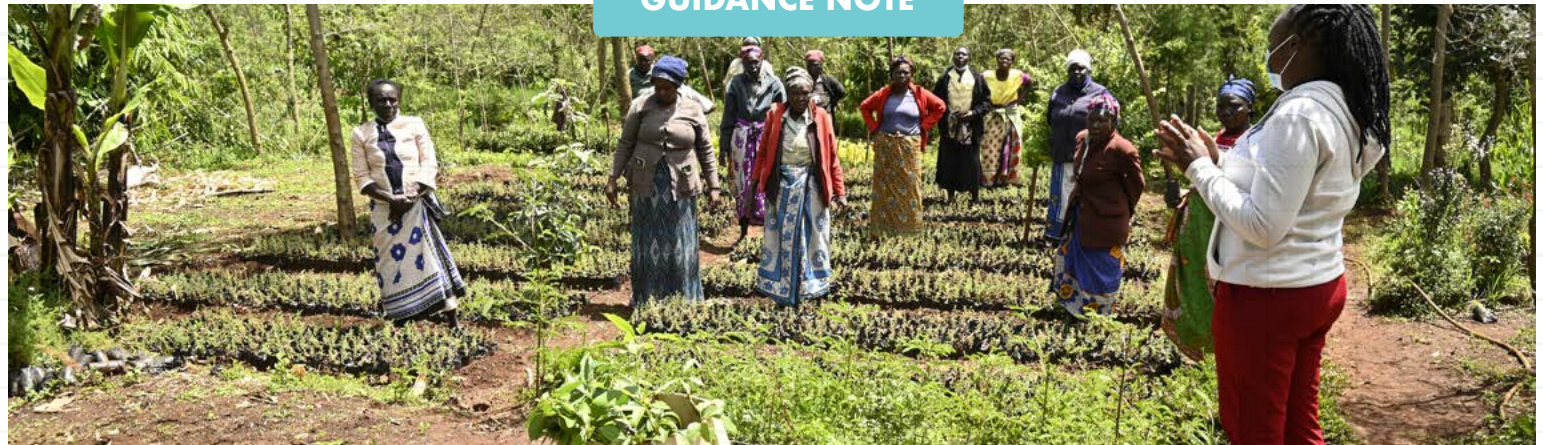




Sustainability planning with community and local stakeholders

Prepared by Lisa Elena Fuchs, Mieke Bourne, Winnie Achieng and Constance Neely

GUIDANCE NOTE





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Introduction

Regreening Africa is an ambitious five year programme (2017-2022) funded by the European Union to reverse land degradation across 1,000,000 million hectares and benefit 500,000 households in Mali, Senegal, Niger, Ghana, Somalia, Kenya, Rwanda, and Ethiopia.

The project is implemented by a consortium of non-governmental organizations, World Vision, CARE, Oxfam, CRS, Sahel Eco and led by World Agroforestry (ICRAF). **This guide was developed to support project partners in preparing for the close of the programme. This guide may also be of value to other stakeholders working in land restoration and related projects.**

Sustainability planning with the community and local stakeholders is important to ensure that promoted land restoration practices continue being implemented after the Regreening Africa Programme transitions at the end of 2022. Sustainability planning should be part of the programme's exit planning.

The objectives of community sustainability planning include to:

- 1** Create opportunities for long-term thinking in the communities.
- 2** Identify key interventions in the final years of the project to support sustained efforts after project closure.
- 3** Identify how various partners, including communities, can develop a joint long-term vision and sustainable pathways towards achieving this vision.

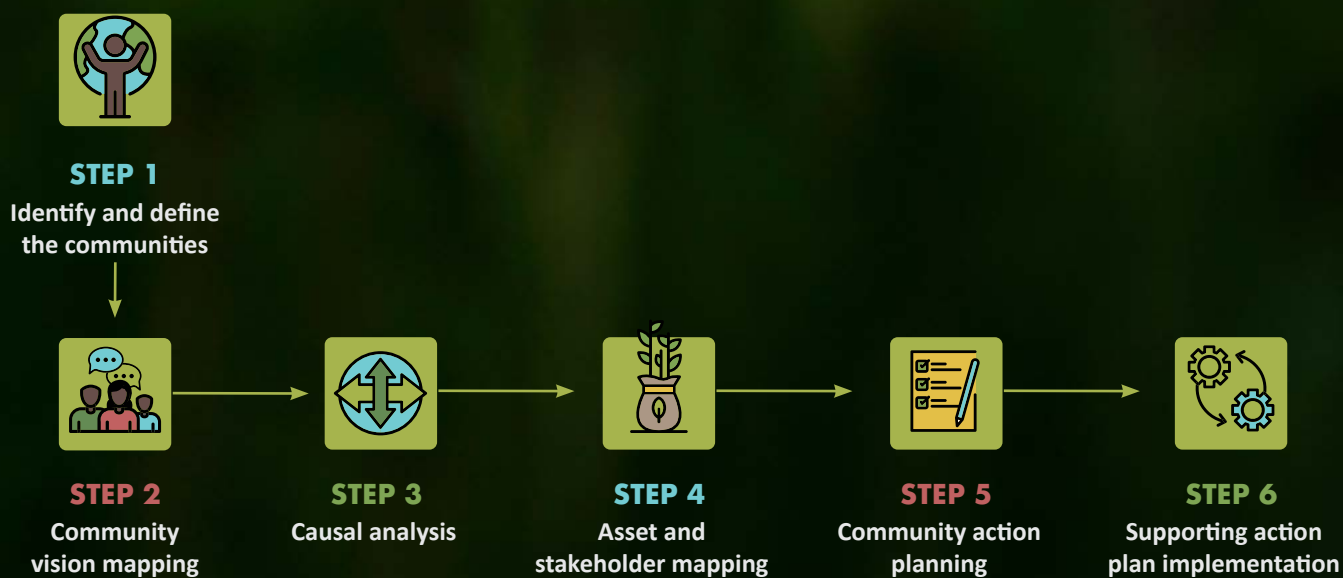
While each organization will have its own approach to sustainability planning, **this guide provides insights into existing tools, and offers a consistent approach across the Regreening Africa Programme.** While taking a holistic approach that covers all the outlined steps is important, some of the proposed tools can be replaced or additional tools added depending on individual country teams' interests and experience.

Some of the programme countries have initiated this work through identification of local visions, development of models for adoption and scaling up of good practices as well as establishment or strengthening of village committees. Previous efforts can be built upon or integrated as part of the community sustainability planning process.

The sustainability planning process

The proposed sustainability planning process includes six steps (see Figure 1). While the first step is usually driven by external actors, participatory and inclusive methods are used for the following five steps. The five community-driven visioning sessions can either be done in one go, or in several sessions – depending on context and local specificities. The overview table in the annex provides brief details at a glance to facilitate planning.

Figure 1: The proposed sustainability planning process





step 1

Identify and define the communities

A community can be defined in various ways. In the context of this activity, we use a place-based definition of community. This means that we will define people living close to each other, or in the same area, as a community.

When planning for the scale at which a community could/should be included in the sustainability planning, it is important to take **shared experiences** into account. These can focus on both challenges and/or opportunities for land restoration. For instance, it can be useful to consider a number of villages that have similar biophysical conditions, and/or that are connected and influenced by similar social and economic dynamics. The community could be a series of villages that are impacted by a similar salinity issue, are in the same watershed or share a common market for example.

In the context of this activity, it is also important to consider **travel distances and available meeting spaces**. Since a number of representatives from different villages may be brought together, it is important that they are close enough and/or have reliable and practicable communication channels. Furthermore, the meeting venues, whether inside or outside, need to be selected in a way that guarantees comfort and safety for all participants.

When **selecting representatives from the community** for the activity it is important to ensure different socio-economic and occupational groups (consider gender, disability, age, wealth/poverty, farming/

pastoral etc.) are included and the people have a good understanding of the local area and community. Since priorities and perspectives are likely to vary in line with these factors of social differentiation, inclusivity is key to realistic and successful planning.

The specifics concerning the number of communities, villages and/or households to include in the sustainability planning exercise will depend on the different countries' and sites' contexts. The specific **sampling methodology and frame** will be addressed in each country level plan. For Regreening Africa, it was expected that this process would be conducted for each direct intervention zone and/or each relevant administrative unit (i.e. woreda, district, location) to ensure sustainability planning is conducted across the project. More could be done if it was possible. Decisions were made jointly by individual country teams and the Regreening project management team in view of available budgets, and identified opportunities for wider sustainability breakthroughs.

The proposed process was developed specifically for the wider Regreening Africa context, and is based on the fact that the country teams are familiar with the project area and core actors.



Implementing Step 1



DURATION

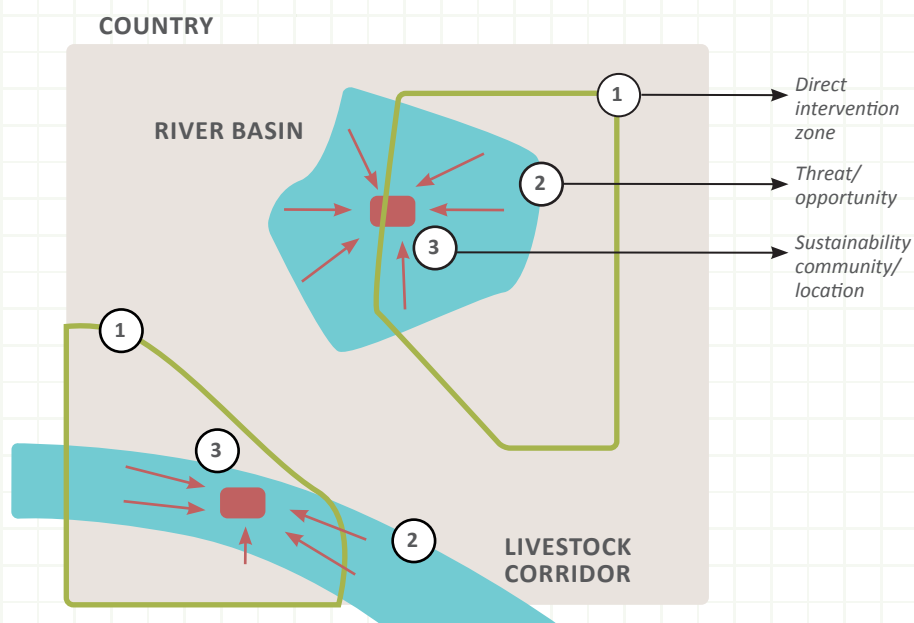
2 hours + ground-proofing



METHOD

- 1 **Identify landscape-level opportunities or threats** within the intensification/direct intervention sites.
- 2 **Analyse which villages, towns, 'communes' are touched by this opportunity or threat** to define them as 'community of place' in relation to the identified opportunity or threat.
- 3 **Identify community representatives** from all these villages, towns, 'communes' across stakeholder groups – identify them by asking yourself 'who needs to be included to make this a success, or prevent a failure' with regards to the opportunity or threat.
- 4 **Identify how and where identified community representatives can meet** (considering applicable public health and safety protocols) – the meeting place should be central to the identified opportunity or threat and one meeting place per opportunity/threat should be identified.
- 5 **Meet the pre-identified sustainability 'community of place' representatives and visit the pre-identified meeting site to ground-proof both.** Ask pre-identified representatives to confirm the 'opportunity/threat' landscape, and whether all important groups and individuals have been included. Be open to adjusting your plans accordingly. Plan jointly for when, how, and over which time duration to implement the following five steps of the sustainability planning process.

Figure 2: The sustainability 'community of place' identification process. The following elements are visible in the figure: (1) direct intervention zones in green, (2) the landscape problem/opportunity identified within and/or in parts of the direct intervention zones in blue, (3) the 'communities of place' identified as relevant sustainability planning groups for the exercise and their proposed community 'location'/central meeting place in red.





step 2

Community vision mapping

Vision mapping is a critical approach to understand the view of the community and their aspirations and desires for the future.

Different approaches can be used for this activity as long as they capture the community vision, including but not limited to the restoration component (soil erosion, trees, salinity etc.). Overall, community vision mapping entails **reflecting with different community groups on an ideal positive vision for their community in the next 5/10/20 years in relation to the changing environment**. One aim is to better understand the variation of expectations and aspirations for the future from one community to another. Beyond that, change towards these visions can be mapped both **prospectively** (the subject of this guide) and **retroactively**. To that end, scientifically-backed community mapping exercises can allow tracing the evolution of the transformation process of their environment.

As discussed, factors of social differentiation are likely to influence individual community members' ideas

and interests. Specifically, there is often a **gender difference in vision and priorities**, so please start by inviting women, men and youth to prepare their initial maps separately (and consider separating boys and girls as well). Depending on the context, other community sub-divisions for the preparation of initial vision maps might be sensible as well.

Once the sub-groups are done, a discussion in plenary can help to bring the different maps together. While the sub-groups' vision maps are likely to differ, it is important to **consolidate one common map** featuring elements from all individual maps that distills the essence of a truly integrated and common vision for the community.

The proposed process is adapted from a facilitator guide that can be accessed [here](#).



Implementing Step 2



DURATION
1.5 hours



RESOURCES
Plain sheets of paper (large - flip chart),
different colour marker pens



METHOD

- 1** Each group (men, women and youth) with a maximum of 8 people each, is given two flip charts and different coloured markers.
- 2** Each group draws two separate maps representing their community in the present, and how they would like it to be in the future (10 years from now). Ask the community to think of a 10 year old child and how they would like the community/ area to be for him/her when they are 20.

- 3** Ask each group to present their vision maps in a plenary and discuss the commonalities and differences. By the end you want some agreement on common aspects of their vision.



Figure 3: Vision mapping example
Source: Strengthening Rural Institutions Project (ICRAF)



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION
Another example for community vision mapping can be found in [CRS manual pages 11 and 12](#).





step 3 **Causal analysis**

A causal analysis is used to understand what issues underpin identified barriers to achieving a desired outcome, for instance the sustainable adoption of and engagement in desired and/or envisioned behaviour. This third step is an important pathway towards realistic sustainability planning.

A causal analysis is used to look at identified barriers to **detect underpinning or root causes** that reflect deeper political, economic, social, technological, environmental, legal and institutional (PESTELI) factors as well as different world views or behavioural drivers. These deeper causes are those that have to be overcome to meaningfully tackle development challenges and achieve aspirations.

The causal analysis helps **build an understanding of the systemic nature of many of the encountered problems**, and differentiates between symptoms and causes. Lastly, the causal analysis can be used to understand implications of not addressing root causes.

The proposed process is adapted from a SHARED Toolbox that can be accessed [here](#).





Implementing Step 3



DURATION

30 minutes



RESOURCES

Plain sheets of paper (large - flip chart),
different colour marker pens



METHOD

The key steps outlined below will lead to a clearer understanding of both the deeper issues that need to be addressed and the different actors or partnerships that need to be in place to address them. This activity can be done in mixed groups or groups of men, women and youth separately.

- 1** Brainstorm the different barriers to achieving the vision the community have mapped and select the one the group feels is the most important to discuss.
- 2** Using one of the prioritized barriers, place the barrier at the centre of the sheet. Then ask, “what are the causes of this barrier?”

and place that next to the central barrier.

When a cause is identified, ask again, “what is the cause of this?” and place that next to the cause. Do this until you reach the root cause, the cause for which you cannot think of any additional causes.

- 3** Consider the implications of this barrier if it is not addressed. Groups should discuss: “what will be the result if the barrier or its causes are not addressed?”, “how could these causes be addressed?” and “who would need to be involved to address these causes?”. Any notes can be recorded on flip chart paper.

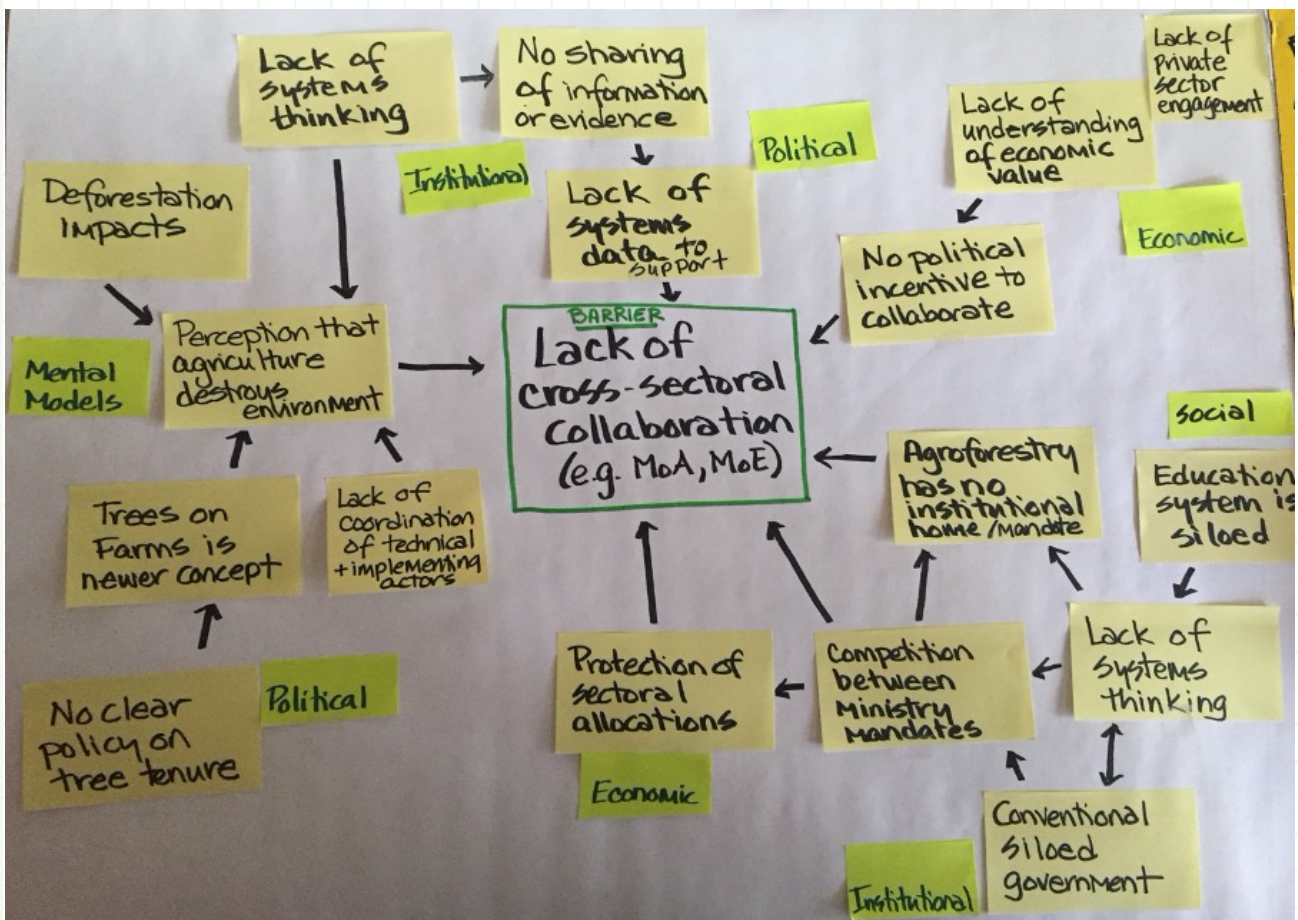


Figure 4: Root cause analysis mapping example
Source: ICRAF SHARED team.



step 4




Identify assets and stakeholders

Over the past years, ICRAF's ABCD (asset-based community-driven development) team has adapted, developed, and tested various tools that can be used for wider community visioning and planning.

Based on the team's ABCD approach for holistic community development, three ABCD-inspired options can be considered for identifying assets and

stakeholders. The selection of the most appropriate option will depend on contextual factors in each setting (see Table 1). The three options are:

Table 1: Contextual factors to consider when choosing a specific ABCD-inspired approach to identifying assets and stakeholders

Option	Tools	Expected outcome	Contextual factors
 <p>OPTION 1: Human and social asset assessment for strategic partnership development and future collaboration; including a visual mapping of current and future internal and external partnerships.</p>	Heads, hands and hearts; institution and association mapping; community action planning	Vision for strategic partnerships, both within the community and with targeted external actors in pursuit of specific development goals.	Suitable for communities where social capital is important; potentially for less sedentary communities.
 <p>OPTION 2: Local economy assessment for strategic planning of income-generating activities and future investments; including mapping of current and prospected inflows, outflows and circulation of goods and services – both at community and at individual level.</p>	Community Leaky Bucket	Strategic plans for income-generating activities (increase inflows, reduce outflows), future investments (re-purpose outflows) and improving circulation of goods and services in the community (circular economy).	Suitable for communities that tend to respond to economic rationales, and potential individual development goals, over 'common good' thinking.
 <p>OPTION 3: Natural and physical resource assessment and mapping for envisioned changes that can manifest physically in future, including mapping of past, present, and future natural and physical resources.</p>	Community resource mapping; Transect walk and mapping	Vision for conserving and/or changing the physical environment, based on an appreciation for what has been, used to be, and could potentially be in future.	Suitable for communities that live in areas whose particular agroecology, biodiversity and/or legally protected status require a joint rethinking of land use; potentially in areas that are legally or de facto held collectively and/or in freehold.



Implementing Step 4



DURATION

While the ABCD guide proposes to spend 1-3 hours to go through each of the tools comprehensively, aim to spend about 1 hour on the respectively selected asset activities for sustainability planning.



SOURCE

The ICRAF ABCD guide with more details on these tools can be accessed [here](#).





OPTION 1: Human and social asset mapping

Mapping human assets

Human assets are mapped with a tool called ‘**Heads, Hands, and Hearts**’. This exercise helps people recognise the variety of strengths each person has.

It is done by brainstorming and grouping skills in three categories – head (intellectual), hand (physical) and heart (emotional). Everyone has skills and qualities in each of these areas. By naming everyone’s strengths, community members can see how one person’s skills complement other peoples’ skills. There are many people who do not even realise all the skills they have!

By understanding their strengths, people may feel more confident that they have something to contribute to the development of both their individual households and their communities.

The objectives of this exercise include:

- i. To **identify the skills and capacities of individuals** for community building.
- ii. To **strengthen the confidence of villagers** in their own skills and capacities.
- iii. To **encourage individuals to see potential connections** between individual skills and the work of local associations, institutions, and businesses. (For example, a connection between a person’s carpentry skills, a local group’s marketing skills, and tools or workspace provided by an institution could result in a profitable micro-enterprise.)
- iv. To provide an **opportunity for people with ‘hidden’ skills** and talents to be recognised.



DURATION

30 minutes



RESOURCES

Marker pens of different colours, sticky notes, flipchart or butcher paper



METHOD

- 1** Ask the community group to think about what they do well, each of them individually. It might be their work or something else they are known for within their community.
- 2** Explain that these skills and capacities can fall into different categories, including intellectual (head), physical (hand), and emotional (heart).
- 3** Give examples of each type, as illustrated in Figure 5.
- 4** As you ask the community members to form sub-groups along age and gender lines, ask them to brainstorm about their own skills and capacities in these areas.
- 5** Ask the sub-groups to share their lists in a plenary session and continue to build them. People who know one another can add to each other’s lists.
- 6** List all the identified human assets/strengths on separate charts for each category.



- Analysis
- Accounting
- Organisation
- Business and trading
- Management
- Literacy
- Problem solving
- Money management



- Carpentry
- Farming
- Cooking
- Mechanics
- Sewing
- Weaving
- Animal husbandry
- House construction



- Compassion
- Care of elderly
- Sense of humour
- Conflict resolution
- Willingness to collaborate
- Cooperative spirit

Figure 5: Human asset mapping tool
Source: Coady International Institute (no date).

Mapping social assets

Social assets are mapped through Associations and Institutions mapping. In ICRAF's regular ABCD process, these are done separately. However, the following two exercises can also be combined.

Identifying social assets usually begins with an **inventory of voluntary groups at the village level** as these are groups of people already mobilised around some form of community activity. These groups are often called 'associations' to differentiate them from institutions which are organisations whose members are employees.

While associations may be organised around a particular interest or activity, many groups can be

stretched beyond their original purposes to become full contributors to the development process, even if that is not their original mandate (for example, a youth group that gathers to play sports could get involved in an income generating activity).

The objectives of this exercise include:

- To discover **the informal and voluntary groups or associations** that are active in an area.
- To **understand the various relationships** between these associations.
- To **identify opportunities for collaboration** among the identified associations.



DURATION

30 minutes



RESOURCES

Marker pens of different colours, sticky notes, flipchart or butcher paper



METHOD

- Organise community members into **sub-groups** along age and gender lines.
- Ask participants to list their personal connections to associations.** Describe the role of these associations, list names of the leaders, and list the community members that are part of the ABCD training who are members of these associations.
- Expand the list to other associations.** Ask each of the participants to identify other associations that he or she knows about. If known, list the leaders and name the person among your group who are most closely connected to the leader.
- Discuss the individual lists in plenary and **compose one integrated list of associations** that are active in the area. Talk about opportunities for collaboration among associations.
- Once the group has drafted a comprehensive list of the associations that exist in the community, it may be useful to **illustrate their relative size (membership) and importance to overall community life.** You can do this by drawing a Venn diagram (see Figure 6). The intensity of interactions between actors can be represented to reflect the level of collaboration in achieving sustainability.

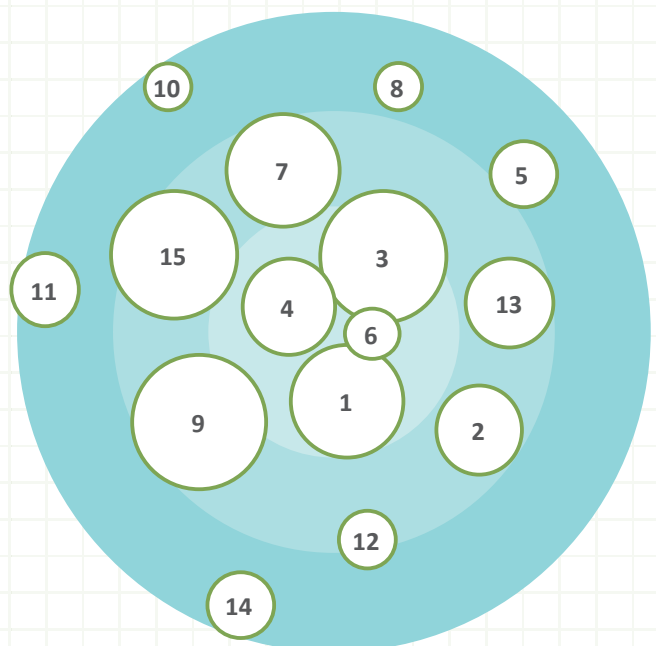


Figure 6: Social asset mapping tool I: Community associations
Source: Mathie, Foster, Cunningham, Peters (2017).

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1 S. Kulisuru Health Development Group | 9 Nombelo Women's Group |
| 2 Bisunu Community Water Project | 10 Tambulukha |
| 3 Bisunu Jua Kali Women Group | 11 Umoja Self Help Group |
| 4 Chenjeni Wachalusi | 12 Wakholi Women's Group |
| 5 Khaka Onyole | 13 Chenjeni Youth Group |
| 6 Lutaso Development Women's Group | 14 Bisunu jua Kali Self Help Group |
| 7 Lutaso Pefa PTA Primary School | 15 Bisunu Youth Football Team |
| 8 Tunyo Chama Cha Upendo Self Help Group | |

Mapping institutions as assets

Institutions in a locality are often overlooked as assets that community groups can draw upon to support their development activities. Assessing and mapping local institutions can result in the community discovering that they partner with existing external actors to support their development journey, in addition to fully community-driven efforts.

In the spirit of ABCD, it is important to facilitate the institution mapping in a way that **allows community members to identify and understand with which external actors they can potentially build strategic partnerships**, rather than contributing to a 'business-as-usual' and dependency mindset. In the context of

Regreening sustainability planning, discussions can emphasise **partnerships conducive to sustainable land restoration**; but the interaction between different partnerships in pursuit of multiple objectives and outcomes is important to consider as well.

The objectives of this exercise include:

- i. To discover the **full range of institutions** in the area.
- ii. To identify which **assets** these institutions could offer for community development.
- iii. To **understand the links** between local institutions and local associations.



DURATION

30 minutes



RESOURCES

Marker pens of different colours, sticky notes, flipchart or butcher paper



METHOD

- 1 Organise community members into **sub-groups** along age and gender lines.
- 2 **Ask participants to identify local institutions** including government institutions such as agricultural extension offices, health clinics, schools, universities, and libraries; NGOs; research institutes; religious institutions such as temples, mosques, and churches; private sector institutions such as cooperatives, banks, and private businesses.
- 3 **For each institution, list its potential assets** including: Which services and expertise does it offer? Which space and facilities does it have? Which materials and equipment does it have? If relevant, which purchasing power does it have, i.e., for buying community members' produce or labour? If relevant, which employment practices and personnel does it have, i.e., are employees paid on time? Which links to institutions outside the community does it have?
- 4 Discuss the individual lists in plenary and **compose one integrated list of institutions that are active in the area**. Talk about and write down possible relations between institutions.
- 5 Once the comprehensive list of the locally relevant institutions is composed, it may be useful to **illustrate their importance to overall community life**, and existing or potential collaboration with community associations (see Venn diagram in Figure 7). One option for such an illustration is to represent community associations as circles and/or triangles, and formal institutions as rectangles. Furthermore, those associations and institutions that are within the community can be drawn within the circle, and those that influence the community from outside can be drawn outside of the circle. Thinner or thicker arrows can be drawn to show the existence and strength of interaction between different actors. This helps to illustrate existing connections between actors – but also shows absent, and potential new, relationships.

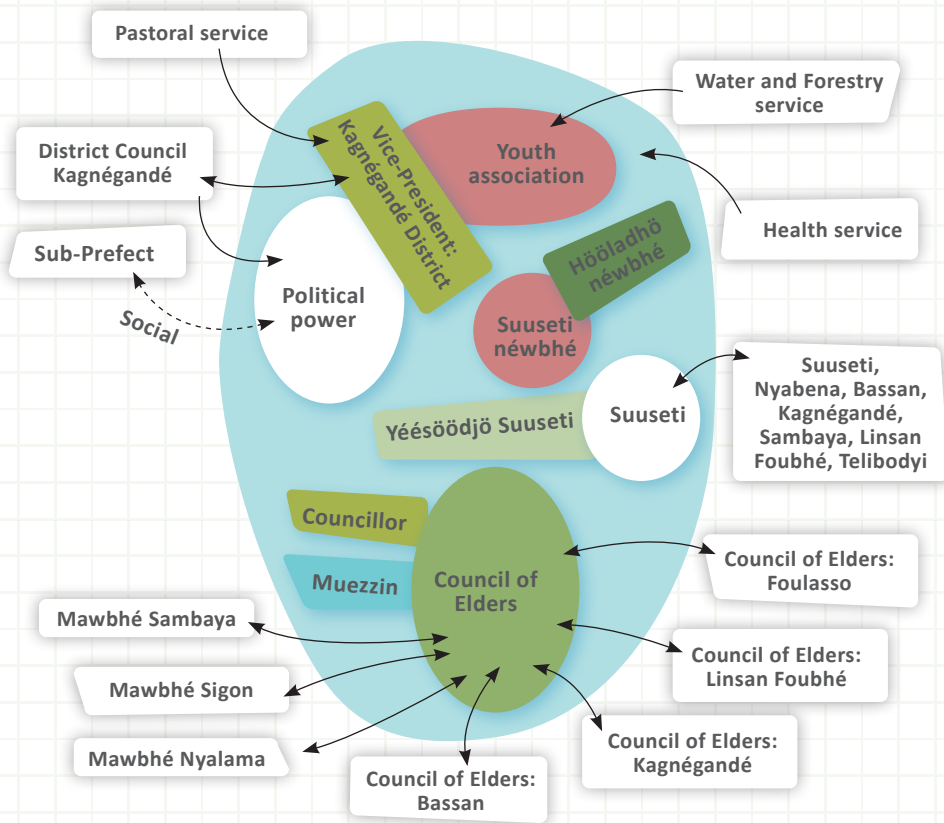


Figure 7: Social asset mapping tool II: Bringing institutions and associations together.
 Source: Freudenberger (1994), in Mathie, Foster, Cunningham, Peters (2017)



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Additional stakeholder mapping tools available in the SHARED Toolbox can be accessed [here](#). Another example can be found in the *CRS manual* page 40-41.





OPTION 2: Local economy assessment

The 'Community Leaky Bucket' is a tool that helps people understand how their local economy works. By imagining the village's economy as a bucket with money flowing in and leaking out, community members can understand the importance of retaining money in the community, and by extension in the household. They can start to identify ways of **increasing flows of income into the community and preventing the leakage of money out of the community**, which happens when goods and services are purchased outside.

The increase of inflows, and the reduction of outflows can lead to an overall increase of means that are retained in the community (net income) – whose circulation can be further improved within the community to increase the circular nature of the local economy.

This benefits both the community as a whole, and individual households within the community. In the context of Regreening sustainability planning, facilitators can emphasise the importance and potential of restoration-related elements within the local economy.

The objectives of this exercise include:

- i. To **identify money for goods and services flowing in and flowing out** of the local economy.
- ii. To **identify opportunities for savings and income generation** for the community; and to increase funding streams by raising funds locally to grow current and future initiatives.
- iii. To **understand the local economy** and its relationship to the larger economy.



DURATION

1 hour



RESOURCES

Marker pens of different colours, sticky notes, flipchart or butcher paper



METHOD

- 1** Ask the participants to think of the **economy of their community**, which means the goods and services produced, sold, and bought in their community. Then ask the participants to imagine their local economy as a bucket with income sources from outside the community pouring in from the top and expenditure on goods and services purchased outside the community spilling out of the holes at the bottom.
- 2** **Brainstorm in plenary** about: (1) Goods and services that are bought and sold within the village and outside the community; (2) Money that flows in and out of the community; (3) How money circulates within the community, and within households in the community, through the sale of goods and services.
- 3** **Draw a picture of a bucket with three boxes inside the bucket** representing the main economic actors in any market economy: households, local government and businesses.
- 4** **Draw arrows coming into the bucket** to represent income coming from sources outside the community. The arrows will begin at the top of the bucket and lead into the right box: household, local government or businesses.
- 5** **Draw arrows between the three boxes inside the bucket** (households, local government and businesses) and show the financial interactions between the economic players listed in the boxes.
- 6** **Draw arrows leaking out of the bucket** from households, businesses and local government representing spending that is taking place outside the community.
- 7** Once the participants in this exercise understand the basic idea then you can ask them to **list all the inflows and outflows** in the community.
- 8** After the analysis of current inflows in and outflows from the local economy is finalised, ask participants to think about

how this situation could be improved. Explain that, simply speaking, the local economy can be improved by increasing the inflows, reducing the outflows, and increasing the circulation in the bucket.

- 9** Based on the situational analysis, **ask community members to identify opportunities** to increase inflows into and circulation of money within the community. Mark these in a different colour in the Community Leaky Bucket. For example, external demand for high quality craft products from actors outside the local economy may be an opportunity for organising craft workers in the community to be able to serve that demand. These are inflows – money coming into the community from outside.

- 10** Then **identify opportunities to plug leaks** and mark these in yet another colour in the Community Leaky Bucket. For example, improving agricultural production in the community might decrease the need to spend money on food outside the village. Composting might decrease the need to buy fertilisers when these are not available locally. Money spent on food that is produced and bought outside of the village is a 'leak' in the local economy.

- 11** **Ask community members to keep the picture of the Community Leaky Bucket displayed** at a central venue in the area, or even within households, and encourage them to make modifications (in different colours) or draw new ones to show change.

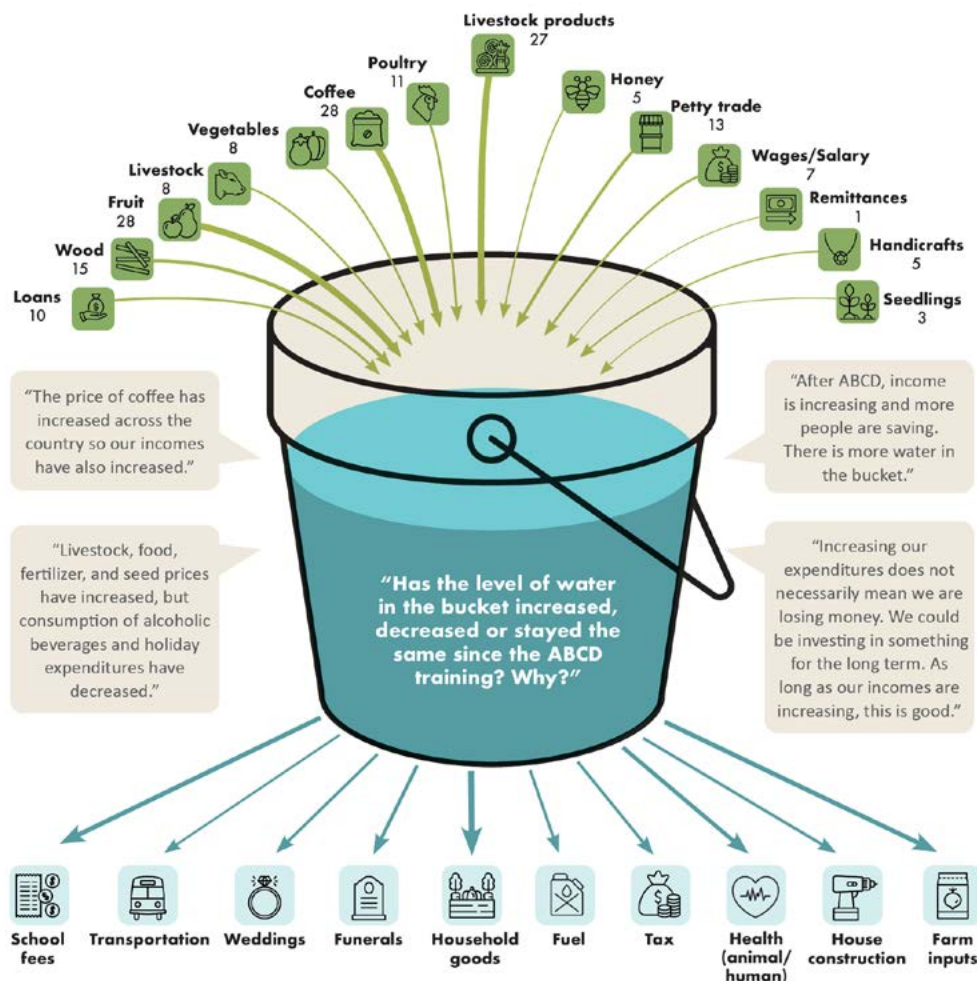
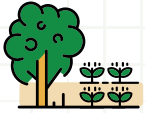


Figure 8: Local economy mapping tool: The Community Leaky Bucket. The thickness of the arrows represents the amount of money flowing into or out of the community from each source; the thicker the arrow, the more money it represents. Source: MacDonald. J. (2005)



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

There are also commodity, on-farm, off-farm and integrated household leaky bucket exercises that can be accessed in the manual. If possible and desired, the local economy assessment exercise can also be extended and address local fundraising strategies, as well as targeted proposal writing, in the context of strategic partnership development.



OPTION 3: Natural and physical resource assessment and mapping

Drawing a topographic village map can help community members to **understand the diversity of physical assets** (roads, buildings, etc.) **and natural assets** (tree cover, land conditions, water sources, etc.) that exist within their area and that they can draw upon. Maps provide a visual image of an area that is easy for all community members (even those who are illiterate) to understand.

The objectives of this exercise include:

- i. To **identify the physical and natural assets** that exist within a given area that community members can draw upon.
- ii. To **show living conditions within the area** (types and location of houses, access to services, etc.).
- iii. To **generate baseline information** against which future changes can be analysed over time.



DURATION

1-1.5 hours (depending on respective area)



RESOURCES

Marker pens of different colours, sticky notes, flipchart or butcher paper



METHOD

- 1** Use the **community map drawn in the previous exercise** that shows land use, land tenure, water sources, buildings and facilities, roads and boundaries as a basis for this exercise.
- 2** Ask the participants to decide where to **draw a transect line through the village** (mark x and y). The line should cross a diversity of areas including homes, water sources, agriculture, and roads. (Note: if the area is particularly large, community members may split into groups to cover more of the area simultaneously).
- 3** Together with the community members, **walk through the community** following the imaginary transect line.
- 4** As you walk, ask community members to **make observations** about land use, trees, animals, soils, and resource tenure in different areas using either a pre-set or a free format. Ideally, the transect is drawn and sub-divided in zones – and observations are made for each of these zones [see Table 2 on the following page, adapted from Freudenberger (1994), in MacDonald, J. (2005)]. Also ask them to take note of ideas about potential opportunities for development based on their observations.
- 5** After the transect walk, ask participants to come back together to **draw a joint transect map and discuss observations** for each of the listed categories, including land use/ infrastructure; trees and plants; animals; soils; resource tenure; opportunities – or others that are relevant for a given context.
- 6** **If possible, post the map in a public location** within the area so that people can continue to develop it.



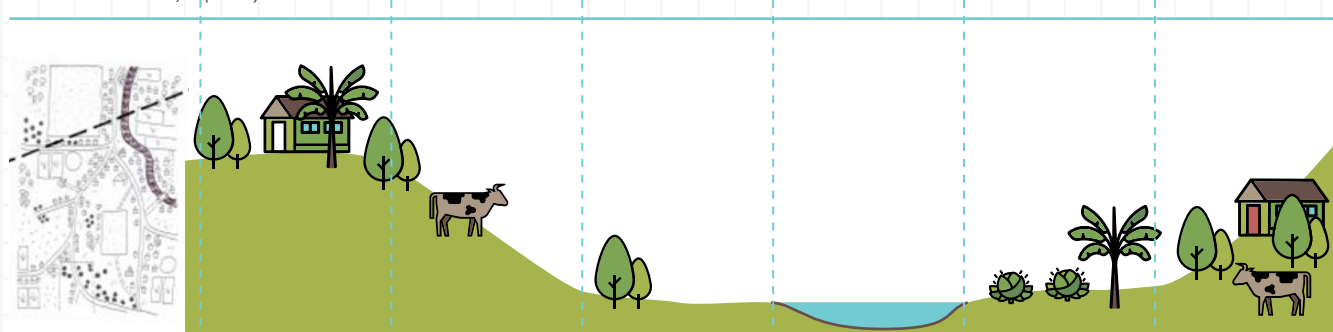
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Some additional tools exist to assess policies, laws and institutions; see [page 17 of the CRS Natural Resource Management Manual](#).



Table 2: Natural and physical asset mapping tool

Source: MacDonald, J. (2005).



Zone	Upland	Hillside	Riverbank	River	Riverbank	Hillside
Land use	House, huts, Mosques, food drying and storage, animal pens	Pasture	Fallow land, pasture, water sources, fields	Water sources	Fields, fallow land, banana fields	Houses, huts, food drying and storage, fields, fallow land, pasture
Trees and plants	<i>Parkia biglobosa</i> , <i>Combretum micranthum</i> , <i>Lophira lanceolata</i>	<i>Parkia biglobosa</i> , <i>Acacia spp.</i> , <i>Combretum micranthum</i> , grasses	<i>Erythrophleum suaveolens</i>	–	<i>Bauhinia reticulata</i> , <i>Pterocarpus erinaceus</i> , <i>Parkia biglobosa</i>	<i>Mangifera indica</i> , <i>Citrus aurantium</i> , <i>Carica papaya</i> , <i>Borassus aethiopicum</i> , <i>Tamarindus indica</i>
Animals	Goats, sheep, cattle, poultry	Goats, sheep, cattle, poultry, squirrel, hare	Monkeys, domestic animals	Fish	Monkeys, field rats	Goats, sheep, cattle, poultry, hare
Soils	Gravel surface Little soil development	Skeletal soils, over dolerite Gullyng	Black soils, easily worked Increased clay content	–	Ferrallitic soils, silty or sandy clays, soil accumulation, ochre	Black soils, easily worked
Resource tenure	Compounds and enclosure: private individual holdings Pastures: open access	Open access	Fields/fallow land: limited access Private individual/family holdings and communal management Water sources: open access, communal management Pasture: open access	Open access, communal management	Fields/fallow land: limited access Private individual/family holdings and communal management Banana fields: private holdings	Compounds and enclosures: individual/family property, private Outer fields: limited access Private/individual holdings and communal management
Opportunities						



step 5

Community action planning (adapted from ABCD)

Community development involves linking the assets that people have with desired and envisioned outcomes to create opportunities to enhance their livelihoods.



Implementing Step 5



DURATION

1.5 hours



RESOURCES

Plain sheets of paper (large - flip chart),
different colour marker pens



METHOD

- 1 **Remind community members** that the asset mapping exercises revealed their ability and agency to make positive changes to their households and communities without any external assistance. Also **review the community visions** and reflect on the underlying causes of the challenges to achieve their visions. Discuss that there are stakeholders that can support the community in certain areas (in addition to what they can do locally). **Review the vision maps**, causal analysis, assets and stakeholders.
- 2 **Jointly identify and/or confirm specific community development goals** by asking the following questions: Based on all the assets and vision, what are desired and realizable development goals for this community? Guide community members to identify “low hanging fruit” that are within their power to achieve without outside assistance. Ensure that this discussion is based on and a further development of the initial vision mapping.
- 3 **Jointly identify community assets to achieve that goal** by asking community members to identify which specific assets they can use to achieve their goals.
- 4 After listing what they can do by themselves, community members can **identify their social assets** – their access to specific resource persons, associations or organisations – that can support them for some or all the listed development goals and strategies on how to bring them on board. As much as possible, ask them to identify and understand the specific mission, mandate and interest of different actors and ask them to be realistic in who can be approached for which activities, and how the community should go about it.
- 5 Use Table 3 on the following page to **guide how the plan can be developed** by matching goals with assets. Ensure that some of these goals are linked to landscape restoration.
- 6 The plan and other outputs should be copied or photographed by the team and the originals left in the community to be put up somewhere prominent where people can see it.

Table 3: Integrated community action planning tool - aligning assets with objectives
 Source: Fuchs et al. (2020)

Future change	Actions required	Local assets	Who can contribute	External support required	Who can be approached
Good soil conservation					
High vegetable yields					
Increased poultry production					
Good water spring protection					
Other future change					



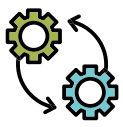
Note: The proposed table can be adapted to suit the respective context. For instance, the ‘who can contribute?’ question can be adapted to feature two sub-columns on ‘what?’ and ‘how?’. If relevant and desired, individual timelines for the proposed future changes can be included in the table as well.



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Another approach to action planning can be borrowed from CARE’s Climate Change Vulnerability and Adaptive Capacity Analysis (CVCA) tools. These tools assist with the prioritisation of actions by taking into account the technical, social, economic and environmental feasibility of activities, while considering the effects of climate change on the sustainability of actions. More information on the toolbox can be found [here](#).





step 6

Supporting action plan implementation

Reflect on the action plan developed by each 'sustainability community' to chart pathways towards implementation.

Jointly with communities, clearly identify and differentiate between four different types of actions and pathways:

- i. Those that can be pursued by **individual community members** deciding to start where they are and use what they have.
- ii. Those that can be pursued independently by **community members coming together** and using existing assets better without any external support.
- iii. Those that can be pursued through **strategic partnerships with Regreening Africa** (or another project).
- iv. Those that can be pursued through **strategic partnerships with other external actors**.

To ensure that the actions that need external support can be pursued successfully, support the community to set up planning meetings with the identified local partners and government officers to agree on whether and how support can be provided

to the community. This request for support should be as specific as possible (rather than asking 'what can you do for us?', ask 'can you do XYZ to support us?'), and be aligned with the details elaborated during community action planning. Present the action plan, and specifically the social asset analysis, and show how their support will complement what the community members are able to undertake by themselves towards realizing their vision. If possible, ask for commitments (written and time specific) from these stakeholders to the community.

Ideally, these meetings are held by community representatives directly. If involvement of Regreening personnel is considered, ensure that community representatives are present and driving the process as much as possible.



Note: For partners working on restoration specifically, ensure provision of locally appropriate tree species and practices.

Concluding remarks

on process facilitation and implementation

Community sustainability planning activities should be conducted by specifically identified facilitators in each project country, or, ideally, in each category of sites (direct intervention vs. leverage). All facilitators should be trained together to foster a maximum of exchange, co-learning, and contextual suitability of selected approaches in view of experiences made in the different project countries and contexts.

The following core contents should be part of the training of identified facilitators:

- Introduction of the **idea** for and **purpose** of community sustainability planning.
- Introduction of the **specific tools, processes and methods** identified in this document that can be used for community sustainability planning.
- **Discussion session** to solicit feedback on, experience with and interpretation of the proposed tools, processes and methods - as well as the experience, thoughts and ideas of participants with other approaches and tools.
- Joint development of **tailored approaches** and adaptation of specific tools for each context.
- Proposed process and tools.

During the planning process, country teams might identify specific ‘interventions’ that support sustainability (i.e., work with lead farmers, Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration demonstration etc.). Rather than jumping to implementing these activities directly, they should be embedded in the community action plans resulting from the holistic sustainability planning process, and then implemented through one or several of the four identified implementation pathways (i.e., individually, community-led, strategic collaboration with Regreening Africa/other project, strategic collaboration with other external partner/s) – rather than Regreening Africa country teams implementing them.

While the final outcome might be similar in terms of the practical activities that will be implemented and supported by Regreening Africa staff, the six-step sustainability process is to ensure community ownership of both the process and the activities.

Communities develop ownership when they:

- a. **Clearly see a problem/opportunity** – hence the importance of identifying a ‘sustainability community’ that is directly concerned by the identified landscape-level opportunity or threat.
- b. **Feel concerned by the problem/opportunity** and want to do something about it – hence the ‘vision mapping’.
- c. **Feel and/or realise that they are able to do something about it** – hence ‘causal analysis’ to identify obstacles and ‘asset assessment’ to realise what they have and from where they can start, which helps them build agency, or the belief in their ability to change something about their situation.
- d. **Are included in identifying and defining solutions** and practical pathways towards them – hence the holistic ‘action planning’.
- e. **Steer the implementation of the proposed solutions** – hence the ‘implementation support planning’ to ensure that Regreening Africa staff step up where demanded/desired by the community, and step down and ‘lead from the back’ where the community has identified other, more sustainable, implementation pathways.

Community ownership is the most important element to fostering and ensuring long-term sustainability (especially after project exit).



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annex 1

Overview of sustainability planning process, duration and objectives

 Process element	 Duration *	 Objective
(1) Identify and define the communities	2 hour discussion with the team	Identify relevant sample of the community for sustainability planning process prior to engaging with the community
(2) Community vision mapping	1.5 hours	Understand the view of the community and their aspirations and desires for the future
(3) Causal analysis	30 minutes	Understand what issues underpin identified barriers to achieving a desired outcome
(4) Asset (and stakeholder) mapping		
Option 1: Human and social asset mapping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human asset mapping 	30 minutes	Identify the skills and capacities of community members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association mapping 	30 minutes	Identify informal and voluntary groups or associations that are active in an area, and understand the potential for collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions mapping 	30 minutes	Identify the full range of institutions in the area, and understand the links between local institutions and local associations
Option 2: Local economy assessment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Leaky Bucket 	1 hour	Understand the local economy, including opportunities to improve its circular nature, and its relationship to the larger economy
Option 3: Natural and physical resource assessment and mapping <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Village mapping 	30 minutes	Identify the physical and natural assets that exist within a given area that community members can draw upon
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transect mapping 	1 hour to 1.5 hours	Document the diversity of community assets in detail, including what and how resources are used, and identify opportunities
(5) Community action planning	1.5 hours	Link the assets that people have with opportunities to enhance their livelihoods
(6) Identify intervention areas	1-2 hours	Reflect on the plan developed by the community, and particularly the actions that need external support

* The table provides minimum durations; depending on circumstances and context, individual sessions might take much longer than indicated here. Contextual adaptation during the planning stage is important.



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