



SUMMARY BRIEF

Considering barriers to accelerating impact in the Great Green Wall Initiative.

A summary of participant feedback, Virtual Event Series: 25 October, 24 November 2022.

Background

To advance a transformational approach and in support of the Great Green Wall (GGW) Initiative, the GGW Accelerator and the Pan African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW), the One CGIAR ClimBeR Initiative, the Alliance of Bioversity International and the International Center for Tropical Agriculture, along with CIFOR-ICRAF, have undertaken a study in four countries (Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia and Sudan) and hosted a series of virtual events across a wide range of stakeholders to generate knowledge to understand key barriers to and potential solutions for accelerating impacts for the GGW.

This brief summarises key findings from the first virtual event which presented the initial outcomes of desk review and interview activities in Senegal, Mali, Ethiopia and Sudan, in order to identify and deepen the understanding of existing barriers to finance and alignment, policy and institutions, science, practice and scaling. Facilitated interactions in this session focused on barriers to the scaling ambitions of the GGWI and their underlying causes.



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Examining barriers

In working groups, event participants identified barriers to accelerating impacts in the Great Green Wall and considered potential underlying causes.

Working groups were organised by the following thematic categories:

- institutional relationships and partnerships;
- funding mechanisms and alignment;
- policy and enabling environment;
- research and academia for development; and
- promoting practice and capacity development.

QUESTION

“What is one barrier to acceleration of impact of the GGWI that must be addressed?”

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK

- Inclusion of all actors
- Alignment with stakeholders

- Lack of policy coherence
- Lack of political will
- Political instability

- Land tenure insecurity
- Tree and land tenure systems
- Water

- Institutions and governance
- Understanding the GGWI
- Lack of coordination
- Egos
- Results of capitalism



INSTITUTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND PARTNERSHIPS

One of the biggest challenges discussed was the **lack of funding of partnerships**, given that this is not a traditional funding line item.

Furthermore, in both Mali and Senegal, the **positioning of national agencies** has formed an obstacle to the mobilisation of resources, with agencies under the direction of each country's Ministry of the Environment but with financial partners convened at a national level by the Ministry of Finance and Planning.

Working group participants also highlighted the need for more national engagements to break down the silos that are a major barrier to effective communication and coordination. One of the key outcomes of the Permanent Interstate Committee for Drought Control in the Sahel (CILSS) and AGRHYMET partnership for example, is the development of a **national platform to work together across countries** and create a common programme of work.



FUNDING MECHANISMS AND ALIGNMENT

The Funding Mechanisms and Alignment working group highlighted the inability to capitalise on project activities, as funding tends to remain within the ministries, with very little coordination among the silos.

While funding mechanisms have been designed to help mitigate the challenge of adequate financing, such as the Great Green Wall Umbrella Programme that aims to promote **inclusive green financing**, there remains a need for enhanced **coordination of fundraising**, as well as reviewing national and regional project proposals under the GGW umbrella programme and providing guidance and arrangement on the formulation of projects.

Participants discussed that the GGW is generally viewed as having so far **failed to deliver the large-scale change** that was originally envisaged, and therefore not only has this resulted in a lack of commitment from sectoral ministries to coordinate finances, but any available funding is being prioritised elsewhere. This is compounded by a switch of priorities to **regional security issues** and the onset and subsequent management of **COVID-19**.



RESEARCH AND ACADEMIA

One of the main challenges identified in this working group is the **lack of availability and sharing of information between sectors** as well as across different levels of society.

In Sudan, the **slow movement of data and information** has had a direct impact on the implementation of GGWI related activities.

This is associated with the lack of funding available for research, as well as the **absence of clear communication pathways to share knowledge, particularly indigenous knowledge**. While it is critical that science is linked to policy, it is equally critical that indigenous knowledge is taken into consideration when policies are developed and updated.



POLICY AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT

GGW member states are in need **land use policies and governance structures** to enable communities with ownership or tenure to successfully restore degraded lands and avert recurrent droughts and loss of livelihood. In Sudan, the absence of land use plans and the lack of laws governing land tenure and land use have had a substantial impact on the successful activities relating to addressing land degradation.

Other challenges include the **lack of synergy at the national level**, and the issue of ministries working in silos. Communities often do not believe that they will receive the benefits of the GGWI, particularly in the initial phase where they do not readily see the benefits. **Government support is critical** to help encourage communities to participate in GGW activities, until such a time where benefits of the initiative are more visible.



PROMOTING PRACTICE AND CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT

Working group participants identified that **effective technologies exist but are not always accessible**, particularly at the grassroots level.

They felt that the GGW needs to move away from designating implementation to certain government institutions and instead **reach out to civic society and the private sector to mobilise resources** and enhance the resilience of communities. Local community ownership is fundamental to incentives and final outcome of the GGW projects, particularly for the annual tree planting campaign.



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ClimBeR

ClimBeR seeks to address challenges to adaptation by small-holder farmers through science and innovation aimed at transforming the climate adaptation capacity of food, land, and water systems, working closely with partners at the local, national, regional, and global levels. ClimBeR focuses on generating knowledge to unlock public and private finance, foster climate- and peace-sensitive policies and backstop the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI), Africa's flagship programme to address climate change and desertification.



<https://www.cgiar.org/research/publication/initiative-overview-climber-building-systemic-resilience-against-climate-variability-and-extremes/>



ClimBeR: Building Systemic Resilience Against Climate Variability and Extremes

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