



# YOUR UPDATE

**AUGUST 2023**  
**ISSUE 24**

## **INSIDE THIS ISSUE:**

- News from Burkina Faso
- Tree Aid innovations in Ghana
- Interview with a Tree Aid Project Officer in Mali



# HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE...



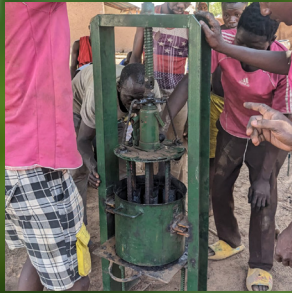
## Page 4-5

Update from  
Burkina Faso



## Page 6-7

Interview with Aly Diarra,  
a Tree Aid Project Officer



## Page 8-9

Innovations from  
projects in Ghana



**GREAT  
GREEN  
GOAL**

Dear Supporters,

I am delighted to share with you the August Update newsletter. Why not make yourself your drink of choice and sit down in your favourite spot so you can enjoy reading about the latest news on the ground! There are many exciting projects happening, none of which would be possible without your support.

Phase 2 of the Forest Governance Project in Burkina Faso is well underway. On this project, we have been working with communities across the country to manage and protect land and forests. Meanwhile in Mali, one of our Project Officers, Aly Diarra, gives us an insight into his work. Elsewhere in Ghana, some innovative work is taking place. We wanted to let you know about three brilliant innovations being used in different projects.

Thank you for standing with people in the drylands of Africa. Big or small, your support makes a difference.

Best wishes,

**Tom Skirrow**  
CEO



[www.treeaid.org](http://www.treeaid.org) | [info@treeaid.org](mailto:info@treeaid.org) | 0117 909 6363

Tree Aid is a registered charity, no. 1135156, and a company limited by guarantee, no. 03779545, incorporated in England. Registered office: Tree Aid, Brunswick Court, Brunswick Square, Bristol, BS2 8PE.



## NEWS

### The Great Green Goal appeal

An update from our Spring appeal: thank you so much to everyone who donated to our Great Green Goal appeal. We have raised more than £153,000 to date.

Your support means we can scale up our tree planting efforts and restore even more land to reverse the effects of the climate crisis. By growing the Great Green Wall, together we can help communities in the Sahel region of Africa to achieve a greener, better future for themselves and their children. Thank you!

Even though our public appeal has ended, the Great Green Wall continues to be a major focus of our work.

### Tree Aid and the Shea Global Alliance

Tree Aid CEO Tom Skirrow was elected on the Executive Committee of the Shea Global Alliance:

*"It is an absolute honour to be re-elected onto the Executive Committee of the Global Shea Alliance. Since its very inception, Tree Aid has always been a supporter of this crucial organisation which bridges the gap in the Shea market between international buyers, consumer brands, producers and civil society. The alliance is the perfect place to bring those groups together to achieve more than the sum of our parts to ensure a just and sustainable growth in the shea market which helps small holders harness the power of shea trees and lift themselves out of poverty."*



# PROJECT UPDATE: FOREST GOVERNANCE IN BURKINA FASO



Since 2007, Tree Aid has been working with communities across Burkina Faso to manage, protect, and use forests, known as our forest governance programme. Following the success of phase one, in 2019 we rolled out our work into more communities across the country.

Through this work, we are supporting people in rural areas to manage and protect trees and use them to earn an income. We are also supporting them to build water-conserving pits – known as boulis – to provide a stable source of water, all year round.

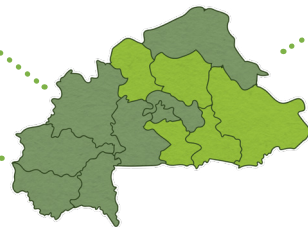
Over 70% of people in Burkina Faso live rurally and rely on land and trees to get food to eat and products to sell for an income. But the effects of the climate crisis and deforestation mean land is rapidly losing its fertility. As a result, poverty and hunger are major issues here.

To make matters worse, communities that rely on the forests don't always know who is in charge of them. This means people are often unable to manage and protect forests in the way that they need.

**The objectives:** Through this project, we are...

Providing people with the **tools and training** they need to restore and protect 25 forests

Supporting people to develop **forest management plans** to help them protect the forests for years to come



Supporting over 13,000 people to form **enterprise groups** to process and sell tree products like shea butter to make an income

Building 145 **water-conserving boulis** each holding as much water as an Olympic swimming pool

## Achievements so far:



**30 forests** now have management plans in place to protect them and ensure resources are used sustainably and equitably



1,325L of shea butter, 365kg of moringa and 365 balls of soap **created and sold** by enterprise groups, plus lots more!



**5,800 hectares of forest** now certified organic



**3 forest sites** certified organic fair trade in 2022



**138 new enterprise groups** created to collect, transform and sell tree products



**145 boulis** built



**609,021 trees** planted



Shea nuts and butter in some communities now **certified organic** meaning products will sell better

This project has been made possible with funding from SIDA.





# STAFF SPOTLIGHT:

## ALY DIARRA



“ I am most proud of improving women’s living conditions. ”

Aly Diarra is a Project Officer for Tree Aid in Mali. A child of two teachers, he grew up in the village of Dogo in central Mali.

After completing his education, he became a shepherd for a while and worked in his family’s fields.

### A few facts about Aly

Aly’s favourite food is tention, a dish from his local region consisting of fish and rice seasoned with sauce and hot oil. What he loves the most about his city is having a “few green spaces that allow for relaxation.” Aly’s favourite part of the day is going home to his family.

### Working for Tree Aid

When Aly is in the field, a typical day looks like this: “I wake up at

5am, wash, say my prayers, have breakfast, check my email to respond to emergencies. I leave to do activities in villages around 8.30am to 9am and return to my base around 4pm. I wash and rest. After evening prayers, I check my email to respond to emergencies.”

Some of these activities could be monitoring the progress of a nutrition garden or facilitating training on water conservation with project participants.



### What projects is Aly working on?

Aly is working on two projects: ‘Empowering 1,000 women in Mali through improved access to forests



and businesses’ – also known as She Grows – and ‘Promoting forest governance for resilient ecosystems and communities in Segou’.

The She Grows project – which has now been completed – was implemented in 10 villages and we are now doing the final evaluation.

Aly told us about challenges he faced on the She Grows project such as gender inequality: after seeing that women beekeepers were frowned upon in the community, Aly and the rest of

the team trained and sensitized men on gender so that they could understand that women can do the same activities that they do.

### What are Aly’s hopes for the future?

He hopes to expand the work in Mali and implement new projects which will help more communities, and he wishes for political stability and security.

### A few facts about Mali:

- The capital of Mali is Bamako
- It is the 8<sup>th</sup> largest country in Africa
- There are many languages spoken, including French, Bambara, Dogon, Fulfulde and Arabic
- These are two famous sayings: “The forest comes because of the tree” and “Water is life.”



# HAVE YOU HEARD OF THESE INNOVATIONS?



Ghana has experienced severe land degradation. The environment there is difficult, the land is dry and infertile, making it difficult for people to grow food. As a result, Tree Aid is finding ways to adapt to these challenges, such as:

## Grass briquettes

In Ghana, participants of a project supported by Ecosia have been learning to make grass briquettes. These are made by clearing dried grass that grows around the base of trees, threatening wildfires.



These super bricks are fuel efficient, cleaner than wood burning and help to protect trees from fire.

Communities have found that two small briquettes are enough to cook a meal. They can either sell the briquettes or use them in their homes.

### How grass briquettes are made:

1. Gather the grass
2. Dry it
3. Burn it slowly in a barrel
4. Mix it with a natural adhesive
5. Squash it into moulds
6. You have a grass briquette!



## Mud walls

Mud walls are used to protect tree saplings. The traditional way of making a mud wall takes 3 days. It is labour intensive and leads to inconsistent results, which can sometimes lead to mud walls collapsing under heavy rain.

Tree Aid has been working with communities on the Bongo Reforestation Project in Ghana to use a new and improved method of making a mud wall using a mould. This process is much quicker – under an hour – and means that the mud walls are all standardised and can withstand the environment.



## Vetiver grass planting

Vetiver is a grass commonly used in Ghana for weaving baskets and hats, amongst other things. But vetiver also has a superpower: with its long roots, this drought-resistant plant can be used to reduce soil erosion and restore degraded land.

As part of the Bongo Reforestation Project in Ghana, we have been working alongside communities to plant vetiver along a dam wall to help catch some of the water runoff and absorb it into the soil.







## FANTASTIC FUNDRAISING



### From the Bristol 10k...

On 14 May Liam was one of our amazing fundraisers to run the Bristol 10k. It was a sunny day, a great atmosphere, and a worthy cause!

*"I chose to run for Tree Aid as the run was something I wanted to do and Tree Aid grabbed my attention as I understand the importance of trees from my time in Africa. It provides food, shelter and employment. Plus it's good for the planet too!"*

A huge congratulations to all our runners and a massive thank you for raising a total of £620!

### ...to Dylan's 10 mile run

Dylan is not your typical 10 year old. Every year, he runs to raise money for a charity and every year, he increases the distance that he runs.

This year, we are so proud to say that Dylan has chosen to fundraise for Tree Aid.

*"I wanted to fundraise for Tree Aid*

*because I am deeply concerned about the ongoing climate crisis affecting people all across the globe. Tree Aid was perfect because it helps save the planet as well as helping many people in need."*

Well done for raising £482!

*"I'm hoping some readers of the Tree Aid magazine will know that even someone as young as me can do something to make a difference."*



### A Great Green Goal bake sale

To celebrate the launch of our appeal, Tree Aid staff members organised a bake sale in the building at our office in Bristol. We raised £132.65 and delicious cakes were enjoyed by all!

### Why not set your own Great Green Goal?

In May we launched our spring appeal: the Great Green Goal. This is part of our long-term vision to grow the Great Green Wall and bring degraded landscapes back to life, reclaiming the land for people.

**Join Team Tree Aid this summer by setting your own goals.** Tree Aid's Great Green Goal is to support the growth of the Great Green Wall & create an epic 8000 km mosaic of hope. What's yours?

### How to get involved:

Go solo, or as part of a team.

Click on the QR code to sign up



Pick a goal; from baking, to hiking, to clearing out the garage - anyone can take part because we all have goals!

Join our community of passionate supporters online and share your progress. We need tree-loving fundraisers to help us grow the Great Green Wall!

If you'd like to take part in an event or fundraising activity in your community, please get in touch. Any funds you raise will help to tackle poverty and food insecurity today while restoring land and protecting the environment for tomorrow.

If you have an idea for fundraising, or you would like some resources, please contact our Supporters Team at [info@treeaid.org](mailto:info@treeaid.org) or by calling 0117 909 6363.







# ADD YOUR NAME TO OUR VIRTUAL FOREST

Explore Tree Aid's virtual forest and join our community of supporters.

How it works: Donate to add your own personalised tree to our virtual forest. Use your own name or dedicate your tree to a loved one, then watch it grow! You can share your personalised virtual forest page with friends to spread the word about your contribution to our vital work.

Your donation could help us:

- Grow trees
- Restore land
- Fight poverty

Visit [www.treeaid.org/virtualforest](http://www.treeaid.org/virtualforest) to add your tree to the forest or scan the QR code.

Join the virtual forest today by scanning here:



## ADD YOUR NAME

