communities to protect and govern their land and tackle the climate crisis.

HERE'S THE IMPACT FROM MIDWAY THROUGH THE PROJECT:

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

Working with **2,846** people, the two projects are strengthening local management of Boswellia forests that produce frankincense, have provided warehouses to store frankincense and provided training on how to market it. Ongoing research into the impact of different tapping approaches on the health of trees will support the development of more sustainable practices in harvesting frankincense.



4%

average reduction in the number of households below the poverty line



305%

average increase in household income sourced from NTFPs



16%

increase in the proportion of women reporting equal or more power than their male partners



39%

increase in the number of households reporting strong forest governance*



ETHIOPIA

GHANA

In northern Ghana, 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. Between 2000 and 2020, Ghana lost **573,000** hectares of tree cover¹.

Around **80%** of the people in the region are living in poverty² and over **one million** people are food insecure³. We've been working with communities in northern Ghana since 1994 to address these issues.

- 1 https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/GHA
- https://ophi.org.uk/sites/default/files/Ghana MPI report 2020.pdf
- 3 https://www.wfp.org/countries/ghana

STRENGTHENING SHEA

We work with communities to restore shea parklands, which are vital landscapes that support both people and nature. In 2024/25, we planted over 80,500 shea seedlings, 8,749 of which were carefully grafted to improve their growth and resilience. The project, supported by the Global Shea Alliance and Soroptimist International, focuses on planting shea trees across degraded communal land and farmland using an agroforestry approach, growing trees alongside crops to improve soil, restore the land and provide long-term income.

We're also working to strengthen the shea value chain by supporting women's groups to produce and sell shea-based products like shea butter. Four women's cooperative unions have been established and two new shea processing centres are already up and running, supporting women to boost production and earn a more reliable income. Communities are seeing real benefits, restoring their land while creating opportunities for women to thrive.



80,500 shea seedlings planted



8,749 seedlings grafted



women's cooperative unions established



new shea processing centres up and running

© Jhoe Sey/Tree Aid

REFORESTING BONGO

The Bongo reforestation project, funded by Trees for All and the Blue Deal. has delivered significant environmental and agricultural benefits for 20 participating communities. Together, they developed local management groups and plans while planting an impressive 314,410 trees, including agroforestry species that enhance soil health and resilience. Farmers have already seen major improvements in crop yields since 2021, with aroundnut production rising by 150%, rice by 132%, beans by 425%, and soya beans by 377%. Ongoing donor support is funding a seven-year monitoring and evaluation phase to ensure long-term impact and continue to restore more land.

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

Beyond environmental agins, the project has strenathened community capacity and social outcomes. Although fewer farmers than targeted received training, an impressive 91.8% now use sustainable natural resource management techniques on their land, more than doubling the average number of practices used. Women have particularly benefited, with a marked increase in their participation in leadership roles, community decision-makina and access to resources. NTFPs now make up 25% of household income, up from just 1.1%, highlighting lasting progress in reforestation, sustainable farming and community empowerment.



Apart from farming, I also engage in shea nut picking in the farm. I dry it, parboil it and then break the shells and get the shea kernels. Sometimes I sell the kernels like that, there are other times I process it into shea butter to sell. When I sell, I am able to get extra income to pay for my children's school fees, or buy uniforms for them, or sometimes I buy ingredients to cook at home.

Ndarkli Mpaambu, Lakaldo village



species

314,410 trees planted including agroforestry



91.8% farmers now sustainably manage their land



25% of household income now comes from NTFPs





Mali is one of the world's poorest countries, with over **68%** of the population living in severe poverty¹. Most people rely on farming and livestock, yet these livelihoods are highly vulnerable to rainfall variability and land degradation across Mali's vast Sahelian plains.

Between 2000 and 2020, the country lost **256,000** hectares

of tree cover², contributing to soil erosion and environmental decline. At the same time, **1.5 million** people are facing acute food insecurity³, highlighting the urgent need for sustainable land and resource management. Tree Aid has been working with communities in Mali since 1993 to tackle these interconnected challenges.

- https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI2024/MLI.pdf
- 2 https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/MLI/
- 3 <u>https://www.wfp.org/countries/mali</u>

PROMOTING FOREST GOVERNANCE

The Ségou region of Mali has been hit particularly hard by deforestation and the effects of the climate crisis. Through our three-year project, we've been building capacity in the management and sustainable use of two forests: Safienso and Sanekuy.

As the project ended, the final evaluation showed that, in Safienso forest, tree density increased by 36%, vegetation cover increased by 10% and production potential rose by 14%. In Sanekuy forest, tree density increased by 21%,

NTFPs = non-timber forest products

vegetative cover increased by 10% and production potential increased by 10%. The project surpassed its target of 3,000 households, reaching 8,479 households (9,934 participants).

Investment in training and provision of equipment for NTFP value chains had a huge impact, which saw average household income from NTFPs increase by **720%**. Over **80%** of households reported their local forest governance as strong - a **69%** increase since 2022.

SCALING UP RESTORATION

Thanks to further funding from Darwin Initiative, we scaled up community-driven forest governance in Mali with a new project called Anw Ka Siguida, meaning 'Our Land' in Bambara. In 2024, over 523,000 trees were planted across three priority sites and 495 hectares of degraded land are now under restoration by local cooperatives.

We also trained community members in sustainable forest management and established three seed groves to protect and propagate endangered tree species, ensuring longterm ecological resilience.



523,000

trees planted across three sites



495

hectares of degraded land under restoration



36%

increase in tree density in Safienso and a 21% increase in Sanekuy



8,479

households supported to earn an income from NTFPs



720%

increase in average household income from NTFPs



69%

increase in households reporting 'strong local forest governance'





OLYMPIC SPIRIT, COMMUNITY ROOTS

tCO₂e = tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent

In Senegal and neighbouring Mali, our work through the Olympic Forest with the International Olympic Committee (IOC) continues to make great progress. In 2024/25 alone, we planted 434,722 trees across both countries, which will contribute to the removal of over 190,000 tCO₂e over 30 years. Also in 2024/25, 609 hectares of land benefitted from restoration activities. The project has

been certified by <u>Plan Vivo</u>, a standard that supports communities and smallholders at the forefront of the climate crisis.

We began a new phase in early 2025 to sequester an additional **100,000** tCO₂e as part of the IOC's climate commitment ahead of the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026, the first Olympic event ever held on African soil.



434,722

trees planted in the Olympic Forest



609

hectares of land benefitted from restoration

EXPANDING TO A NEW REGION

A new tree planting project has started in Saint Louis, a new region for our work in Senegal. The aim is to plant 500,000 trees across 1,000 hectares of land. Work has already begun to grow seedlings and involve local communities in the planting. To support the project, Tree Aid has added two new team members in Senegal, joining our new country director, Sana Diop Dieng.



NIGER

Niger is one of the world's poorest countries, with 91%* of its population living in poverty¹. Over 80% of people depend on agriculture for food and income², yet the hot, arid climate and widespread desert make farming difficult. Between 2000 and 2020, Niger lost 4,810 hectares of tree cover³, worsening

soil degradation and food insecurity - leaving **2.2 million** people acutely food insecure⁴.

Since 2013, Tree Aid has been working with communities in Niger to tackle poverty and protect the environment. Despite ongoing security challenges, our work continues to grow.

- 1 <u>https://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/Country-Profiles/MPI2024/NER.pdf</u> *Recent estimations are below this, but the 2012 figure is the last publicly available survey
- 2 https://www.fao.org/agriculture/ippm/projects/niger/en/
- 3 https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/NER/
- 4 https://www.wfp.org/countries/niger

FOSTERING FINANCIAL INDEPENDENCE

With support from Enabel, in 2024/25 we reached an additional 1,344 women in Niger's Dosso and Tahoua regions, bringing our total impact to 5,564 women and counting. These women are building stronger futures through 288 savings and loan groups, where they not only access financial support but participate in training for income-generating activities, laying the foundation for lasting financial independence.

To ensure this knowledge spreads far and wide, we trained 205 group leaders, who in turn will share their skills with over 5,000 women, focusing on good practice for soil and water conservation, namely: techniques for creating half-moons, stone ridges and Zai pits; techniques for producing fruit and forest seedlings; and techniques for planting and maintaining forest trees.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY

INCOME

The income we received in 2024/25 increased to £11.3 million (2023/24: £10.8 million) due to the timing of when we received restricted grants.

37% Corporate & major donors

37% Institutional grants

16% Charitable trusts

8% Individuals

1% Legacies

1% Gifts in kind

EXPENDITURE

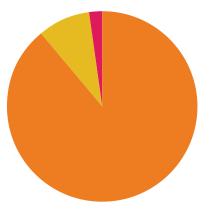
We were pleased to increase our expenditure on our charitable activities significantly, from £10.6 million in 2023/24 to £12.6 million in 2024/25.

For every £1 raised, we spent:

89p on programme delivery

9p on raising the next £1

2p on advocacy & awareness



This financial information is extracted from Tree Aid's audited Annual Report & Accounts for 2024/25. The full Report & Accounts, including the independent auditor's report, are available at www.treeaid.org.







Tree Aid continues to make strong progress toward the ambitious goals of our 2022–2027 strategic plan. As we scale up our work, we remain focused on addressing the intertwined challenges of the climate crisis, conflict, population growth and migration that threaten the livelihoods of millions of people across Africa's drylands.

40 • Tree Aid Annual Report 2024/25

Our approach combines practical action on the ground with systemic change through advocacy, ensuring that communities are empowered while the wider enabling environment evolves to support sustainable outcomes.

Empowered families

At the heart of our mission are empowered families. By providing skills, knowledge, and resources, we support households to lift themselves out of poverty while improving nutrition and resilience. Trees remain a vital source of food and income and initiatives such as nutrition gardens ensure families can access nutritious food year-round.

We continue to expand our reach, supporting village tree enterprises and increasing women's decision-making power in households. Our targets aim for a sustained reduction in extreme poverty, a doubling of household incomes and greater economic gains from non-timber forest products.



Beyond individual households, we focus on empowering communities to manage and restore their landscapes. Without rapid action to halt deforestation, millions risk losing their livelihoods to land degradation. Our programmes enable communities to

regenerate degraded land, sustainably manage forests and strengthen local governance.

By 2027, we aim to grow over 12 million trees and restore 66,000 hectares of degraded land. Upcoming largescale initiatives, including major tree planting efforts for carbon sequestration, will significantly accelerate progress.

Empowering & enabling systems

Our third priority is to create empowering and enabling systems. Sustainable change requires strong policies and financial flows that benefit frontline communities.

We are deepening our policy engagement with national and international stakeholders, making the case for decentralised forest governance, scaling highintegrity carbon investments, and advocating for climate finance that is more equitable and accessible. We are also strengthening the capacity of communitybased organisations to lead restoration efforts, ensuring that solutions are rooted in community needs.

Looking forward, we will expand evidence gathering, share learning across Africa and internationally, and highlight the transformative impact of locally-led restoration. We will also build on our growing partnerships to unlock greater investment in dryland restoration, creating lasting economic and environmental benefits for the communities we work with.

With a clear strategy, strengthened advocacy and community-driven programmes, Tree Aid is poised to scale its impact even further in the years ahead. By combining practical restoration, economic empowerment and systemic change, we remain firmly on track to achieve - and in some areas exceed - our 2022–2027 targets, building resilient futures across Africa.





TRUSTS, FOUNDATIONS & CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

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

Alland & Robert

Barton Hyett Associates Ltd

Carbon Underwriting

Cirque Furniture

DreamingFish

Ecosia

Eleos Compliance

ForrestBrown

forpeople

Juniper Trading

Microsoft

Palmstead Nurseries

Prestige - Meyer Group Ltd

Montpelier Hampshire

Foundation

Trees for All

TravelLocal

Soroptimist International

Treework Environmental

Practice

Rolfe Charitable Trust

Souter Charitable Trust

Patrick & Helena Frost

Foundation

Unicorn Grocery

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Trust

RoomPriceGenie

Paul Foundation

Kirkhouse Trust

The 3 T's Charitable Trust

The Batchworth Trust

The Gibbs Trust

Delves Charitable Trust

Marus Trust

The Morel Charitable Trust

The Serve All Trust

The Hon ML Astors

Discretionary Trust 1969

Societrees

The Helen and Michael Brown

Charitable Trust

The A S Charitable Trust

The Fulmer Charitable Trust

The Dick Foundation

The Frays Charitable Trust

St Bega Charitable Trust

Stonewall Park Charitable Trust
The Whitaker Charitable Trust

PROGRAMME PARTICIPANTS AND PARTNERS

Our work would not be possible without the hard work and commitment of the communities we work with and for. We are also honoured to work with local partner organisations who share our knowledge, expertise and passion. From everyone at Tree Aid, thank you.

PATRONS

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

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

We recognise the huge and ongoing contribution made by staff in our offices in Addis Ababa, Bamako, Bristol, Dakar, 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 very grateful to our experienced Board of Trustees and to all volunteers who donated their time to Tree Aid this year.



