



YOUR **UPDATE**

2022 ISSUE 21



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Cher supporters,

There's lots of exciting news and stories to share in this edition of Update magazine. The Future Forest project has recently got underway and a huge restoration project along the Daka River has come to an end in Yendi, Ghana. We're incredibly proud of what's been achieved helping to restore land by the river – now that the project has finished you can read about it on page 4.

You can also read my reflections on visiting COP26 last November. I was there as a national delegate for Burkina Faso and representing Tree Aid. It was a real pleasure to attend and to meet others who are working towards furthering nature-based solutions. It was also great to be there on your behalf as someone who makes Tree Aid's work possible. You

can read more about my experience as an attendee on page 6.

I'm also delighted to let you know about our new patron Adjoa Andoh; you can find more on that in the news section and in a special interview with her on page 8.

As ever, thank you so much for your support. As Tree Aid's Director of Programmes, I witness the impact of your generosity for communities on a daily basis. It's both humbling and inspiring.

Cordialement

**Georges Bazongo
Director of
Programmes**



Cover image: Tree Aid patron Adjoa Andoh



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NEWS

New patron

We're delighted to announce that Adjoa Andoh joined Tree Aid as a patron.

Adjoa is a successful actor, who has worked in theatre, film and television as well as radio and audio books. She's most known for her role in *Bridgerton*, which was watched by over 82 million households in the first month of it's Netflix release.

Adjoa was born in Bristol and stayed in the city to study before embarking on her career in acting. Her father is a Ghanaian journalist and musician, meaning she has strong ties to the country.

Her Ghanaian heritage and passion for social justice issues and climate action makes her a perfect patron for Tree Aid. We're delighted to welcome her to the charity. Of her appointment as Tree Aid patron Adjoa said;

"The climate crisis is the biggest challenge facing humanity. As a British/Ghanaian daughter, I am particularly impressed by Tree Aid's practical, empowering approach to working with local communities in Africa's drylands."



Tree Aid's work shows how we can all make a difference in tackling poverty and the climate crisis, wherever we live in the world."

For more, see an interview with Adjoa on page 8.

Future Forest project launches

After an incredibly successful appeal in Spring 2021, we're delighted to announce that the Future Forest project launched in October 2021. This project wouldn't have been possible without supporters making it a reality – so thank you!



The project will help to protect and restore frankincense forests in northern Ethiopia. It will also help communities to maximise the income they can make from sustainably harvesting and processing frankincense resin.

Project
region in
Ethiopia





COMPLETED PROJECT: RESTORING THE DAKA RIVER 2017-22

Over 3 million trees grown and more than 1,000 hectares of land restored along the Daka River – our recently completed project in partnership with Ecosia.

The Daka River is an essential source of water for communities who live alongside it. The river is relied upon for many daily activities such as drinking, washing, cooking and farming. But in recent years a rapid loss of trees and soil fertility and the effects of the climate crisis, mean that the river dries out for months on end. This has a devastating knock-on effect for communities living alongside the river and makes growing enough food difficult, particularly during the dry season.

This large-scale project working with 61 communities who live alongside the Daka River started back in 2017 and completed in February 2022. Thanks to you and other supporters, so much has been achieved – growing trees, restoring land and protecting the viability of the river for future generations. In total 2,285 households have been trained in restoration techniques, including bushfire management, tree grafting and assisted natural regeneration – a

method used to regenerate trees. Using this technique, 1,458,222 trees have been regenerated on the project and another 1,729,970 new trees planted.

Earning an income alongside the Daka River

As well as restoring and growing trees, communities have been supported to create new opportunities to earn an income and ensure a consistent supply of food all year round.

Tree enterprise nurseries have been set up in all 61 communities taking part in the project. These nurseries provide a community with a specific area to grow income-generating trees. Trees like moringa and baobab whose leaves and fruit are harvested, processed and sold.

Having a specialised tree nursery in the community helps enterprise groups to earn a reliable income. It also means they can scale up their enterprise activities, spending less time out collecting fruits and leaves.

Project region in Northern Ghana



River restoration

Where the water table was high enough to do so, 10 wells have been dug. These wells make it easy for communities to water their tree nurseries, whilst also relieving some of the pressure from the Daka River. Across 20 other communities, boreholes are being maintained to support the nutrition gardens water.

The project utilised the technique of enrichment planting. Growing a combination of native trees and a few carefully selected fast-growing

exotic trees. This combination of trees grown along riparian buffer zones, open parklands and for agroforestry collectively improve watershed management. The 61 communities taking part now find themselves with a range of trees that complement their farming activities; trees for use in enterprise groups and trees that planted alongside the Daka River are helping to improve the water levels of the river during the dry season.

We're delighted to share some of the headline figures demonstrating the progress made on the project.



1,729,970
trees planted



1,458,222
trees regenerated



Over 1,000
hectares of land protected



2,285
households trained in restoration techniques

Taaga's story

This is Taaga she lives in the Yendi region of Ghana. She explained how reliant she and her neighbours are on the Daka River:

"The river is so important to us. We use the water to prepare our food, to wash our clothing and bath. We also use it to farm vegetables in the dry season – a time when there is no other work or way to earn money. We rely on the river water to grow our vegetables."

Thanks to you and other Tree Aid supporters, Taaga and her community have been involved in growing and restoring trees along the riverbank for the last four years. The activities they've undertaken are helping to secure this vital water source for generations to come.

With 1,729,970 trees planted and 1,458,222 regenerated on the project, Taaga reflected on her involvement in the project.



"Thank you to Tree Aid supporters for all the training they have given us to plant trees along the river side to preserve the water."

GEORGES BAZONGO: I WAS A COP26 DELEGATE

Tree Aid Director of Programmes
Georges Bazongo attended COP26 in Glasgow last November. He reflected on his experience and the potential impact of initiatives:

“Between the talk and the politics at COP26, I was pleased to see significant declarations made to help the people affected by and leading the way in the fight against climate change.

However, there was a lack of clarity around how African communities on the front line of the climate crisis can access key funds, which raises concerns about the seriousness of declarations made. At times I found myself exasperated at the barriers delegates from Africa face. There was a lack of multilingual signage, which made navigating the COP a challenge for international delegates.

But I also experienced energising meetings with long-time collaborators and new allies in the spaces of nature-

based solutions to the climate crisis. These gave me hope, and left me feeling positive about what we can achieve moving forward.

Why did I attend COP26?

As a representative of Tree Aid and a Burkina Faso national delegate I went to COP26 to represent the people of Sahel region of Africa. The Sahel region is amongst the lowest contributors to rising carbon emissions, yet we feel the biggest impact. Temperatures have already risen twice as fast as the global average.

Making sure local Sahelian communities are at the centre of the climate fight is an important part of Tree Aid's mission, so I arrived at COP with clear asks for global leaders.

What went well?

Tree Aid saw some major policy announcements with relevance to our work, and we welcome the following victories:

1. Nature was recognised as a crucial solution for climate action, alongside deep emission cuts. Through the decision text (Glasgow Climate Pact), the Glasgow Leader's declaration on Forest and Land use, and the Global Forest finance pledge. Protecting and restoring nature was rightfully

recognised as crucial to reach the 1.5C goal.

2. Increased climate finance for adaptation. In the decision text, the proportion of climate finance going to adaptation has been doubled.

3. \$2 Billion was pledged by world leaders to support the restoration of 100 million hectares of land in Africa. This could see scale-up funding for nature-based solutions in the drylands of Africa, especially the Great Green Wall. This is a fantastic policy that we hope will be very effective. We also saw the announcement of an extra \$1 Billion for the Great Green Wall initiative, a welcome intervention that will assist this decade of restoration.

For the communities I work with in the drylands of Africa, soaring temperatures are having extreme effects on our natural environment, with devastating consequences for the people who depend on it and so these declarations are welcomed.

But... the important part comes next; these announcements must become realities in the field. Funding and assisting the work of proven organisations and NGOs on the ground alongside communities, such as Tree Aid is paramount. Funding must not get lost in bureaucracy and administration. The impact is evident, we just need funding to scale our operations.

Where COP fell short

Unfortunately, COP highlighted the issues Africa faces making itself heard on the international stage. African communities experience problems accessing funding promised at events such as COP. The mechanisms are simply too complicated and costly for many developing countries.

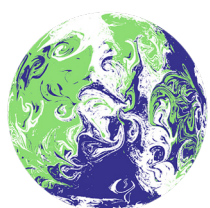
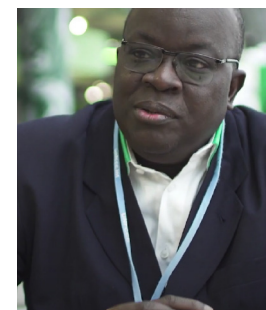
A heightened focus on tree planting also raises several concerns. An over-emphasis on planting new trees over forest conservation could distract attention from the urgent need to reduce emissions and to protect and restore existing ecosystems. Furthermore, policies which take land used for producing food and transform it for purely for carbon-removal purposes can threaten food security. Reforestation has lower risks of exacerbating hunger, provided it is led by and for the local communities to protect their land and their livelihoods.

Lessons for COP27

This year COP will be held on African soil, in Egypt. I heard from Egyptian delegates of their plan to make COP27 a COP for Africa. I'm sure that, in contrast to the UK, Egypt's leadership will make sure that it is accessible for all countries in Africa.

It is time for African countries to come together as one voice, ensuring strong participation at COP27. We want to see real influence during negotiations on key projects like the Great Green Wall. It is imperative these are African-led programmes.

At such a significant moment for Africa, COP27 must be inclusive of the entire continent. We will continue to ask for formal recognition of the Sahel as a priority area for the deployment of climate finance and action. And we will continue to push for African leadership, and African voices to drive the solutions.



**UN CLIMATE
CHANGE
CONFERENCE
UK 2021**
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY

NEW PATRON: AN INTERVIEW WITH ADJOA ANDOH



We are excited to announce that we have a new patron joining Tree Aid.

Actor and director Adjoa Andoh will be championing our cause and is adding her name to Tree Aid's existing patrons; Dame Joanna Lumley, Zoe Wanamaker and Hilary Benn MP.

Introducing Adjoa Andoh

One of Britain's leading actors, Adjoa Andoh won global acclaim as Lady Danbury in the Netflix smash hit *Bridgerton*. Past TV performances also include *Fractured*, *Dr Who*, *The Witcher*, *Silent Witness* and *Casualty*. Adjoa is a renowned stage actor at the National Theatre and The Royal Shakespeare Company, co-directing and playing *Richard II* at Shakespeare's Globe, in the UK's first all-women-of-colour production in 2019. She is also an Associate Artist at the Royal Shakespeare Company and Senior Associate Artist at The Bush Theatre.

A love of nature, and the power of trees

Originally from Bristol, Adjoa grew up in the Cotswolds surrounded by trees and fields. From a young age, her happiest memories were of being in the woods nearby her house, where she could be found reading a book or just watching the

trees around her. Adjoa's mother is English, and her father is Ghanaian and lives in Accra. This means she has roots in both countries, and a favourite tree in each. *"In Ghana, my Dad has a massive mango tree in the back garden and I love the shade of that"* Adjoa says. *"I love the extraordinariness of being able to just go into the garden there, pick the fruit and eat it. I find it miraculous."*

Adjoa is now looking forward to visiting projects in Ghana made possible by you and other supporters. In England, Adjoa's favourite tree is the oak, familiar from her Gloucestershire childhood, and common in Brockwell Park, one of the closest green spaces to her home in London.

Speaking out on the climate crisis

Passionate about the role environmental restoration plays in tackling poverty and inequality around the world, Adjoa is keen to help Tree Aid shine a light on the impacts of the climate crisis in the Sahel region. Particularly how our projects are helping communities respond to these new challenges of erratic weather, droughts, flash flooding and unstable incomes. But she is quick to point out that the climate crisis is not solely an 'African' problem.

"The climate crisis isn't just happening in Africa is it? It is worldwide. The Covid pandemic has been terrible, but it has also been a great educator. It has shown us that if one part of the world is not safe and healthy, then no part of the world is safe and healthy."

Adjoa's belief in the role of nature here is strong: *"We are a global species. Nature is a fantastically well-balanced ecosystem, and we mess around with it at our peril."*

And how can we encourage the public to recognise the urgency of acting on the nature and climate crisis? As Adjoa describes, we could see the world as a shared house: *"We are living in the top floor of the house and we have set fire to the basement. We think we're fine at the top, but there are people living on the other floors. That fire will eventually consume the whole house."*

Shining a light – the role of The Arts

It is here that Adjoa believes The Arts and public figures within it, can play a unique role in shifting public action on tricky, overwhelming topics like global poverty and the climate crisis. The key is in the power of storytelling.

"Stories are there to broaden, provoke, inspire" she explains. To prise open public conversations *"on the*



future of our world and who we are in relation to it. I think that when we are told stories, we are given a window into a world which isn't the one we are preoccupied with day to day; it changes our worldview. That's what stories are for."

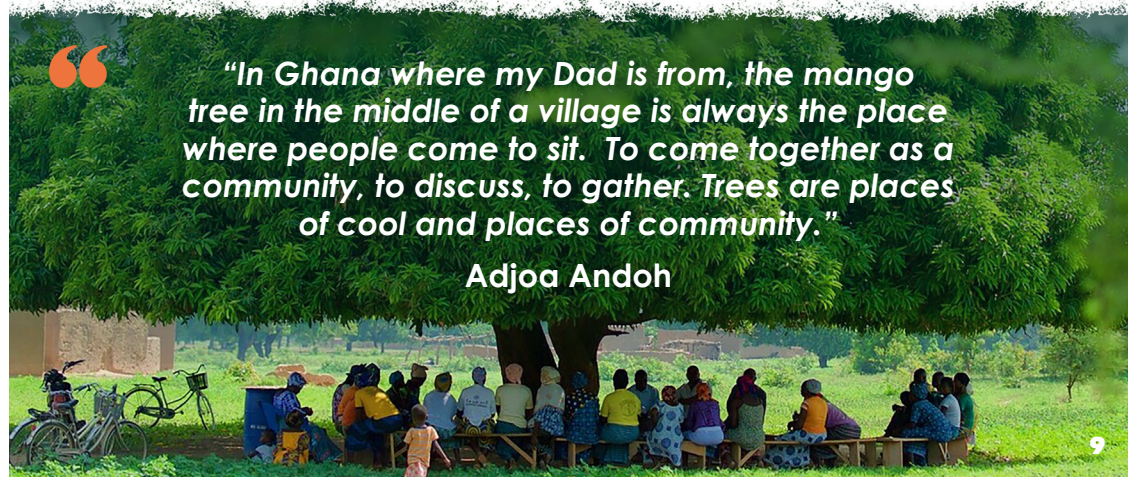
This is where The Arts become a crucial piece of the process, because, as Adjoa says; *"The point of The Arts is that we all navigate our lives through story."* Actors, artists, musicians; *"can tell the story of why we need change, and how. Or they can, like me, be involved in a front-facing conversation with the public"* to allow stories about the Sahel and the benefits that trees can bring, to become part of public consciousness.

This is why we are so lucky at Tree Aid, to have dedicated patrons like Adjoa, helping to spread the word about what we do. We look forward to working with Adjoa to champion our work.

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"In Ghana where my Dad is from, the mango tree in the middle of a village is always the place where people come to sit. To come together as a community, to discuss, to gather. Trees are places of cool and places of community."

Adjoa Andoh



FANTASTIC FUNDRAISING

We'd like to give a big thank you to one supporter – Celia from High Wycombe.

She was inspired by the Great Green Wall; the African-led initiative to restore an 8,000km mosaic of land and forests. After being underwhelmed by the response of world leaders at COP26 she felt like she needed to take matters into her own hands. Celia wanted to embark on a personal challenge that would also help protect the planet:

"I was inspired to read about the Great Green Wall and how simple it could be to make such a huge difference to the land and climate, by empowering farmers to plant and rejuvenate the land. It was a refreshing change to help people reclaim their power over their own land and destiny; rather than bowl in and throw money at projects without much thought, other than to 'do good'.

I set out to try and walk one-tenth (800km) of the wall distance in 80 days, deciding that I would walk a

minimum of 10k per day, to raise awareness of the project, increase my fitness and my knowledge of the local area, whilst hopefully raising a few quid along the way.

Most of my walks were spent in my beautiful lush green Chiltern Hills, hiking through woodland and forest with my dog, Mabelle, and I visited



Northumberland for some bigger hikes. I was struck by how lucky we are to have our climate and the diversity of nature and will do what I can to help it remain so. I love that by raising awareness we can make positive change."

800km in 80 days is certainly some undertaking. We'd like to offer a huge congratulations to Celia for completing the challenge in January and a thank you for raising an incredible £2,725 and counting.

Selling cakes to help plant trees

A huge thank you to 7-year-old Grace who organised a cake sale with friend Fern and her little sister Mya back in August. They were desperate to raise money for Tree Aid to help plant more trees and to protect and restore the environment.

They made a range of cakes and managed to sell every single one, being sure to tell buyers of the importance of planting more trees! They raised £57 in total – thank you so much Grace, Fern and Mya for all your hard work baking and selling the cakes.



"We wanted to raise money to help the environment and keep homes for animals across the world" said Grace and Fern.

Get involved!

If you'd like to undertake an event or fundraising activity in your community, please do get in touch. Any funds you raise will help to tackle poverty and inequality today while restoring land, trees and soil for tomorrow.

If you have an idea for fundraising, or would like some resources, please do contact our Supporters Team on info@treeaid.org or by calling **0117 909 6363**.

FUNDRAISING IDEAS...



Walk, run or cycle 80, 800 or even 8,000 km in the Great Green Walk



Get together with friends for tea and cake at your Tea for Trees fundraiser



Run a bake sale, do a skydive, host a pub quiz and get creative!

LEAVING A GIFT IN YOUR WILL



Leaving a gift in your Will is an incredible way for you to make a lasting impact. Gifts in Wills enable us to plan ahead and expand the reach of the amazing projects that your support makes possible. A gift in your Will is also a way of ensuring that you can continue supporting the causes that are important to you.

You can request a legacy pack in the post ticking the legacy pack box on the form that came with this edition of Update and returning it to us. Or by emailing info@treeaid.org, visiting www.treeaid.org/will or calling **0117 909 6363**.

Thank you if you are considering leaving a gift in your Will or if you just want a bit of further information on the process. Gifts in Wills ensure that communities can grow nutritious food and incomes today while growing trees and restoring the environment for future generations.

Find out more
about gifts
in Wills by
scanning here:

