GEF-8 REQUEST FOR CEO CHILD ENDORSEMENT/APPROVAL

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General Child Project Information

Child Project Title	
Transformation Approach to Large Scale Investment in Support of the Implementation of the Great Green Wall (TALSIG)	
Region Regional	GEF Project ID 11465
Country(ies) Regional	Type of Project FSP
GEF Agency(ies) UNEP	GEF Agency Project ID
Project Executing Entity(s) UNEP Biodiversity People and Landscapes Unit PANAFRICAN AGENCY OF THE GGW - NATIONAL GGW AGENCIES FUTURES AGRIBUSINESS (FAGRIB) GREEN UNITED DEVELOPMENT LIMITED (GUD MATA) UNCCD ACCELERATOR, FAO-SURAGAWA, CIFOR-IRAF K4GGWA, IFAD/GCF/GEF PROGRAMS,	Project Executing Type GEF Agency Government Private Sector Private Sector Others
GEF Focal Area (s) Land Degradation	Submission Date 6/20/2025
Type of Trust Fund GET	Project Duration (Months) 72
GEF Project Grant: (a) 7,139,450.00	Agency Fee(s) Grant: (b) 642,550.00
PPG Amount: (c) 200,000.00	PPG Agency Fee(s): (d) 18,000.00
Total GEF Financing: (a+b+c+d) 8000000	Total Co-financing 58,074,920.00
Project Sector (CCM Only)	
Rio Markers	

Climate Change Mitigation	Climate Change Adaptation	Biodiversity	Land Degradation
Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Significant Objective 1	Principal Objective 2

Project Summary

Provide a brief summary description of the project, to offer a snapshot of what is being proposed. The summary should include: (i) what is the problem and issues to be addressed? ii) as a child project under a program, explain how the description fits in the

broader context of the specific program; (iii) what are the project objectives, and if the project is intended to be transformative, how will this be achieved? and (iv) what are the GEBs and/or adaptation benefits, and other key expected results. (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

The Sahel region, a vast expanse stretching across Africa and home to over 135 million people, is at the epicenter of a complex and interconnected crisis. The convergence of severe land degradation, accelerating climate change, and profound socio-economic fragility has created a precarious environment where livelihoods are constantly under threat. An estimated 65% of the region's productive land is degraded, undermining the agricultural and pastoral systems that form the bedrock of the Sahelian economy. This environmental decline is exacerbated by a climate that is warming 1.5 times faster than the global average, leading to more frequent and intense droughts, erratic rainfall, and extreme heat events that push already vulnerable populations to their limits. The social fabric is further strained by widespread poverty, resource-based conflicts, and a security crisis that has resulted in over 5.5 million internally displaced persons, placing additional pressure on scarce natural resources. In response to this multifaceted challenge, the Great Green Wall (GGW) initiative was launched as a beacon of hope—an ambitious, African-led vision to restore 100 million hectares of degraded landscapes, sequester 250 million tons of carbon, and create 10 million green jobs. However, progress has been slow and fragmented. Over a decade into its implementation, the GGW has achieved only a fraction of its restoration target. The primary obstacle is the absence of a coherent, large-scale coordination mechanism to harmonize efforts, share critical knowledge, and mobilize investments across national borders. This has led to a patchwork of isolated interventions, duplicated efforts, and inefficient use of resources, ultimately blunting the potential impact of one of the world's most audacious environmental undertakings.

The objective of the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project is to address this systemic failure by building a coordinated, multi-country framework that advances green and sustainable development across the GGW region. Its transformative ambition is to serve as the 'connective tissue' for the currently fragmented GGW investments, creating a unified and powerful regional movement from a series of isolated national projects. This will be achieved by establishing a durable regional architecture for collaboration that addresses the root causes of slow progress. The project's innovation lies in its design as a regional public good, creating harmonized systems for monitoring, fostering policy coherence, and enabling systematic knowledge exchange among nine participating countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Djibouti, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Nigeria). By creating this shared infrastructure for collaboration, the project will catalyze a paradigm shift, moving beyond localized successes to achieve landscape-scale impact and unlock the full potential of the GGW initiative.

This transformative objective will be achieved through a comprehensive four-component approach, with each component designed to deliver regional public goods that strengthen the capacity of the nine participating national child projects. Component 1 will focus on strengthening technical capacity for integrated natural resource management by developing and disseminating gender-responsive tools, guidelines, and best practices for restoration, drawing on the expertise of partners like the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT). Component 2 will promote equitable, gender-responsive green value chains and public-private partnerships, working to de-risk private investment in a challenging market and create sustainable livelihood opportunities. This component will be supported by partnerships with financial institutions and specialized organizations like FAGRIB and GUD Mata to develop carbon market infrastructure and equitable benefit-sharing models. Component 3 is dedicated to strengthening institutional frameworks and cross-border collaboration, supporting policy harmonization on critical issues like land tenure, pastoralist mobility, and shared water resources. Finally, Component 4 will establish a harmonized monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge management system, creating a unified platform for tracking progress, sharing lessons learned, and ensuring adaptive management across the entire GGW landscape. This regional hub, implemented by the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW) with support from UNEP, will provide the essential support structure to amplify the on-the-ground impact of the child projects.

The project will foster strong partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, including farmer organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), to ensure that interventions are context-specific and community-driven. A central focus will be placed on empowering women and youth, who are disproportionately affected by land degradation and climate change, by ensuring

their active participation in decision-making processes and providing targeted support for green enterprises and livelihood diversification. By building a broad coalition of partners and placing local communities at the heart of the GGW movement, the project will create a resilient and inclusive foundation for transformative change.

The project will deliver significant and measurable Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs) and adaptation benefits, contributing directly to the GGW's ambitious goals. Key expected results include supporting the restoration and improved management of 325,900 hectares of degraded land and the sequestration of 275,000 tons of CO2e. The project's human-centered approach is projected to directly benefit 3.1 million people, with a strong focus on gender equity ensuring that 53.6% of beneficiaries are women. Furthermore, the project is expected to catalyze the creation of 1.26 million green jobs and enhance the capacity of over 500 institutions, from community-based organizations to national agencies. By fostering a self-sustaining ecosystem of collaboration and knowledge exchange, the project will not only enhance the climate resilience of Sahelian communities but also build a lasting foundation for collective action, ensuring that the Great Green Wall vision can be realized at the scale and pace required to meet the urgent challenges of the region.

Child Project Description Overview

Project Objective

To build a coordinated framework that advances green and sustainable development in the GGW Region by strengthening capacities, promoting resilient livelihoods, restoring natural resources, and enhancing regional adaptation.

Project Components

Component 1: Supporting gender-responsive sustainable use and integrated management of water, land and forest resources within the GGW region.

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
2,878,923.00	23,415,978.00

Outcome:

1.1 Implementation of Integrated NRM practices improve land productivity, land cover, soil organic carbon and build resilience

Output:

1.1.1: Stakeholders supported in developing gender-responsive technical tools, policies, and training to advance watershed management, renewable energy, participatory forestry, sustainable water use, soil conservation, and land restoration, enhancing adaptation and rehabilitating degraded lands.

1.1.2: Institutions as well as grassroot communities' skills and capacities are enhanced with due gender balanced consideration, allowing promotion and uptake of smart climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture practices, agroforestry schemes development and forest conservation planning.

1.1.3: Gender responsive stakeholder capacity for promoting community-based natural resource management systems that ensure the equitable distribution of benefits and encourage the sustainable use of natural resources are enhanced.

Component 2: Supporting the adoption and implementation of equitable, and gender-responsive local level enterprises, Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs) for NTFPs and value addition of selected products within the GGW region.

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,267,756.00	10,311,407.00

Outcome:

2.1 Local enterprises of selected value chains and NTFPs strengthen gender-responsive public-private partnerships (PPPs) and diversify resilient local livelihoods, while enhancing women's access to socioeconomic opportunities and overall resilience.

Output:

2.1.1 Gender-responsive enterprise training to strengthen the capacity of local entrepreneurs and promote equitable, gender-sensitive businesses developed and implemented.

2.1.2 Gender responsive value chain analyses of selected NTFPs performed, with training to identify actors and markets, improve processing, and facilitate market linkages via networks and trade fairs.

2.1.3 Gender responsive public-Private Partnerships to enhance sustainable natural resource management and value-chain development for NTFPs Facilitated.

Component 3: Building gender-responsive institutional capacity, strengthening policies, and mobilizing stakeholders to enhance climate impact planning, advocacy, and communication for GGW implementation.

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,453,367.00	11,821,090.00

Outcome:

3.1 Resilience and Capacity building, policy and institutional strengthening, stakeholder engagement and improved communication enhance the implementation of the GGWI

3.2 Capacity building, policy and institutional strengthening enhance planning for climate impacts and extreme weather events

Output:

3.1.1 Gender responsive training programs on technical, adaptation, policy, and communication aspects of GGWI to build stakeholders capacity. developed and delivered.
3.1.2 Gender responsive Communication tools, methodologies, and advocacy approaches for effective awareness campaigns via social media, radio, TV, and print developed and rolled out to National GGW Agencies.
3.1.3 Gender responsive multi-country policy analysis in relation to climate change risks (drought, floods, etc.) adaptation conducted to identify areas where policy reform is necessary to support the Great Green Wall Initiative.
3.1.4 Gender responsive resource mobilization and stakeholder partnership mechanisms to secure and leverage support from governments, private sector, and international partners established.

3.2.1 Gender responsive institutional and policy structures strengthened to provide good weather advisories to inform farmers, pastoralist communities and land managers to improve their preparedness.
3.2.2 Gender responsive climate risks, drought assessment and Climate change data focused system set up for reporting droughts, floods and disease (crop and zoonotic) and pest outbreaks (including locusts) in GGW countries.

Component 4: Support towards gender responsive knowledge management and regional monitoring and accountability

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
1,083,061.00	8,809,173.00

Outcome:

4.1 A functional platform enhances transparent regional and national implementation and reporting of the GGW Initiative.

Output:

4.1.1 Institutional structures to develop gender responsive knowledge management systems (KMS), share information and best practices including on adaptation with stakeholders are strengthened and enabled to deliver updated policies and develop tools for KMS and information dissemination.
4.1.2 Tailored gender responsive training on sustainable land management, climate adaptation, and biodiversity conservation for diverse stakeholders using appropriate methodologies conducted.
4.1.3 A functional gender responsive knowledge management system with robust protocols for collecting, analyzing, and sharing Great Green Wall Initiative information and best practices to support stakeholder engagement developed.
4.1.4 Gender responsive structures to develop results-based management and finance systems, along with standards and protocols for capturing and storing national-level GGW implementation data accessible to stakeholders strengthened.

M&E

Component Type	Trust Fund
Technical Assistance	GET
GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
117,220.00	953,420.00

Outcome:

An M&E plan with clear roles and responsibilities for collecting, reporting and analyzing data on results indicators, and sources and frequency of data availability improves the ability to track the Program's progress.

Output:

A monitoring and evaluation system to track the Program's progress towards its objective sustainable land, water, and forest management using results-based to inform policy and programmatic decision-making developed

Component Balances

Project Components	GEF Project Financing ($)	Co-financing ($)
Component 1: Supporting gender-responsive sustainable use and integrated management of water, land and forest resources within the GGW region.	2,878,923.00	23,415,978.00
Component 2: Supporting the adoption and implementation of equitable, and gender-responsive local level enterprises, Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs) for NTFPs and value addition of selected products within the GGW region.	1,267,756.00	10,311,407.00

Component 3: Building gender-responsive institutional capacity, strengthening policies, and mobilizing stakeholders to enhance climate impact planning, advocacy, and communication for GGW implementation.	1,453,367.00	11,821,090.00
Component 4: Support towards gender responsive knowledge management and regional monitoring and accountability	1,083,061.00	8,809,173.00
M&E	117,220.00	953,420.00
Subtotal	**6,800,327.00**	**55,311,068.00**
Project Management Cost	339,123.00	2,763,852.00
Total Project Cost ($)	**7,139,450.00**	**58,074,920.00**

Please provide Justification

CHILD PROJECT OUTLINE

A. PROJECT RATIONALE

Describe the current situation: the global environmental problems and/or climate vulnerabilities that the project will address, the key elements of the system, and underlying drivers of environmental change in the project context, such as population growth, economic development, climate change, sociocultural and political factors, including conflicts, or technological changes. Since this is a child project under a program, please include an explanation of how the context fits within the specific program agenda. Describe the objective of the project, and the justification for it. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

The Sahel, a vast semi-arid region stretching across Africa, stands at a critical juncture, grappling with a complex nexus of environmental degradation, climate change, and socio-economic fragility. The region is home to some of the world's most vulnerable populations, with an estimated 135 million people whose livelihoods are directly dependent on degraded lands[1][1]. Decades of unsustainable land use, coupled with accelerating climate change, have led to widespread desertification, biodiversity loss, and food insecurity. The Sahel today is characterized by a paradox: immense potential coexisting with pervasive fragility. The region boasts a significant demographic dividend, with 64.5% of its population under the age of 25[2][2], representing a vast human capital resource. However, this potential is severely constrained by a daunting array of interconnected challenges. The GGW Initiative has the vision to restore the continent's degraded landscapes, representing a beacon of hope. However, progress towards its goal of restoring 100 million hectares by 2030 has been slow and fragmented. As of 2020, only 4% of this target had been achieved within the GGW's strict intervention zones, with a further 14% under restoration in the wider region[3][3]. This slow progress underscores a critical gap: the lack of a coherent, large-scale coordination mechanism to harmonize efforts, share knowledge, and mobilize investments across national borders.

Environmental baseline: Land degradation is the most critical environmental threat, with an estimated 135 million people dependent on degraded lands for their survival[4][4]. The primary drivers of this degradation are unsustainable agricultural practices, overgrazing, deforestation for fuel wood, and increasingly, climate change. The region is warming at a rate 1.5 times faster than the global average, with projections indicating a

temperature increase of 2-2.5°C by 2050[5] (see Figure 1). This is projected to increase the frequency and intensity of droughts, further stressing already scarce water resources and reducing agricultural yields.

Wetland ecosystem services in the Sahel region: Wetlands across the Sahel region provide critical ecosystem services that underpin food security, water availability, climate resilience, and the livelihoods of millions of people in the project intervention countries. These 'Blue Lifelines' function as vital productive landscapes that sustain both human populations and biodiversity in an otherwise arid environment[6]. In Nigeria, the Hadejia-Nguru Wetlands support diverse provisioning services including farming (rice, maize, sorghum, wheat), fishing (contributing US$5,864 per household annually), collection of non-timber forest products such as doum palm (US$4,694 per household annually), fuelwood, and grazing resources that are essential during the dry season when pastures elsewhere have dried up[7]. Similarly, the Inner Niger Delta in Mali, one of Africa's most extensive floodplain systems, generates an estimated ecosystem value of US$500 million per year through its support of agriculture, fisheries, and pastoral activities, with seasonal floods depositing nutrient-rich sediments that enhance soil fertility and sustain crop production[8]. The Lake Chad wetlands, straddling the borders of Chad, Niger, Nigeria, and Cameroon, provide biological resources and ecosystem services that are fundamental to food and water security for the basin's growing population, although these services have been severely compromised by a 60% reduction in fish populations due to habitat destruction and climate-induced shrinkage of the lake[9]. Beyond direct provisioning services, Sahel wetlands perform essential regulating functions including water storage and purification, groundwater recharge, flood attenuation, and climate regulation through carbon sequestration and evaporative cooling, which are particularly critical in dryland ecosystems experiencing temperatures rising 1.5 times faster than the global average[10]. During prolonged dry seasons and drought periods, wetlands act as critical refugia and buffer zones, attracting pastoralists and their livestock and providing emergency water and forage resources that prevent complete livelihood collapse[11]. In the Senegal River Basin, spanning Mauritania, Senegal, and Mali, wetlands support riverine communities through multiple land-use systems including flood-recession agriculture, fishing, and livestock grazing, with traditional management practices maintaining both ecological integrity and livelihood benefits[12]. The ephemeral wetlands of eastern Mauritania, though temporary in nature, provide significant economic value to pastoral communities by supporting livestock during critical periods and enabling mobility strategies that are fundamental to dryland resilience[13]. However, these vital ecosystem services are under severe threat from climate change, upstream dam construction, invasive species (particularly Typha grass), unsustainable water extraction, and land-use conversion, leading to wetland degradation, resource scarcity, and intensified conflicts among user groups[14]. The TALSIG project recognizes that safeguarding and restoring wetland ecosystems is essential not only for achieving land degradation neutrality targets but also for ensuring the food security, water security, and climate resilience of the 3.1 million direct beneficiaries across the nine participating countries.

Socio-economic baseline: The economies of the Sahel are heavily reliant on rain-fed agriculture and pastoralism, sectors that are acutely vulnerable to climate variability. Food insecurity is chronic, with the cost

of a nutritious diet in the central Sahel being 110% higher than the daily minimum wage[15][15]. This economic precarity is a major driver of the escalating displacement crisis. As of March 2025, the Sahel is home to 5.9 million internally displaced persons (IDPs) and 2.2 million refugees, a total of 8.1 million people uprooted by the convergence of conflict, climate change, and poverty[16][16].

Institutional baseline: Institutionally, the GGW initiative has been marked by a fragmented implementation landscape. While numerous projects are underway, they often operate in isolation, lacking the coordination needed for landscape-scale impact. A 2020 UNCCD report highlighted a 'lack of coordination, exchange and flow of information and knowledge at the regional and national levels' as a primary barrier to progress[17][17]. National agencies often lack the capacity for robust Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV), and there is no harmonized system to track progress towards the GGW's ambitious goals. This fragmentation leads to duplication of effort, inefficient use of resources, and a failure to capture and disseminate valuable lessons learned.

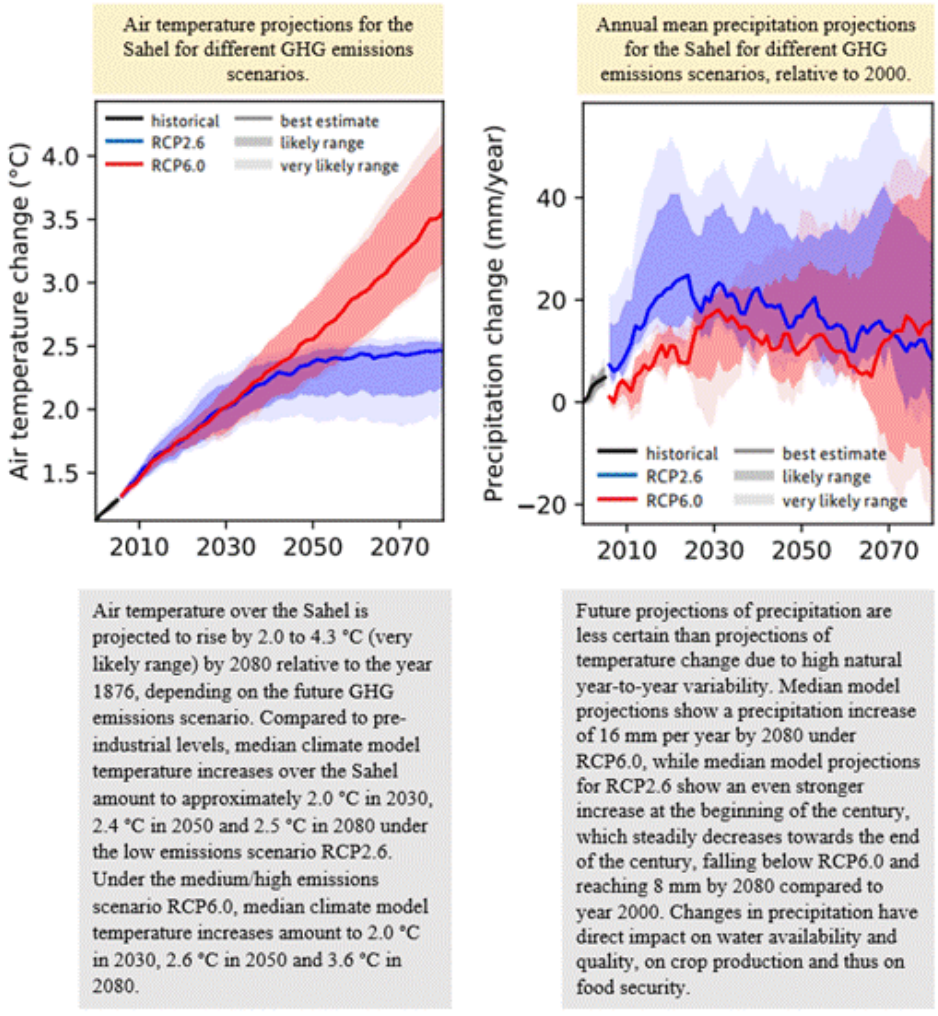

Figure 1. Projections of air temperature and precipitations changes in the Sahel up to the end of the century (source: UNHCR. (2021)).

Future narratives

In line with STAP guidance on designing for resilience in the face of uncertainty[18], three simple future narratives have been developed to explore the potential long-term outcomes for the Sahel by 2035, depending on the success of coordinated action.

Narrative 1: Coordinated stewardship and regenerative growth (success scenario)

By 2035, sustained investment in regional coordination through TALSIG has catalyzed a paradigm shift in the Sahel. A robust, interconnected network of national and local stakeholders operates under a harmonized MRV framework, providing transparent data on restoration progress across the 9 participating countries. The GGW is no longer a patchwork of isolated projects but a cohesive front of regenerative landscapes. Cross-border collaboration on water management and pest control is standard practice, informed by a shared, digitally-enabled knowledge management system. The restoration of over 50 million hectares has significantly boosted food security, created millions of green jobs, and visibly reduced climate-induced migration. Private sector investment has flowed into sustainable value chains for non-timber forest products (NTFPs), and innovative blended finance models are self-sustaining. The Sahel is increasingly seen as a global model for large-scale ecosystem restoration and climate adaptation, with its institutional architecture providing a blueprint for other regions.

Narrative 2: Fragmented gains amidst mounting pressures (mixed scenario)

By 2035, the TALSIG project has yielded tangible improvements in specific transboundary corridors and among certain value chains. Pockets of resilience have emerged where national child projects successfully aligned, and knowledge-sharing platforms are functional, but their use is inconsistent. However, the lack of sustained political will and continued security challenges in key areas have hampered the full realization of a regional approach. Policy harmonization has been partial, and while some countries have adopted new MRV technologies, a unified regional system remains elusive. Restoration has progressed to approximately 25 million hectares, but these gains are constantly threatened by accelerating climate impacts, including more frequent and intense droughts and a temperature increase of over 2°C. Displacement continues to be a major challenge, and while some communities have benefited, widespread transformation has not been achieved. The GGW remains a collection of successes and failures, a testament to both the potential of coordinated action and the difficulty of sustaining it at scale.

Narrative 3: Systemic decline and regional displacement (failure scenario)

By 2035, the vision of a coordinated Great Green Wall has largely dissolved. The TALSIG project failed to secure the necessary institutional buy-in and was unable to overcome the deep-seated fragmentation of efforts. Without a functional regional coordination body, national projects continued to operate in silos, often with competing objectives and duplicative investments. The knowledge management and MRV systems were never fully operationalized, leaving a data vacuum that deterred further large-scale investment. Land degradation has continued unabated, with less than 10 million hectares showing signs of restoration. The Sahel is caught in a vicious cycle of environmental decline, resource-based conflict, and mass displacement, with the number of internal migrants exceeding 50 million[19]. Food and water insecurity are rampant, and the region has become a global hotspot of humanitarian crisis. The initial promise of the GGW has faded, serving as a cautionary tale of what happens when a grand vision lacks the connective architecture to be realized.

Barriers to achieving transformative change

Achieving the GGW's transformative vision requires overcoming a set of deeply entrenched barriers that have historically impeded progress. TALSIG is designed to systematically address these obstacles.

1. Fragmented governance and institutional silos: The most significant barrier is the lack of a cohesive governance framework. National GGW agencies, international partners, and local CSOs often work in parallel rather than in concert. This leads to a patchwork of interventions that fail to connect at a landscape level. TALSIG addresses this by establishing a regional coordination platform to foster joint planning, harmonize policies, and facilitate cross-border collaboration, moving from a project-based approach to a systemic one.

2. Deficient monitoring, reporting, and verification (MRV) systems: Without a credible and transparent MRV system, it is impossible to track progress, demonstrate impact, or attract large-scale investment. Currently, MRV capacity is weak at the national level, and data is not standardized or shared regionally. TALSIG addresses this by co-developing and deploying a harmonized MRV framework, leveraging technologies like GEO-LDN and UNCCD's PRAIS, to provide reliable data on restoration progress and socio-economic co-benefits.

3. Knowledge gaps and limited dissemination of best practices: While significant local and scientific knowledge on effective restoration techniques (e.g., Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration, Zaï) exists, it is not systematically captured, validated, or shared across the region. Success stories remain localized, and failures are often repeated. TALSIG addresses this by creating a digital knowledge management and learning platform to document best practices, facilitate peer-to-peer learning, and connect researchers with practitioners.

4. Weak capacity for scaling and investment mobilization: National and local actors often lack the technical and financial capacity to scale up successful restoration efforts. They struggle to develop bankable projects and access climate finance. TALSIG addresses this by providing targeted technical assistance and capacity building on project design, financial structuring, and resource mobilization, creating a pipeline of investment-ready projects for public and private funders.

Key enablers for transformative change

TALSIG will leverage and strengthen a series of key enablers to create the conditions for large-scale, durable change.

1. Strengthened multi-level governance and coordination: The core of TALSIG's approach is to build a robust, multi-level governance architecture. By creating a formal regional coordination body and strengthening national platforms, the project will foster a culture of collaboration, ensuring that actions are strategically aligned from the local to the regional level.

2. Data-driven decision making through harmonized MRV: By establishing a credible, transparent, and regionally harmonized MRV system, TALSIG will enable adaptive management and results-based financing. Reliable data on what works, where, and why will empower decision-makers to allocate resources more effectively and attract performance-based investments.

3. A regional knowledge and learning ecosystem: The creation of a dynamic knowledge management platform will transform the GGW from a collection of projects into a learning ecosystem. This will accelerate the adoption of proven technologies and practices, reduce the learning curve for new projects, and foster a community of practice dedicated to innovation and continuous improvement.

4. Gender-responsive institutional arrangements: Recognizing that women are powerful agents of change, TALSIG will champion gender-responsive approaches across all its interventions. By promoting women's land rights, ensuring their participation in decision-making bodies, and supporting women-led enterprises, the project will unlock a critical enabler for sustainable and equitable restoration.

5. Catalytic finance and private sector engagement: TALSIG will act as a catalyst for mobilizing the significant financial resources required to achieve the GGW's goals. By building capacity for developing

bankable projects and creating a clear pipeline of investment opportunities, the project will de-risk private sector engagement and facilitate access to a diverse range of financing instruments, from blended finance to green bonds.

Why TALSIG is best suited to catalyze change

This regional coordination project is uniquely positioned to address the systemic failures that have hindered the GGW initiative. A focus on individual restoration projects alone is insufficient; a dedicated investment in the connective architecture is required to achieve impact at the necessary scale and speed.

1. It addresses the core problem: TALSIG is designed to tackle the root cause of the GGW's slow progress: fragmentation. Focusing solely on individual restoration projects is not enough; achieving impact at the necessary scale and pace requires dedicated investment in the connective architecture that links these efforts and enables collaboration across borders.

2. It creates economies of scale: A regional approach to capacity building, technology deployment (e.g., MRV systems), and knowledge management is far more cost-effective than a country-by-country approach. TALSIG will create shared public goods (e.g., data platforms, training modules) that all participating countries can leverage, avoiding duplication and maximizing the return on investment.

3. It is demand-driven and country-owned: The project is a direct response to the articulated priorities of GGW countries, which have consistently emphasized the need for strengthened regional support to overcome shared challenges. It is designed to empower rather than replace national and local actors, ensuring that interventions are context-specific, country-led, and sustainably owned.

4. It aligns with global best practice: The TALSIG model aligns with the growing consensus in the development community that large-scale, transboundary challenges require dedicated coordination platforms to be effective. It builds on lessons learned from other large-scale initiatives and represents a state-of-the-art approach to landscape-level management.

Stakeholder roles and engagement

The success of the TALSIG project hinges on the active and coordinated engagement of a diverse range of stakeholders, from continental bodies to local communities. Each actor plays a critical role in delivering the project's intended Global Environmental Benefits (GEBs), adaptation benefits, and socio-economic outcomes. The project's design ensures that these stakeholders are not merely consulted but are integral partners in the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the Great Green Wall initiative. The development of the GEF8 GGW Program has been one of the most participative processes in the region. Countries and partners including NGO have mentioned it on various occasions and the previous. The thematic areas have been identified and agreed with all stakeholders, particularly National Agencies and partners. The expression Natural Resources Management has been used to include all types of environment conservation and management. There was continuous discussion with some international NGOs including Birdlife International with which since the beginning of the process in 2021 there understanding that the NGO should focus its role at 2 levels: (a) regional level for transboundary and regional issues considered relevant by countries to avoid the top-down approach and (b) at country level for Birdlife to engage with each countries on its priority within the framework of national child projects.

Regional and continental bodies: At the highest level, the African Union Commission (AUC) provides the political leadership and continental vision for the GGW. The Pan-African Agency for the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW), as the specialized agency under the AUC, is the lead implementing partner for TALSIG. Its role is to coordinate the implementation of the GGW across its member states, mobilize resources, and monitor progress. TALSIG will directly support PAAGGW in strengthening its operational capacity to fulfill this mandate effectively (Component 4 output 4.1.1). Regional Economic Communities (RECs) such as ECOWAS, IGAD, UMA, and CEN-SAD are crucial for promoting policy harmonization and transboundary

cooperation. Their engagement ensures that TALSIG's activities are aligned with broader regional development strategies and that lessons learned are disseminated across their member states.

National government bodies: National government agencies are the primary drivers of GGW implementation at the country level. National GGW Agencies and Focal Points are responsible for supervising and coordinating priority actions, aligning them with national development plans (NDPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), and National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs). TALSIG will work directly with these national bodies to build their capacity, provide technical support, and ensure that the child projects are effectively integrated into national planning and budgeting processes (Component 4).

Civil society and local actors: Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), including international and national NGOs like Tree Aid, APAC (Aires de Patrimoine Autochtone et Communautaire – Indigenous and Communitiesn Patrimonial Areas) and SOS Sahel, are essential for grassroots implementation, community mobilization, and advocacy. They bring deep local knowledge and established relationships with communities, which are critical for ensuring that restoration activities are socially inclusive and culturally appropriate. Local communities, including Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), women, and youth, are the ultimate stewards of the land and the primary beneficiaries of the project. Their active participation is a prerequisite for the long-term sustainability of restoration efforts. TALSIG will ensure their engagement through participatory planning processes, the integration of traditional ecological knowledge, and the establishment of inclusive governance structures such as gender-balanced restoration committees and water user groups. CSOs will play an important role through engagement as executing partners of some activities including on policies development, advocacy and improve legislation at countries level using sub-contracting modality to deliver for example on component 3. The project is committed to applying Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) principles and ensuring that local actors have a central role in decision-making and benefit-sharing.

Private sector: The private sector is a key partner for unlocking the economic potential of the GGW and ensuring its long-term financial sustainability. The project through Component 2 will engage private sector actors as executing partners using sub-contract modality to develop and scale up green value chains for Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs) like gum arabic, shea, and moringa fostering inclusive market opportunities that benefit local producers—particularly women and youth—while promoting sustainable land management practices. Private companies such as SOMIVAP (Mali)[20][20] and Farmers Warehouses (Burkina Faso) are examples of local enterprises that will be supported to improve processing, access markets, and create green jobs. International firms like Futures Agribusiness (FAGRIB) and Terra Global Capital[21][21] will be engaged to mobilize private investment, develop carbon projects, and provide technical expertise in regenerative agriculture and landscape restoration.

Technical and financial partners: A wide range of technical and financial partners provide the scientific knowledge, technical expertise, and financial resources necessary for the success of the GGW. The GEF, as the primary funder of TALSIG, plays a catalytic role in leveraging additional co-financing. Coordinated by the UNCCD Accelerator, the partners platform meets monthly to update each other’s GGW projects/program progress but also discuss possible joint programming.

Other key partners include:

- The World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB), which provide large-scale financing for baseline projects like Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP).
- UN agencies such as UNEP (the GEF Implementing Agency for TALSIG), FAO (providing technical support on SLM and value chains), IFAD with its $10 million KM project with LDCF resources

collaborating on Knowledge Management, gender consideration and World Food Program (WFP) (addressing food security).

- Scientific and research institutions like the Sahara and Sahel Observatory (OSS) (leading on M&E and early warning systems), WOCAT (providing a global database of SLM best practices), CIRAD, and ICRAF, which generate the data and evidence needed for informed decision-making.

Baseline projects and linkages to the TALSIG

The TALSIG Regional Coordination Project builds upon a rich foundation of baseline projects and programs that have been implemented across the Sahel over the past two decades. These baseline initiatives provide critical lessons that inform TALSIG's design and implementation strategy. This section first describes the key baseline projects, then synthesizes the lessons learned and demonstrates how TALSIG systematically incorporates these lessons to avoid past pitfalls and scale up proven approaches.

Regional baseline projects

The most significant regional baseline is the Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP), implemented by the World Bank from 2012-2019 with $100 million in GEF funding and $1.2 billion in IDA resources across 12 countries, including 8 of the 9 TALSIG countries[22][22]. SAWAP achieved notable results: 1.6 million hectares under improved sustainable land management and 19.4 million direct beneficiaries.

The Great Green Wall Accelerator, launched at the 2021 One Planet Summit with $14.3 billion in pledges, represents the current regional baseline[23][23]. However, as of 2020, only 4% of the 100 million hectare restoration target had been achieved, with implementation remaining fragmented across countries and weak M&E systems preventing learning and adaptive management[24][24].

The GEF-8 TALSIG program, with a total investment of $87 million across 9 countries, represents the immediate baseline that this Regional Coordination Project will support[25][25]. These child projects focus on land degradation, biodiversity, and climate adaptation at the national level. The Regional Coordination Project ($7.14 million) provides the 'connective tissue' to ensure these national efforts are strategically aligned, share knowledge, and contribute to coherent regional outcomes[26][26].

National baseline projects

Each of the 9 TALSIG countries has a portfolio of baseline GEF and multilateral projects that provide context-specific lessons.

In Burkina Faso, GEF-7 investments in land degradation total approximately $10.2 million in GEF grants, leveraging an additional $95.5 million in co-financing[27][27]&[28][28]. These investments include two key projects that directly inform the TALSIG approach. The Sustainable Land Management to Strengthen Social Cohesion in the Drylands of Burkina Faso (GEF ID: 11003), a $3.5 million GEF project implemented by UNDP, focuses on achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets while promoting social cohesion in

the conflict-affected Centre-Nord region[29][29]. Approved in 2023, it pioneers approaches to integrating SLM with peacebuilding, a critical lesson for TALSIG's work in fragile transboundary areas. The Sustainable management of dryland landscapes in Burkina Faso (GEF ID: 10291), implemented by IUCN, is a $6.7 million GEF project that aims to achieve large-scale restoration of dryland landscapes and enhance sustainable livelihoods for rural communities[30][30]. Its multi-focal approach, addressing biodiversity and climate change alongside land degradation, provides a model for the integrated landscape management that TALSIG will promote at a regional scale. Burkina Faso was also a pioneer in testing programmatic approaches to sustainable land management through the GEF-3 Country Partnership Program (CPP) before the Great Green Wall initiative gained momentum[31][31]. The CPP: Sub-programme of the Northern Region (GEF ID: 3567), a $2 million GEF project implemented by IFAD and completed in 2014, successfully tested a participatory watershed management approach across five provinces in Northern Burkina Faso, covering over 21,000 km² and 358,000 people[32][32]. The project's emphasis on land tenure security, co-management of natural resources, and multi-stakeholder partnerships (involving the World Bank, FAO, UNEP, and AfDB) demonstrated the viability of the coordinated, decentralized model that TALSIG now aims to scale up regionally.

In Chad, the SAWAP component ($35 million) focused on transhumance corridors but achieved 0 hectares of farmland restoration due to diluted SLWM objectives. The project did develop management plans for 235,000 hectares of transhumance corridors at a cost of approximately $2/ha, but these had questionable attribution[33][33]. Ethiopia's SLMP2 demonstrates what is possible with focused SLWM investment, land tenure security, and decentralized implementation[34][34]. The project's success catalyzed follow-on investments of $100 million (Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods Project, 2018) and $500 million (Ethiopian Climate Action through Landscape Management Program for Results, 2019)[35][35]. In Niger, the Community Action Project for Climate Resilience successfully scaled FMNR practices through knowledge management, farmer study visits, and spontaneous adoption—not through cash-for-work payments. Nigeria's NEWMAP project demonstrated that multiple entry points are possible for SLWM, successfully addressing peri-urban gully erosion through community-based watershed management[36][36]. In Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal, SAWAP projects achieved limited hectares of SLWM (3,600 ha, 3,000 ha, and minimal hectares respectively) despite significant budgets, due to combining SLWM with broader agricultural and energy objectives[37][37].

Other multilateral baseline projects

In addition to the SAWAP and national GEF projects, several other major multilateral initiatives provide a critical baseline for TALSIG. These programs offer complementary investments, technical expertise, and established networks that TALSIG will coordinate with to maximize regional impact.

The World Bank's Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support Project (PRAPS-2) is a cornerstone of regional efforts to support pastoralism, with $375 million in IDA financing across six Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad,

Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal)[38][38]. Building on the successes of its first phase, PRAPS-2 aims to improve the productivity and resilience of pastoral systems, benefiting approximately 13 million people. The project focuses on establishing robust animal health systems, increasing access to natural resources, supporting peaceful cross-border mobility, and improving livestock value chains. For TALSIG, PRAPS-2 represents a significant complementary investment in pastoral land management and rangeland restoration, providing a strong foundation for TALSIG's Component 1 activities related to transboundary pastoralism.

The African Development Bank's Desert to Power Initiative is a transformative effort to harness the Sahel's immense solar potential, with a $10 billion investment target to generate 10 GW of solar energy and supply 250 million people across 11 Sahel countries with clean electricity[39][39]. The initiative focuses on mobilizing private capital for green infrastructure, developing both grid and off-grid solar installations, and fostering a solar manufacturing ecosystem in the Sahel. TALSIG will coordinate with this initiative under Component 2 to ensure that the creation of 1.26 million green jobs is aligned with both renewable energy development and sustainable land management, particularly through the development of sustainable biomass value chains that can complement solar energy expansion.

FAO's Action Against Desertification (AAD) program is a key technical partner for the Great Green Wall, providing expertise on large-scale land restoration across the Sahel and other African regions[40][40]. The program focuses on restoring drylands and degraded lands to tackle the social, economic, and environmental impacts of desertification. AAD's successful approach has paved the way for large-scale restoration in support of small-scale farming, with a focus on mechanized land preparation, training of master trainers, and biophysical data collection using tools like Collect Earth. TALSIG will provide the coordination platform for FAO's country-level activities, ensuring that technical expertise is delivered in a harmonized and strategic manner to support the project's restoration goals.

Lessons learned and incorporation into TALSIG design

Past and ongoing baseline projects reveal several critical lessons that have directly informed the design of the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project. These lessons (Table 1), drawn from a wide range of regional and national initiatives, highlight both the challenges and opportunities of working in the complex Sahelian context.

Table 1. Lessons learned from past and ongoing projects and programs and how they are incorporated into TALSIG's components, outputs, and outcomes.

Lesson learned	Projects & programs	How lesson is incorporated into TALSIG Design	Relevant TALSIG Outcome(s) / Output(s)
1. Focused SLWM approaches are more effective than combining with broader rural development.	SAWAP (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal)	TALSIG maintains a clear focus on integrated land, water, and forest management, avoiding mission creep into general rural development.	Outcome 1.1: Improved management of transboundary landscapes Output 1.1.1: Regional framework for integrated landscape management
2. Decentralized implementation outperforms centralized government-led approaches.	SAWAP (Ethiopia SLMP2)	TALSIG emphasizes community-based natural resource management, local enterprises, and decentralized decision-making.	Outcome 2.1: Strengthened local enterprises Output 1.2.1: Community-based NRM plans developed

3. Land tenure security is a foundational enabler for long-term SLM investment.	SAWAP (Ethiopia SLMP2)	TALSIG has a dedicated focus on supporting policy reforms for land certification, community bylaws, and strengthening user rights.	Outcome 3.1: Strengthened policy and institutional frameworks Output 3.1.1: Regional policy dialogue on land tenure
4. Cost-effectiveness is essential for scaling up SLM practices.	SAWAP (Niger)	TALSIG promotes low-cost, replicable practices like FMNR and water harvesting, with a target cost of less than $500/ha.	Outcome 1.1: Improved management of transboundary landscapes Output 1.1.2: Best practices for low-cost restoration disseminated
5. Fragmentation and lack of coordination are the primary barriers to GGW success.	GGW Accelerator	TALSIG's core mandate is to provide the regional coordination mechanism, breaking down silos between countries and projects.	All Outcomes
6. The land degradation-conflict nexus must be explicitly addressed.	Burkina Faso GEF-7 (ID 11003)	TALSIG integrates conflict-sensitive natural resource management and equitable benefit-sharing into its approach.	Outcome 2.2: Reduced conflict over natural resources Output 2.2.1: Conflict resolution mechanisms established
7. Peer-to-peer learning is more effective than external incentive payments for scaling.	Niger Community Action Project for Climate Resilience	TALSIG establishes a regional knowledge management platform to facilitate cross-country learning exchanges and farmer study visits.	Outcome 4.1: Enhanced knowledge management and learning Output 4.1.1: Regional knowledge management platform operational
8. Multi-stakeholder coordination at the national level is a prerequisite for regional success.	Burkina Faso CPP (GEF-3)	TALSIG builds upon the lessons of the CPP by scaling up the coordinated, decentralized model to the regional level.	Outcome 3.2: Strengthened national coordination mechanisms Output 3.2.1: National multi-stakeholder platforms supported
9. Pastoral systems require a specific and transboundary focus.	PRAPS-2	TALSIG includes explicit focus on pastoral land management and cross-border transhumance corridors.	Outcome 1.2: Improved management of pastoral systems Output 1.2.2: Transboundary agreements on rangeland management
10. Technical expertise must be coordinated to be effective.	FAO Action Against Desertification	TALSIG provides a coordination platform for technical partners like FAO to deliver support in a harmonized and strategic manner.	Outcome 4.2: Strengthened technical capacity Output 4.2.1: Coordinated technical assistance delivery

Gender analysis and approach

The Sahelian context presents a stark gender paradox: women are the primary stewards of the land but have the least secure rights and access to resources. Women constitute up to 93% of the active agricultural workforce in countries like Burkina Faso[41][41], yet they hold formal ownership over less than 13% of the land

across the region[42][42]. This fundamental inequality is a critical barrier to sustainable development. Women face systemic obstacles in accessing credit, extension services, and technology, and are often excluded from decision-making processes related to natural resource management.

TALSIG adopts a transformative gender approach that moves beyond simply including women to actively empowering them as leaders in restoration and resilience-building. The project will:

1. *Promote secure land tenure for women:* Advocate for and support the implementation of legal and institutional reforms to strengthen women's land rights, a prerequisite for long-term investment in land restoration.

2. *Ensure women's leadership in governance:* Mandate and monitor female representation in all project-supported coordination bodies and community-level committees, ensuring their voices shape strategy and resource allocation.

3. *Deliver targeted capacity building:* Provide tailored training for women on climate-resilient agriculture, sustainable value chains, and financial literacy, building their capacity to lead and innovate.

4. *Facilitate access to finance and markets:* Support the development of women-led enterprises and connect them to markets and financial services, fostering their economic independence and control over benefits.

Sustainability and potential for scaling up

The sustainability of TALSIG's impact is embedded in its design. By focusing on building institutional capacity, harmonized systems, and a culture of collaboration, the project creates an enduring architecture that will outlast the project's lifespan. The regional coordination body, the MRV framework, and the knowledge management platform are designed to become permanent assets for the GGW countries.

The potential for scaling up is immense. TALSIG is creating a replicable model for regional coordination that can be applied to other large-scale, transboundary environmental challenges. By demonstrating the value of a coordinated approach, the project will attract further investment from public and private sources, creating a virtuous cycle of scaling and impact. The ultimate goal is to create a self-sustaining ecosystem of collaboration that can independently drive the GGW vision forward, transforming the Sahel into a resilient and prosperous region for generations to come.

Incremental/Additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline

Baseline scenario

The Sahel's ecosystems and the livelihoods of its 135 million people dependent on land are currently trapped in a vicious cycle of degradation, driven by fragmented governance, weak institutional capacity, and a lack of coordinated investment. Under the baseline scenario, the Great Green Wall (GGW) initiative continues to be implemented as a patchwork of isolated national projects, lacking the connective architecture to achieve impact at scale. This fragmentation perpetuates several negative trends:

Land degradation and biodiversity loss: Unsustainable land use, coupled with climate change, continues to drive desertification and biodiversity loss. Without a coordinated regional approach, restoration efforts remain localized and are often undermined by cross-border pressures such as unmanaged transhumance and shared water resource depletion. The GGW's ambitious goal of restoring 100 million hectares by 2030 remains unattainable, with progress stagnating at a fraction of the required 8.2 million hectares per year.

Climate vulnerability: The Sahel is warming 1.5 times faster than the global average, and without coordinated adaptation strategies, the resilience of its communities and ecosystems will continue to decline. Fragmented

approaches prevent the implementation of landscape-scale solutions needed to mitigate drought, manage floods, and build resilient food systems, leaving millions of people exposed to increasing climate shocks.

Institutional and governance weaknesses: National GGW agencies and other stakeholders operate in silos, with limited knowledge sharing, inconsistent M&E systems, and duplicative investments. There is no mechanism to capture and disseminate the rich lessons learned from two decades of projects, leading to repeated failures and a slow pace of innovation. This lack of a harmonized, transparent system deters large-scale private sector investment and results-based financing.

Socioeconomic stagnation and gender inequality: In the absence of a coordinated approach to value chain development and green job creation, the region's youth demographic dividend remains untapped, and rural poverty persists. Gender inequalities are unaddressed at a systemic level, with women continuing to face barriers to land tenure, finance, and decision-making, limiting the effectiveness of restoration efforts.

Scenario without GEF funding

Without the GEF investment in the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project, the baseline scenario of fragmentation and slow progress would persist and likely worsen. Specifically:

Continued fragmentation and inefficiency: The GGW would remain a collection of disparate national projects. The lack of a regional coordination platform would mean no harmonized M&E, no systematic knowledge sharing, and no coherent regional strategy. This would lead to continued inefficient use of resources, with an estimated opportunity cost of billions of dollars in unrealized ecosystem services and socioeconomic benefits. The GGW would fail to achieve its 2030 targets, undermining its credibility and deterring future investment.

Accelerated environmental degradation: The failure to implement coordinated landscape management would lead to continued degradation of transboundary ecosystems. The lack of shared data and joint planning would prevent effective management of shared water resources and pastoral corridors, exacerbating resource-based conflicts. The rate of land restoration would remain far below the level needed to outpace degradation.

Heightened climate vulnerability and displacement: Without regional adaptation strategies, the Sahel's vulnerability to climate change would intensify. The failure to build resilient food systems and livelihoods at scale would lead to increased food insecurity and forced migration. Projections indicate that without significant intervention, climate-related migration in sub-Saharan Africa could reach 85 million people by 2050.

Stagnant institutional capacity and limited private investment: National capacities would remain siloed, and the development of regional public goods (e.g., knowledge platforms, harmonized MRV) would not occur. The private sector would remain hesitant to invest due to the high transaction costs, lack of transparency, and perceived risks associated with a fragmented and uncoordinated implementation landscape.

Table 2. Desired outcomes and their transformational change from the baseline.

Outcome	Change from baseline
Outcome 1: Coordinated and scaled-up implementation of SLM practices	Converts a fragmented patchwork of isolated projects into a coherent, landscape-scale restoration front across 9 countries, accelerating progress towards the GGW's 100M ha target.
Outcome 2: Equitable and gender-responsive green value chains developed	Replaces subsistence-level, often unsustainable, livelihoods with market-linked, nature-positive enterprises that generate 1.26 million green jobs and empower women and youth.

Outcome 3: Harmonized policies and strengthened institutions for regional collaboration	Fills the current vacuum of regional governance by creating a durable institutional architecture for joint planning, policy harmonization, and cross-border management of shared resources.
Outcome 4: A regional knowledge and learning system for the GGW is operational	Addresses the baseline of knowledge fragmentation and repeated failures by creating a dynamic learning ecosystem that captures and disseminates best practices, fostering innovation and adaptive management.

Scenario with GEF funding

With the $7.8 million GEF investment, which leverages $523 million in co-financing, the TALSIG project will catalyze a paradigm shift from a fragmented to a coordinated approach, creating the enabling environment for the GGW to succeed at scale (see Table 2 &3). The GEF funding is strategically deployed to create regional public goods and institutional architecture that individual national projects cannot support on their own.

Establishment of a Regional Coordination Platform (Component 3): The GEF investment will establish a functional regional coordination mechanism, bringing together the 9 TALSIG countries, the Pan-African Agency for the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW), Regional Economic Communities (RECs), and other key stakeholders. This platform will facilitate joint planning, policy harmonization, and cross-border collaboration, addressing the root cause of the GGW's slow progress.

Creation of regional public goods (component 4): The project will develop and deploy a harmonized Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system using cutting-edge technologies like GEO-LDN. It will also create a regional knowledge management and learning platform to systematically capture, validate, and disseminate best practices, such as FMNR. These regional public goods will enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of all GGW investments, creating a multiplier effect across the $523 million in co-financing and beyond.

Strengthened national and local capacity (components 1, 2, 3): TALSIG will provide targeted technical assistance and capacity building to national GGW agencies and over 500 community-based institutions. This will enhance their ability to design and implement scalable, evidence-based restoration projects and to access climate finance. The project will also build capacity for developing gender-responsive value chains and public-private partnerships, creating a pipeline of investment-ready projects.

Catalyzing sustainable finance (component 2): By de-risking the investment landscape through enhanced coordination, transparency, and capacity, TALSIG will mobilize an estimated $50 million in private sector co-financing. The project will support the development of innovative financing mechanisms, such as blended finance and green bonds, creating a pathway to long-term financial sustainability for the GGW.

Table 3. Incremental analysis of GEF investment under baseline and alternative scenarios.

Cost/Benefit	Baseline (B)	Alternative (A)	Increment (A-B)
Global Benefits	Continued slow progress towards GGW targets; fragmented restoration efforts with limited landscape-scale impact;	325,900 ha of land restored under a coordinated framework; enhanced biodiversity conservation in critical transboundary	Accelerated progress towards GGW targets; coherent, landscape-scale restoration; improved conservation of

	ongoing biodiversity loss in transboundary ecosystems.	corridors; 275,000 tons CO2e mitigated.	transboundary biodiversity.
	Weak and inconsistent M&E systems; limited data for global reporting and adaptive management; knowledge fragmentation.	Harmonized regional M&E system using GEO-LDN; regional knowledge management platform operational; data shared across 9 countries.	Reliable, transparent data for global reporting; evidence-based adaptive management; accelerated adoption of best practices.
	Limited contribution to global environmental commitments (UNCCD, UNCBD, UNFCCC) due to lack of scale and coordination.	Significant, coordinated contribution to Land Degradation Neutrality, Aichi Targets, and NDCs across 9 countries.	A paradigm shift from isolated national contributions to a powerful, unified regional impact on global environmental goals.
Local Benefits	Persistent rural poverty and youth unemployment; limited and unsustainable livelihood options; ongoing resource-based conflicts.	1.26 million green jobs created; diversified, nature-positive livelihoods through value chains; reduced conflict over shared resources.	A large-scale transition to a green economy in the Sahel; enhanced social cohesion and stability.
	High vulnerability of 3.1 million people to climate change; chronic food insecurity; forced migration.	Enhanced climate resilience for 3.1 million people; improved food security through SLM; reduced drivers of displacement.	A significant increase in the adaptive capacity of Sahelian communities, contributing to regional stability.
	Weak institutional capacity at national and local levels; limited private sector investment; persistent gender inequalities.	500+ community institutions strengthened; national agencies capacitated; $50M private sector co-financing mobilized; gender-transformative approaches implemented.	Strengthened multi-level governance; a de-risked environment for private investment; systemic advancement of gender equality.

Additionality to Global Environmental and Adaptation Benefits

The TALSIG project generates significant global environmental and adaptation benefits that would not materialize without the GEF's incremental investment in regional coordination (Table 4). While the $523 million in co-financing supports national-level implementation, it is the GEF's $7.8 million investment that provides the 'connective tissue' to bind these efforts into a coherent whole, unlocking their full potential. The additionality of the GEF intervention lies in its unique ability to fund regional public goods and institutional mechanisms that are beyond the scope of individual countries. By creating a harmonized MRV system, a regional knowledge platform, and a cross-border coordination body, TALSIG creates economies of scale, enhances the effectiveness of all other GGW investments, and builds the long-term institutional capacity for sustained, large-scale impact. This strategic investment in coordination is the critical missing piece that enables the GGW to transition from a collection of projects to a truly transformative regional program, contributing significantly to global commitments under the UNCBD, UNCCD, and UNFCCC.

Table 4. additionality of environmental and adaptation benefits with and without GEF intervention.

Environmental/Adaptation Benefit	**Additionality of TALSIG Intervention**
Coordinated landscape restoration (325,900 ha)	Without TALSIG's regional coordination, restoration would remain fragmented and localized, failing to achieve landscape-scale ecological connectivity and resilience.
Harmonized M&E and knowledge management	The creation of a regional M&E system and knowledge platform is a regional public good that would not be funded by individual national projects, unlocking evidence-based learning at scale.
Policy harmonization across 9 countries	Without TALSIG, policies would remain fragmented, creating barriers to cross-border trade, investment, and management of shared resources like transhumance corridors.
Large-scale green job creation (1.26M)	The coordination of value chains and mobilization of private finance at a regional level enables job creation at a scale far beyond what individual national projects could achieve.
Enhanced climate resilience for 3.1m people	TALSIG enables the implementation of regional adaptation strategies (e.g., for shared river basins) that are essential for building resilience to large-scale climate impacts like drought.
Mobilization of private finance ($50M)	By creating a coordinated, transparent, and de-risked investment environment, TALSIG provides the critical mass needed to attract significant private sector capital that would otherwise be deterred.
Gender-transformative approach at scale	TALSIG's regional platform allows for the promotion and monitoring of gender-transformative approaches across all 9 countries, creating systemic change that isolated projects cannot.

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B. CHILD PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This section asks for a theory of change as part of a joined-up description of the project as a whole, including how it addresses priorities related to the specific program, and how it will benefit from the coordination platform. The project description is expected to cover the key elements of good project design in an integrated way. It is also expected to meet the GEF's policy requirements on gender, stakeholders, private sector, and knowledge management and learning (see section D). This section should be a narrative that reads like a joined-up story and not independent elements that answer the guiding questions contained in the guidance document. (Approximately 3-5 pages) see guidance here

The Sahel region presents a paradox of immense potential coexisting with deep-seated fragility. It is endowed with vast, untapped resources for renewable energy, agricultural expansion, and sustainable development. Furthermore, the Sahel is one of the world's most youthful regions, with 64.5% of its population under the age of 25, representing a significant demographic dividend that could, with targeted investment in education and skills development, drive transformative economic growth[1][43]. However, this potential is severely constrained by a convergence of crises. The region suffers from high levels of poverty, persistent food and nutrition insecurity, and protracted conflict. The affordability of a healthy diet is beyond the reach of most households; in the central Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, the cost of a daily nutritious diet is 110% higher than the daily minimum wage[2][44]. This economic hardship is compounded by a volatile political and security landscape, where high demographic pressure and competition over dwindling natural resources fuel instability and violent extremism, creating a vicious cycle of poverty and conflict[3][45].

The environmental crisis nexus: land, water, and climate: The region's socioeconomic challenges are inextricably linked to a complex environmental crisis where land degradation, biodiversity loss, and climate change intersect and reinforce one another. An estimated 80% of the Sahel's farmlands are degraded, suffering from nutrient depletion and erosion[4][46]. Persistent droughts, coupled with a trend of rising temperatures, accelerate desertification and soil degradation. As these productive landscapes deteriorate, biodiversity is lost, habitats become fragmented, and vital ecosystem services such as water regulation and carbon sequestration are compromised. This loss of ecological integrity further weakens the resilience of both natural and human systems, making it harder for communities to adapt to changing climatic conditions while increasing pressure on the remaining natural resources.

Climate change as a threat multiplier: projections and vulnerabilities: Climate change acts as a potent 'threat multiplier' in the Sahel, exacerbating existing vulnerabilities and creating new layers of risk. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) projects that the Sahel will experience more frequent and intense droughts, floods, and heatwaves in the coming decades, leading to widespread food insecurity, water scarcity, and population displacement[5][47]. Projections indicate that a global temperature rise of 1.5°C could lead to a 40% reduction in maize cropland suitability in the region, a devastating blow to an already food-insecure area[6][48]. However, significant uncertainty remains regarding the precise timing, magnitude, and spatial distribution of these impacts due to the complexity of climate systems and socio-economic feedback loops. In this context, interventions must be flexible, diverse, and grounded in local knowledge to protect the assets of small-scale farmers and herders who are on the front lines of the climate crisis.

Quantifying vulnerability: Evidence from the ND-GAIN Index

Concrete, case-based evidence of the Sahel's fragility is provided by the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND-GAIN) Country Index, which measures a country's vulnerability to climate disruptions and its readiness to leverage adaptation investments. As shown in Table 5, all nine Great Green Wall (GGW) countries participating in this program rank in the bottom third globally, confirming a state of extreme regional climate vulnerability. With an average ND-GAIN score of just 36.4, far below the global average of approximately 49 these nations face compounded climate risks that threaten food security, water availability, health systems, and infrastructure.

The Sahel region faces severe climate fragility, as shown by the ND-GAIN Country Index, which measures vulnerability to climate disruptions and readiness to leverage adaptation investments. All nine Great Green Wall (GGW) countries rank in the bottom third globally, with an average score of 36.4—well below the global average of 49. This highlights the region’s compounded climate risks, which threaten food security,

water resources, health systems, and critical infrastructure, and underscores the urgency for targeted, integrated resilience interventions.

Table 5. Climate vulnerability of GGW countries (ND-Gain Index, 2023)

Rank (out of 187)	**Country**	**ND-GAIN Score**	**Vulnerability Status**	**Readiness Status**	**Income Group**
133	Senegal	40.4	High	Low	Low income
143	The Gambia	39.0	High	Low	Low income
145	Ethiopia	38.7	High	Low	Low income
147	Burkina Faso	38.4	High	Low	Low income
157	Nigeria	37.1	Very High	Low	Low income
159	Mauritania	36.9	Very High	Low	Lower middle income
169	Mali	34.8	Very High	Very Low	Low income
171	Niger	34.6	Very High	Very Low	Low income
187	**Chad**	**25.0**	**Extreme**	**Very Low**	**Low income**
	Regional Average	36.4	Very High	Very Low	Predominantly Low

The data reveals the depth of the crisis. Chad ranks as the second most vulnerable country worldwide (187th), underscoring the severe exposure and critically low adaptive capacity in parts of the region. Six of the nine countries rank below 140th, and three (Mali, Niger, and Chad) fall within the bottom 10% of all nations assessed. These rankings reflect not only biophysical exposure to climate hazards but also systemic weaknesses in governance, economic capacity, and social infrastructure. The low readiness scores across all countries signal that without coordinated external support, national governments will struggle to convert climate finance into effective adaptation actions. This empirical evidence validates the GEF-8 regional coordination approach, as addressing such widespread vulnerability requires the transnational cooperation, harmonized policies, and shared knowledge platforms that this Regional Coordination Project is mandated to provide.

The gendered face of vulnerability and the imperative for a gender-responsive approach: Land degradation and climate vulnerability are not gender-neutral. Gender inequality is a critical structural driver of environmental degradation and food insecurity across the Sahel. Women, who are central to household food production, forest management, and water supply, face systemic and disproportionate barriers. They hold secure land tenure for less than 15% of the land they cultivate, receive fewer than 10% of extension services, and are systematically excluded from environmental governance and decision-making processes[7][49]. The IPCC (2022) confirms this, stating: 'Women in the Sahel face compounded risks due to social constraints on land, decision-making, and mobility.'

These inequalities result in distinct and pressing gender needs that the GGW initiative must address to ensure its effectiveness, equity, and sustainability. Key needs include securing land and resource rights; ensuring meaningful inclusion in environmental governance; providing access to green livelihoods and climate finance; delivering tailored training and time-saving infrastructure; and protecting against gender-based violence in the context of resource competition. These needs are not peripheral; they are preconditions for success and just restoration. Failure to address these systemic barriers risks the failure of restoration projects, the elite capture of resources, and the exacerbation of existing inequalities. This project is therefore explicitly designed to

address this central gender concern by integrating gender-responsive actions across all components, guided by the UNCCD Gender Action Plan (2017) and the GEF Gender Equality Policy (2024–2030).

Theory of Change

The TALSIG Theory of Change outlines the causal pathway from regional coordination interventions to the ultimate goal of enhanced land degradation neutrality, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience across the Sahel through the Great Green Wall Initiative (see theory of change diagrams in Figures 2 & 3). It articulates how the Regional Coordination Project's strategic actions will address coordination gaps, institutional barriers, and knowledge management challenges to enable effective implementation of nine national child projects, thereby triggering a cascade of regional-scale environmental, social, and economic outcomes. This framework serves as the foundational logic for the project, explaining how regional coordination is expected to catalyze national-level change and providing a basis for monitoring progress and adapting coordination strategies over time.

Core problem: regional coordination gap

Despite significant investments in land restoration, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation across the Sahel through the Great Green Wall Initiative, these efforts remain fragmented and uncoordinated at the regional level. Nine national child projects (Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal) operate in isolation without harmonized policies, shared knowledge platforms, coordinated monitoring systems, or mechanisms for cross-border learning and collaboration. This lack of regional coordination limits the scaling potential of successful interventions, creates inefficiencies through duplication of efforts, prevents the generation of regional-scale global environmental benefits, and undermines the collective impact of GGW investments on land degradation neutrality, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience across the Sahel.

Threats to effective regional coordination

The effectiveness of regional coordination for the Great Green Wall Initiative is threatened by several direct challenges that actively undermine collaboration, knowledge sharing, and harmonized implementation across the nine participating countries. These immediate pressures on regional coordination include (also see theory of change 1):

Institutional fragmentation across 9 countries: National GGW focal points, implementing agencies, and technical teams operate independently without regular communication, joint planning, or coordinated decision-making mechanisms.

Lack of harmonized policies and technical frameworks: Each child project develops its own policies, guidelines, and technical standards for land restoration, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation, leading to incompatible approaches that cannot be scaled or replicated across borders.

Absence of shared knowledge management systems: Lessons learned, best practices, technical innovations, and implementation challenges remain trapped within individual child projects, preventing cross-fertilization of ideas and replication of successful interventions.

Limited cross-border collaboration mechanisms: Geographic, linguistic, and institutional barriers prevent joint learning events, peer-to-peer exchanges, and collaborative problem-solving among child project teams facing similar challenges.

Weak regional monitoring and accountability systems: Absence of standardized M&E protocols, indicators, and reporting templates prevents aggregation of results, tracking of regional-scale global environmental benefits, and accountability to regional and global stakeholders.

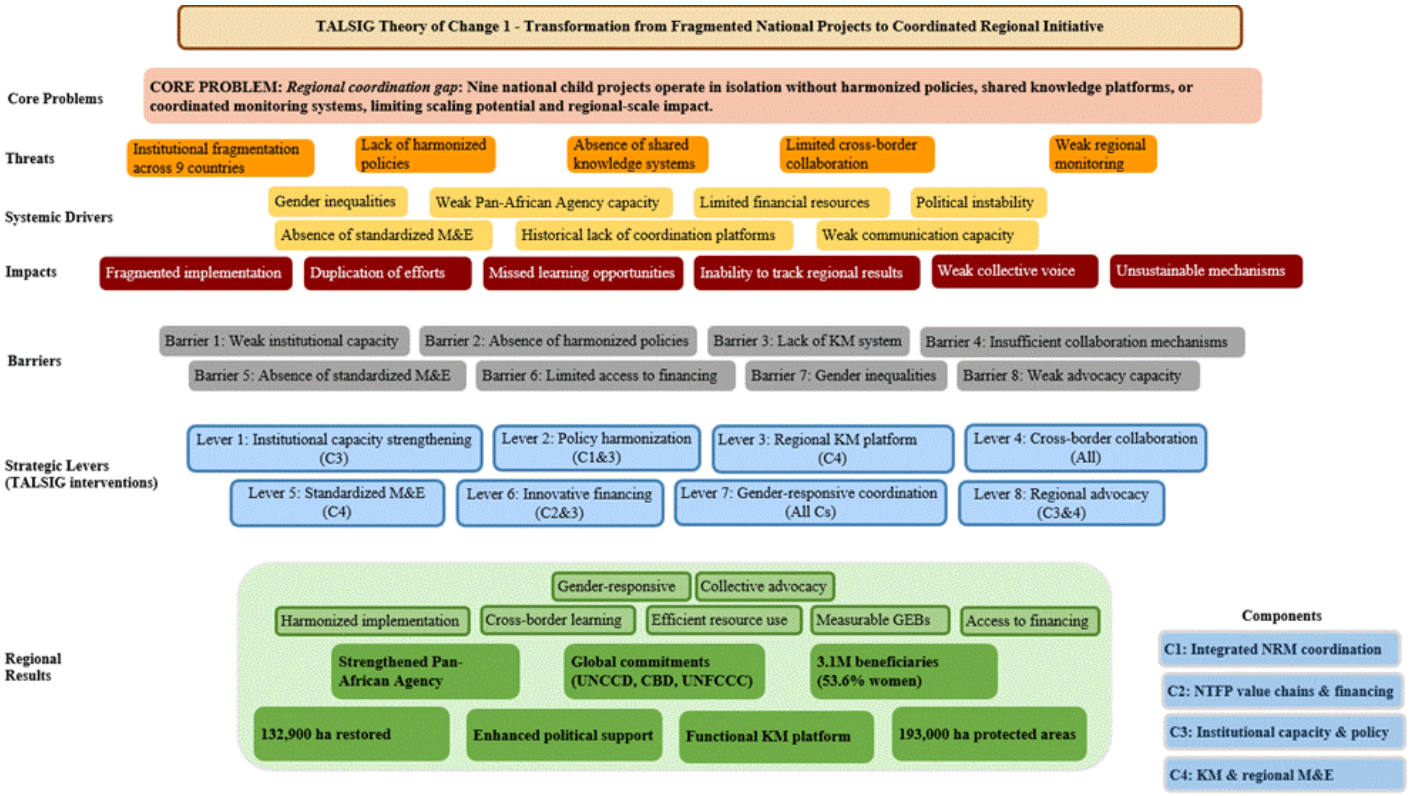

Figure 2. Theory of change diagrams 1.

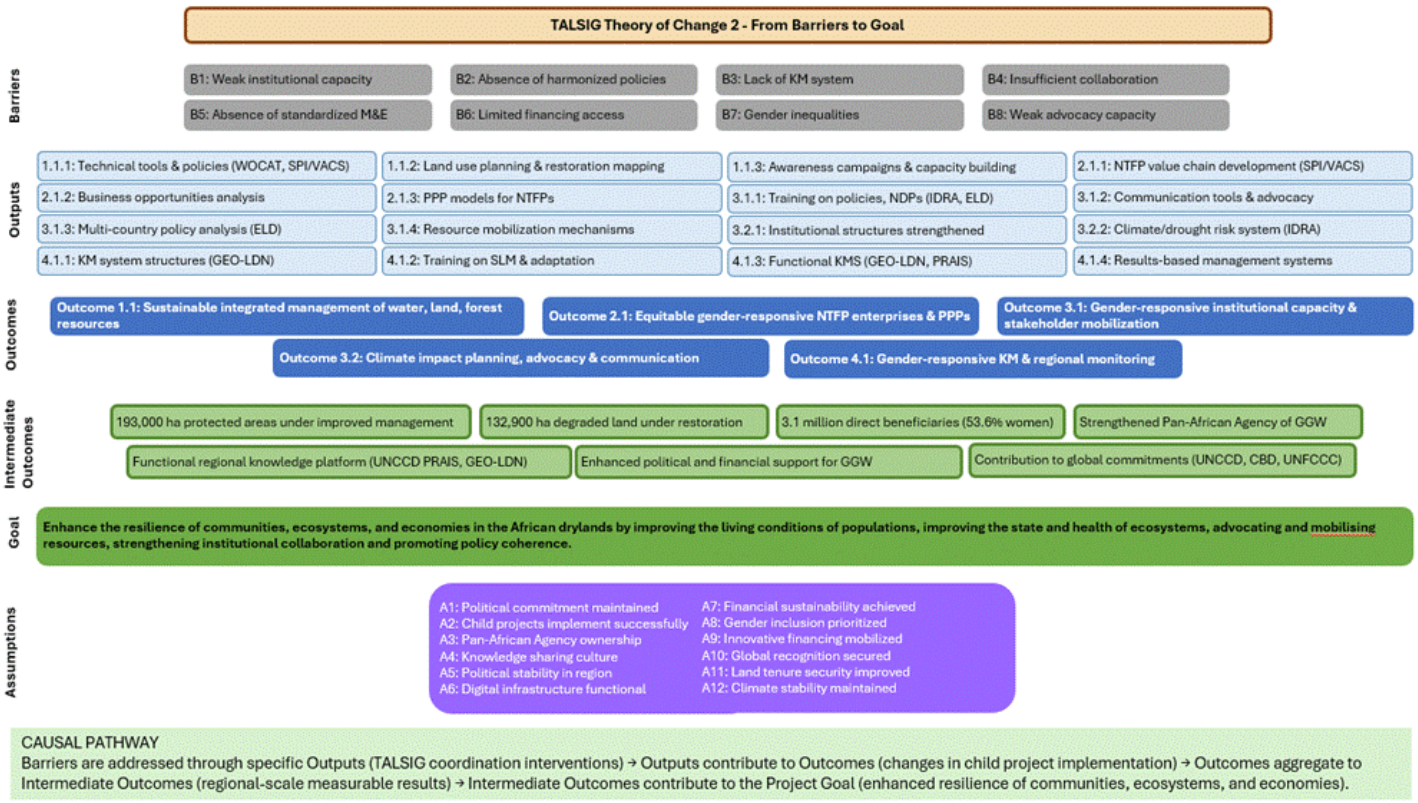

Figure 3. Theory of change diagram 2.

Systemic drivers of coordination gap

Underpinning the direct threats to regional coordination are several systemic and structural challenges that create conditions for fragmentation and isolation (theory of change 1). These root causes are complex and interconnected, and they include:

1. *Historical lack of regional coordination platforms and mechanisms:* The Great Green Wall Initiative has historically operated as a collection of independent national projects without a functional regional coordination structure, leading to path dependency and resistance to collaborative approaches.

2. *Weak institutional capacity of Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall:* Limited human resources, technical expertise, financial resources, and political mandate of the regional coordinating body to effectively coordinate multi-country initiatives, harmonize policies, and facilitate cross-border collaboration.

3. *Limited financial resources dedicated to coordination functions:* Funding for GGW has historically prioritized on-the-ground implementation activities over coordination, knowledge management, and capacity building, resulting in under-resourced regional coordination mechanisms.

4. *Political instability and conflicts limiting cross-border cooperation:* Security challenges, political tensions, and armed conflicts in parts of the Sahel create barriers to cross-border movement, joint activities, and trust-building among participating countries.

5. *Absence of standardized M&E protocols and digital infrastructure:* Lack of agreed-upon indicators, data collection methods, reporting formats, and digital platforms for data sharing prevents systematic tracking and aggregation of results across child projects.

6. *Gender inequalities and exclusion of women, youth, and IPLCs from regional platforms:* Systemic barriers prevent meaningful participation of women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in regional decision-making, knowledge sharing, and coordination mechanisms.

7. *Weak communication and advocacy capacity at regional level:* Limited capacity to document achievements, produce knowledge products, and communicate GGW success stories to regional and global audiences, resulting in low visibility and weak political and financial support.

Impacts of lack of regional coordination

The combination of threats and systemic drivers leads to several negative consequences that undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of Great Green Wall investments across the Sahel (theory of change 1):

1. *Fragmented implementation limiting landscape-scale environmental benefits:* Isolated national projects cannot achieve the landscape-scale ecological connectivity, transboundary ecosystem restoration, and regional-scale land degradation neutrality that the GGW vision requires.

2. *Duplication of efforts and inefficient use of scarce resources:* Multiple child projects independently develop similar tools, guidelines, and approaches without sharing or building on each other's work, wasting time and financial resources.

3. *Missed opportunities for cross-border learning and replication of successful interventions:* Innovative solutions, best practices, and lessons learned remain confined to individual countries, preventing rapid scaling and adaptation of proven approaches across the region.

4. *Inability to track and report regional-scale global environmental benefits:* Without standardized M&E systems and aggregation mechanisms, the collective impact of GGW investments on land degradation, biodiversity, and climate resilience cannot be measured or communicated to global stakeholders.

5. *Weak collective voice in regional and global climate and land forums:* Fragmented national efforts lack the political weight and evidence base to influence regional policies, attract climate finance, and shape global agendas on land degradation neutrality and climate adaptation.

6. *Unsustainable coordination mechanisms beyond project lifecycle:* Without strengthened regional institutions and embedded coordination functions, GGW coordination will collapse when external project support ends, reverting to fragmentation.

Long-term solution: vision for coordinated GGW implementation

A fully coordinated Great Green Wall Initiative across the Sahel, where nine national child projects operate under harmonized policies and technical standards, share knowledge through a functional regional digital platform integrated with UNCCD PRAIS and GEO-LDN, implement standardized monitoring and reporting systems, collaborate on cross-border challenges through regular peer-to-peer exchanges, and collectively generate measurable regional-scale global environmental benefits for land degradation neutrality (193,000 ha protected areas, 132,900 ha restored), biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience (3.1 million beneficiaries, 53.6% women), supported by a strengthened Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall with sustainable institutional capacity, political mandate, and financial resources to maintain coordination functions beyond the project lifecycle.

Barriers to effective regional coordination

Despite the clear need for regional coordination, the successful implementation of harmonized land and water management, biodiversity conservation, and climate adaptation practices across the nine GGW countries is hindered by several significant and interconnected barriers (theory of change 2). These challenges span institutional capacity, policy frameworks, knowledge management systems, financing mechanisms, and project design, and must be systematically addressed to achieve the regional coordination objectives. The primary obstacles include:

Barrier 1 – Weak institutional capacity of Pan-African Agency of GGW and national GGW focal points to coordinate multi-country initiatives

The Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall and national GGW focal points lack the human resources, technical expertise, coordination tools, and political mandate to effectively coordinate nine child projects, harmonize policies and technical standards, facilitate cross-border collaboration, and aggregate regional-scale results. This institutional weakness results in ad hoc coordination efforts, limited follow-through on regional commitments, and inability to sustain coordination mechanisms beyond external project support.

Barrier 2 – Absence of harmonized policy frameworks, technical guidelines, and operational standards across child projects

Each child project develops its own policies, technical guidelines, and operational standards for land restoration, biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, gender mainstreaming, and safeguards implementation, leading to incompatible approaches that cannot be compared, scaled, or replicated across borders. This fragmentation prevents the emergence of regional best practices and undermines the credibility of GGW as a coherent regional initiative.

Barrier 3 – Lack of functional regional knowledge management system and digital platform for capturing and sharing best practices

There is no functional digital platform, database, or knowledge repository where child projects can systematically capture, store, analyze, and share lessons learned, best practices, technical innovations, case studies, and implementation challenges. This absence prevents cross-fertilization of ideas, limits adaptive management, and results in repeated mistakes and missed opportunities for replication of successful interventions.

Barrier 4 – Insufficient mechanisms for cross-border collaboration, joint learning, and peer-to-peer exchange

Geographic distances, language barriers, limited travel budgets, security constraints, and absence of structured exchange mechanisms prevent child project teams from learning from each other, jointly solving common problems, and building trust and solidarity across borders. This isolation limits the potential for collaborative innovation and regional problem-solving.

Barrier 5 – Absence of standardized regional monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems

Child projects use different M&E frameworks, indicators, data collection methods, and reporting formats, making it impossible to aggregate results, track regional-scale global environmental benefits, compare performance across countries, or report coherently to UNCCD, GEF, and other global platforms. This prevents evidence-based decision-making and accountability at regional level.

Barrier 6 – Limited access to innovative financing mechanisms and weak capacity to mobilize co-financing at regional scale

Child projects struggle to access innovative financing mechanisms such as green bonds, blended finance, climate funds, and public-private partnerships due to limited technical capacity, lack of bankable project

pipelines, and absence of regional platforms to aggregate financing opportunities and share expertise on resource mobilization.

Barrier 7 – Gender inequalities and exclusion of women, youth, and IPLCs from regional decision-making and knowledge-sharing mechanisms

Systemic gender biases, age discrimination, and marginalization of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities prevent meaningful participation of these groups in regional coordination platforms, knowledge-sharing events, and decision-making processes, limiting the inclusiveness and effectiveness of regional coordination efforts.

Barrier 8 – Weak regional communication and advocacy capacity to raise awareness and mobilize support

Limited capacity to document GGW achievements, produce high-quality knowledge products, engage with media, and communicate success stories to regional and global audiences results in low visibility of GGW, weak political support, and difficulty attracting climate finance and private sector investment.

Strategic levers to address barriers

To overcome the identified barriers to regional coordination, the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project employs a set of integrated and mutually reinforcing strategic levers. Each lever is designed to directly counteract a specific barrier by strengthening institutional capacity, harmonizing policies, establishing knowledge systems, facilitating collaboration, standardizing M&E, mobilizing financing, ensuring inclusiveness, and enhancing communication. By linking these strategies across all project components, TALSIG aims to create a holistic and adaptive framework for achieving lasting regional coordination and collective impact. Critically, TALSIG does NOT directly implement land restoration, biodiversity conservation, or livelihood activities these are implemented by the nine national child projects. TALSIG's role is to COORDINATE, HARMONIZE, GENERATE KNOWLEDGE, and BUILD CAPACITY to enable child projects to implement more effectively.

The key strategic levers are:

1. Institutional capacity strengthening for regional coordination (linked to Component 3)

Addresses Barrier 1: Weak institutional capacity of Pan-African Agency of GGW and national GGW focal points.

TALSIG strengthens the institutional capacity of the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall and national GGW focal points through targeted training, technical assistance, provision of coordination tools and protocols, and establishment of formal coordination mechanisms (regional steering committees, technical working groups, annual coordination meetings). This includes building skills in multi-country project coordination, policy harmonization, knowledge management, M&E aggregation, resource mobilization, and stakeholder engagement. By embedding these capacities within permanent regional and national institutions, TALSIG ensures sustainable coordination beyond the project lifecycle.

2. Policy harmonization and technical standardization (linked to Components 1 and 3)

Addresses Barrier 2: Absence of harmonized policy frameworks, technical guidelines, and operational standards.

TALSIG facilitates the development and adoption of harmonized policy frameworks, technical guidelines, and operational standards for land restoration, biodiversity conservation, climate adaptation, gender mainstreaming, and safeguards implementation across all nine child projects. This includes: (1) conducting multi-country policy analysis to identify gaps and opportunities for harmonization, (2) developing

standardized technical guidelines for sustainable land management, agroforestry, NTFP value chains, and drought-smart practices (integrating WOCAT, ELD, SPI/VACS, IDRA, GEO-LDN partnerships), (3) facilitating regional policy dialogues to build consensus on common approaches, and (4) supporting child projects to align national policies with regional frameworks and international commitments (UNCCD, CBD, UNFCCC).

3. Regional knowledge management platform and digital infrastructure (linked to Component 4)

Addresses Barrier 3: Lack of functional regional knowledge management system and digital platform.

TALSIG establishes a functional digital knowledge management platform integrated with UNCCD PRAIS, FAO WaPOR, and GEO-LDN satellite monitoring systems to systematically capture, store, analyze, and disseminate lessons learned, best practices, technical innovations, case studies, and implementation challenges from all nine child projects. The platform includes: (1) a centralized database of restoration data, gender indicators, and M&E results, (2) user-friendly knowledge products (briefs, infographics, toolkits, videos) tailored to different audiences, (3) interactive tools for data visualization and analysis, and (4) protocols for data quality control, validation, and versioning. This enables cross-fertilization of ideas, adaptive management, and evidence-based decision-making.

4. Cross-border collaboration and peer-to-peer learning mechanisms (linked to all Components)

Addresses Barrier 4: Insufficient mechanisms for cross-border collaboration, joint learning, and peer-to-peer exchange.

TALSIG facilitates regular cross-border collaboration and peer-to-peer learning through: (1) annual regional workshops bringing together child project teams to share experiences and solve common problems, (2) thematic technical exchanges on specific topics (e.g., NTFP value chains, drought-smart agriculture, gender-responsive governance), (3) study tours and field visits to successful implementation sites, (4) online communities of practice and webinars, and (5) joint pilot initiatives addressing transboundary challenges (e.g., cross-border watershed management, migratory wildlife corridors). These mechanisms build trust, foster collaboration, and accelerate replication of successful interventions.

5. Standardized regional m&e and reporting systems (linked to Component 4)

Addresses Barrier 5: Absence of standardized regional monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems.

TALSIG develops and implements harmonized M&E protocols, indicators, data collection methods, and reporting templates aligned with GEF core indicators, UNCCD reporting requirements, and SDG targets. This includes: (1) establishing a results-based management (RBM) framework with standardized indicators for land restoration, biodiversity conservation, climate resilience, and gender outcomes, (2) providing training and tools to child projects for data collection and reporting, (3) integrating GEO-LDN satellite data for objective verification of restoration progress, (4) aggregating results across child projects to track regional-scale global environmental benefits (193,000 ha protected areas, 132,900 ha restored, 3.1 million beneficiaries), and (5) producing consolidated regional reports for UNCCD, GEF, and AU stakeholders.

6. Innovative financing and resource mobilization support (linked to Components 2 and 3)

Addresses Barrier 6: Limited access to innovative financing mechanisms and weak capacity to mobilize co-financing.

TALSIG provides technical assistance to child projects and the Pan-African Agency on accessing innovative financing mechanisms including: (1) green bonds and climate funds (Green Climate Fund, Adaptation Fund), (2) blended finance models combining public and private capital, (3) public-private partnerships for NTFP

value chains and ecosystem services, (4) payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes, and (5) carbon finance and biodiversity credits. TALSIG also facilitates regional resource mobilization events, develops bankable project pipelines, and conducts economic analysis using ELD methodology to demonstrate the value proposition of GGW investments to potential investors.

7. Gender-responsive and inclusive regional coordination (linked to all Components)

Addresses Barrier 7: Gender inequalities and exclusion of women, youth, and IPLCs from regional platforms.

TALSIG ensures gender-responsive and inclusive regional coordination by: (1) establishing gender-balanced regional platforms with minimum quotas for women, youth, and IPLC representatives, (2) conducting gender analysis and tracking sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated data across all activities, (3) supporting women-led and youth-led regional networks and caucuses (building on UNCCD Gender Action Plan and Gender Equality Policy 2024-2030), (4) ensuring IPLC participation in decision-making and recognition of traditional knowledge, and (5) documenting and sharing gender-transformative restoration stories through the knowledge platform. Target: 53.6% of beneficiaries are women.

8. Regional communication, advocacy, and visibility enhancement (linked to Components 3 and 4)

Addresses Barrier 8: Weak regional communication and advocacy capacity.

TALSIG strengthens regional communication and advocacy capacity by: (1) developing a regional communication strategy and brand identity for GGW, (2) producing high-quality knowledge products (policy briefs, technical reports, case studies, videos, infographics), (3) engaging with regional and international media to raise awareness of GGW achievements, (4) organizing high-level advocacy events and side events at UNCCD COPs, AU summits, and climate forums, (5) establishing partnerships with regional organizations (ECOWAS, IGAD, CILSS) and global platforms (UNCCD, UNFCCC, CBD), and (6) mobilizing political support and climate finance through evidence-based advocacy.

Assumptions

For this Theory of Change to hold true and for TALSIG to successfully coordinate the nine child projects and generate regional-scale impact, the following assumptions must be met:

i. *Political commitment and regional cooperation:* Governments of the nine participating countries maintain political commitment to the Great Green Wall Initiative and actively participate in regional coordination mechanisms, policy harmonization processes, and cross-border collaboration activities despite potential political tensions or competing national priorities.

ii. *Successful implementation of child projects:* National child projects are successfully implemented on the ground and generate tangible results (land restoration, biodiversity conservation, livelihood benefits) that can be coordinated, aggregated, and disseminated by TALSIG. If child projects fail to implement, TALSIG has nothing to coordinate.

iii. *Institutional engagement and ownership:* The Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, national GGW focal points, and implementing agencies actively engage in capacity building activities, adopt coordination tools and protocols, and take ownership of coordination mechanisms to ensure sustainability beyond the project lifecycle.

iv. *Willingness to share knowledge and data:* Child projects willingly share data, lessons learned, best practices, and implementation challenges through the regional knowledge platform,

enabling cross-fertilization of ideas and evidence-based decision-making. Institutional cultures of transparency and learning are essential.

v. *Political stability and security for cross-border cooperation:* Sufficient political stability and security conditions exist to allow cross-border movement of project staff, joint learning events, study tours, and collaborative pilot initiatives. Escalation of conflicts or insecurity would severely constrain regional coordination activities.

vi. *Digital infrastructure and connectivity:* Adequate internet connectivity and digital infrastructure exist in participating countries to enable functionality of the regional knowledge management platform, online communities of practice, webinars, and data sharing. Limited connectivity would constrain knowledge management effectiveness.

vii. *Sustainability of coordination mechanisms:* Regional institutions (Pan-African Agency of GGW) and national focal points adopt and institutionalize coordination mechanisms, M&E protocols, and knowledge management systems within their regular operations and budgets, ensuring continuity beyond external project support.

viii. *Gender inclusion and meaningful participation:* Women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities are empowered and supported to participate meaningfully in regional coordination platforms, knowledge-sharing events, and decision-making processes, overcoming systemic barriers and cultural norms that may limit their engagement.

ix. *Mobilization of innovative financing:* Innovative financing mechanisms (green bonds, blended finance, climate funds, PPPs) are accessible and attractive to private sector investors and climate finance institutions, enabling mobilization of co-financing to complement GEF resources and sustain GGW investments beyond the project.

x. *Global recognition and support:* The Great Green Wall Initiative gains visibility and political support at regional (AU, ECOWAS, IGAD) and global (UNCCD, UNFCCC, CBD) forums, attracting climate finance, technical partnerships, and political endorsement that strengthens the enabling environment for GGW implementation.

xi. *Land tenure security and conflict prevention:* Progress is made on improving land tenure security (ownership and users' rights) and preventing land disputes through inclusive governance and recognition of customary rights, creating a stable foundation for long-term restoration investments and community stewardship.

xii. *Climate stability and absence of catastrophic natural disasters:* No occurrence of catastrophic meteorological or natural disasters (extreme droughts, floods, locust invasions) that severely undermine stakeholder and community motivation, destroy restoration investments, or overwhelm institutional capacities to respond.

Project's components, outcomes, outputs and activities

The TALSIG Regional Coordination Project is structured around four complementary components that address eight critical barriers to effective regional coordination through eight strategic levers. As a regional coordination project, not a direct implementation project, TALSIG does not conduct field-level restoration, conservation, or livelihood activities; instead, it creates enabling conditions for nine national child projects (in Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, and Senegal) to implement more effectively through four core coordination functions: (1) harmonizing technical standards and policies for integrated natural resource management across GGW countries (Component 1), (2) facilitating gender-responsive enterprise development and public-private partnerships for non-timber forest product value chains (Component 2), (3) building institutional capacity, strengthening policy coherence,

and mobilizing innovative financing mechanisms to sustain GGW implementation beyond project lifecycle (Component 3), and (4) establishing a regional Knowledge Management System integrated with UNCCD PRAIS and GEO-LDN satellite monitoring, coordinating cross-border learning platforms, and standardizing monitoring, evaluation, and reporting systems to track regional-scale results (Component 4). Each component is designed to address specific coordination gaps identified in the Theory of Change, with outputs and activities explicitly linked to strategic levers that enable national child projects to overcome barriers related to weak institutional capacity, absence of harmonized policies, lack of knowledge management systems, insufficient cross-border collaboration, absence of standardized M&E, limited access to innovative financing, persistent gender inequalities, and weak regional advocacy capacity. The components are mutually reinforcing: Component 1 provides the technical foundation for sustainable land management, Component 2 creates economic incentives for restoration through market-based approaches, Component 3 ensures institutional sustainability and policy coherence, and Component 4 facilitates knowledge exchange and evidence-based decision-making, collectively transforming fragmented national efforts into a coherent regional initiative that generates measurable global environmental benefits including 193,000 hectares of protected areas under improved management, 132,900 hectares of degraded land under restoration, 5.2 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent sequestered, and improved livelihoods for 3.1 million direct beneficiaries (53.6% women) across the Great Green Wall region.

Component 1: Supporting sustainable use and integrated management of water, land and forest resources within the GGW region.

Component 1 aims to strengthen the capacity of nine national child projects to implement integrated natural resource management (INRM) practices that enhance land productivity, restore degraded ecosystems, and build climate resilience across the Sahel. The component addresses a critical coordination gap: national child projects lack harmonized technical standards, proven sustainable land management (SLM) technologies, and coherent policy frameworks for watershed management, renewable energy integration, participatory forestry, sustainable water use, soil conservation, and land restoration. This fragmentation results in duplication of efforts, missed opportunities for cross-border learning, and inability to scale successful interventions across the Great Green Wall (GGW) region. Component 1 operationalizes TALSIG's coordination role by providing national child projects with three critical enablers: (1) access to evidence-based SLM technologies through partnership with WOCAT (World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies), the official UNCCD depository for SLM best practices, (2) harmonized technical tools, policies, and training modules that ensure consistent approaches across nine countries while respecting national contexts, and (3) regional platforms for peer-to-peer learning and knowledge exchange that accelerate the replication of successful restoration practices across borders.

This component recognizes that sustainable development in the GGW region requires transformation in natural resource management approaches, shifting from fragmented national efforts to coordinated regional action. The Regional Coordination Project does not directly implement field-level restoration activities; instead, it creates enabling conditions for nine national child projects to be implemented more effectively through harmonized approaches. The component integrates cutting-edge scientific knowledge, including the UNCCD Science-Policy Interface (SPI) 'Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS)' principles, which identify climate-resilient, locally adapted crop varieties and soil management practices for Sahelian agroecological zones. By facilitating regional policy dialogue, providing standardized integrated approaches, and supporting gender-responsive land tenure reforms (including joint land certification for married and widowed women, recognition of customary rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, and formal enterprise registration for women-led cooperatives), Component 1 ensures that restoration efforts are not only technically sound but also socially equitable and economically viable. The component places strong emphasis on gender-balanced governance structures, with minimum quotas for women, youth, and minorities in restoration committees.

Outcome 1.1: Implementation of integrated NRM practices with due gender consideration improve land productivity, land cover, soil organic carbon and build resilience.

Under this outcome, the Regional Coordination Project facilitates the development and harmonization of integrated natural resource management (INRM) frameworks that enable nine national child projects to improve land productivity, increase land cover, enhance soil organic carbon stocks, and build ecosystem and

community resilience to climate variability. The outcome addresses a critical barrier identified in the Theory of Change: the absence of harmonized policies and technical standards across GGW countries results in inconsistent approaches, duplication of technical assistance efforts, and missed opportunities for scaling proven restoration practices. By providing coordinated technical support, TALSIG ensures that national child projects adopt evidence-based SLM technologies documented in the WOCAT database, integrate VACS-recommended climate-resilient crop varieties and soil management techniques into restoration planning, and implement gender-responsive land tenure reforms that secure women's access to land and natural resources.

Gender equity is a central pillar of this outcome. Recognizing that women in the Sahel face systemic barriers to land ownership, decision-making, and benefit-sharing, TALSIG supports national child projects in advocating for joint land certification for married and widowed women, recognition of customary rights of women and Indigenous communities, and formal enterprise registration of women-led cooperatives to enhance their legal recognition and access to value chain benefits. The outcome ensures that governance structures for natural resource management are gender-balanced, with minimum quotas for women (at least 50% representation), youth, and minorities in water user groups, forest co-management boards, and restoration committees, with equal voting and leadership rights. Capacity building interventions target women's associations, pastoralist groups, and youth restoration forums, ensuring that marginalized voices shape land zoning, reforestation priorities, and benefit-sharing mechanisms.

Policy coherence is a critical focus of this outcome. TALSIG facilitates multi-stakeholder policy dialogues at national and regional levels, bringing together national institutions dedicated to climate change adaptation, land degradation, biodiversity conservation, agriculture, and water management to harmonize visions, capture guidelines into national policy schemes, and update sector strategies to align with GGW objectives. These dialogues address sensitive issues including land tenure governance, with support for national bylaws and customary regulations that clarify land rights, reduce land conflicts, and create a facilitating environment for joint land certification for married and widowed women, recognition of customary rights of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities, and formal enterprise registration for women-led cooperatives.

Output 1.1.1: Stakeholders including women and youths supported in developing technical tools, policies, and training to advance watershed management, renewable energy, participatory forestry, sustainable water use, soil conservation, and land restoration, enhancing adaptation and rehabilitating degraded lands.

The output addresses the reality that many GGW countries have weak technical and financial capacities for environmental protection, with limited access to cutting-edge SLM technologies, climate services, and evidence-based restoration practices. By facilitating access to the WOCAT database (containing over 1,600 documented SLM technologies from 120 countries), TALSIG enables national child projects to identify, adapt, and scale proven practices such as water harvesting techniques (e.g., half-moons, zaï pits, contour bunds), agroforestry systems (e.g., farmer-managed natural regeneration, parkland systems), soil conservation measures (e.g., stone lines, vegetative barriers), and participatory forest management approaches. This output focuses on strengthening the capacity of national child project teams and partner country institutions to develop and implement harmonized technical tools, policies, and training programs that advance evidence-based sustainable land management across the GGW region. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated technical assistance, standardized terms of reference, and access to the global knowledge base of SLM technologies through formal partnership with WOCAT (World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies), the official UNCCD depository for SLM best practices. TALSIG does not directly implement field-level activities; instead, it ensures that national child projects have access to proven restoration practices, harmonized methodologies, and coherent policy frameworks that enable consistent, high-quality implementation across diverse national contexts. The output supports the integration of climate services and early warning systems into agricultural and pastoral planning, enabling farmers and pastoralists to make informed decisions about planting dates, livestock movements, and resource management in response to climate variability. The output also supports the development of a standardized integrated approach and regional strategy compatible with national realities, drawing on WOCAT-documented best practices and regional knowledge exchange to ensure context-appropriate and scalable solutions.

Activity 1.1.1.1: Establish formal partnership with WOCAT to access the global database of proven SLM technologies, facilitate knowledge exchange between WOCAT network members and GGW technical teams, and support national child projects in identifying and adapting WOCAT-documented practices to local contexts.

Activity 1.1.1.2: Review and revise existing national policies to integrate climate services, evidence-based SLM technologies from WOCAT, and proven restoration practices into agricultural and pastoral planning in the context of the Great Green Wall Initiative.

Activity 1.1.1.3: Facilitate national-level multi-stakeholder policy dialogues between partnerships including climate change, adaptation, land degradation, and biodiversity conservation dedicated national institutions, experts, and programmes to capitalize on expertise and lessons learned, harmonize visions, capture guidelines into national policy schemes, and update respective national sector strategies and programmes.

Activity 1.1.1.4: Draft a standardized integrated approach and fine-tune a regional strategy compatible with national realities, drawing on WOCAT-documented best practices and regional knowledge exchange to ensure context-appropriate and scalable solutions.

Activity 1.1.1.5: Provide technical assistance to national child projects in co-designing integrated agro-sylvo-pastoral water management systems (led by men and women) to be enforced by partner countries and GGW child projects.

Activity 1.1.1.6: Support national child projects in reviewing national bylaws or customary regulations to address the sensitive issue of land tenure governance (for both owners and users) and reduce land conflicts by supporting a facilitating environment (validated by communities and endorsed by authorities) able to clarify land rights and ease land disputes resolution and prevention.

Activity 1.1.1.7: Support child projects in advocating for joint land certification for women, recognition of customary rights of women and Indigenous communities, and joint titling land ownership and formal enterprise registration of women-led enterprises to enhance their legal recognition and better access benefit-sharing rights in value chains.

Output 1.1.2: Institutions as well as grassroot communities' skills and capacities are enhanced, allowing promotion and uptake of smart climate-resilient and sustainable agriculture practices, agroforestry schemes development and forest conservation planning

This output strengthens the capacity of national institutions, grassroot communities, women's associations, and livestock farmers to promote and adopt climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural practices, restore degraded land, develop agroforestry systems, and implement forest conservation planning. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated capacity building support to national child project teams, ensuring that community-based forest management systems, restoration committees, and participatory land use planning processes are gender-balanced, inclusive, and technically sound. The output integrates the UNCCD Science-Policy Interface (SPI) 'Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS)' principles, which identify climate-resilient, locally adapted crop varieties (e.g., drought-tolerant cereals, indigenous vegetables, nitrogen-fixing legumes) and soil management practices (e.g., organic matter management, crop-soil-livestock integration) recommended for Sahelian agroecological zones.

In collaboration with specialized CSO and research centres through sub-contracting services, the capacity building interventions are tailored to diverse stakeholder groups, using appropriate methodologies including farmer field schools, exchange visits, demonstration plots, and peer-to-peer learning platforms. Training modules cover participatory land use planning and restoration mapping (using participatory GIS tools that integrate indigenous knowledge, VACS-recommended crop-soil combinations, and ensure women and marginalized voices shape land zoning and reforestation priorities), climate-resilient agricultural practices

(including conservation agriculture, agroforestry, integrated pest management), community-based forest management (including forest co-management agreements, benefit-sharing mechanisms, conflict resolution), and gender and inclusion metrics for monitoring natural resource governance (using sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated indicators to ensure transparency in who is benefiting and participating).

Activity 1.1.2.1: Review with the child projects team the institutional capacity development plan suggested during the PPG and agree on key areas of training and capacity development to support establishment of community-based forest management systems (e.g., water user groups, forest co-management boards) and restoration committees (gender-balanced with minimum quotas for women, youth, and minorities), ensuring equal voting and leadership rights.

Activity 1.1.2.2: Integrate the UNCCD Science-Policy Interface (SPI) 'Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS)' principles into restoration planning and capacity building to enhance climate resilience and food security, collaborating with SPI experts to identify and promote climate-resilient, locally adapted crop varieties and soil management practices for Sahelian agroecological zones.

Activity 1.1.2.3: Support child project teams in building their capacity on participatory land use planning and restoration mapping using participatory GIS mapping and land-use planning tools that include indigenous knowledge, VACS-recommended crop-soil combinations, and ensure women and marginalized voices shape land zoning and reforestation priorities.

Activity 1.1.2.4: Support the formation of local, national, and regional networks (e.g., women pastoralist associations, youth restoration forums) to engage in public consultations and dialogues within the National Coalition system.

Activity 1.1.2.5: Track and report gender and inclusion metrics in governance systems by integrating sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated indicators in monitoring systems for natural resource governance, ensuring transparency in who is benefiting and participating.

Output 1.1.3: Stakeholder capacity for promoting community-based natural resource management systems that ensure the equitable distribution of benefits and encourage the sustainable use of natural resources are enhanced.

Many stakeholders in the GGW region have insufficient understanding of CBNRM principles, the importance of equitable benefit-sharing, and the role of VACS principles for adapted crops and soils in enhancing climate resilience and food security. This output strengthens the capacity of national actors involved in environmental management and socio-economic development (local administrative authorities, NGOs, key opinion formers, trade unions, academics, civil society organizations) to actively contribute to the development of tools and mechanisms for natural resource management, use regulation, and land governance. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in designing and implementing awareness campaigns and targeted training sessions that promote community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) principles, emphasizing equity, sustainability, and equitable benefit-sharing. The output ensures that CBNRM systems are not only technically sound but also socially inclusive, with mechanisms that guarantee women, youth, and Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities receive fair shares of benefits from sustainable resource use.

Activity 1.1.3.1: Support national child projects to co-design awareness campaigns highlighting the importance of sustainable resource use including VACS principles for adapted crops and soils, and equitable benefit-sharing, using appropriate communication channels to reach diverse audiences.

Activity 1.1.3.2: Work with child project to co-design and implement targeted training on principles and best practices of CBNRM, focusing on equity, sustainability, and equitable benefit-sharing mechanisms that ensure women, youth, and IPLCs receive fair shares of benefits.

Component 2: Supporting the adoption and implementation of equitable, and gender-responsive local level enterprises, Public-Private-Partnerships (PPPs) for NTFPs and value addition of selected products within the GGW region

The Great Green Wall (GGW) region is characterized by pronounced inequalities and pervasive poverty, both of which underpin social exclusion. Conflict, unrest, and political instability are direct manifestations of these inequities, creating a reinforcing cycle that perpetuates underdevelopment. This regional project acknowledges that population growth, land degradation, desertification, and climate change deepen vulnerability, resulting in persistent food insecurity and poverty. Agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, tourism, and energy central sectors of socio-economic growth are directly dependent on the environment. When conservation and sustainable resource management are neglected, community resilience declines sharply. Strengthening local livelihoods therefore requires both the sustainable use of natural resources and the empowerment of communities through alternative income-generating opportunities built upon the region's ecological endowments.

Under Component 2, and in partnership with private sectors (FAGRIP, GUD MATA, SOMIVAP Mali, ACCAX, Grenier du paysan of Burkina Faso, etc.) the project promotes a green or restoration economy through the valorization of natural resources and the establishment of value chains. This involves developing processing infrastructure for non-timber forest products (NTFPs), expanding green employment, facilitating access to finance for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and addressing market-entry barriers linked to complex international regulations. Efforts will also focus on local product transformation, economic diversification, and the creation of value addition within communities.

A financial mechanism study conducted during the Project Preparation Grant (Maram, June 2025) found that women constitute the backbone of NTFP production in the GGW region, particularly at the raw material stage. Yet, the prices paid to female gatherers remain low, yielding little improvement in their livelihoods. Most NTFPs continue to be exported unprocessed, limiting potential benefits. With the exception of gum arabic, GGW NTFPs face serious constraints in accessing international markets.

These challenges include:

- *Insufficient funding:* Developing new NTFP-based products demands substantial investment for instance, in cosmetics, food, or fragrance sectors covering manufacturing, product development, and market research that only large corporations can afford.
- *Limited research and development:* Existing data on GGW NTFPs are fragmented. While certain European companies such as Nexira have undertaken chemical analyses, these remain proprietary. Yet, research and development are essential for innovation, quality assurance, safety, and responsiveness to consumer trends.
- *Inadequate market knowledge:* Product development requires a nuanced understanding of market dynamics and demand trends. Such research is costly and generally inaccessible to smaller manufacturers, who rarely share the results publicly.
- *Complex regulatory frameworks:* Export and import of new food or cosmetic products are governed by stringent standards. Without compliance, NTFP-based products face prohibitive barriers to key markets.
- *Unfavorable taxation:* Many producing countries impose heavy export taxes, weakening the competitiveness of local products. Maisharou and Larwanou (2015) noted that tax administrations often regard private companies as 'inexhaustible tax deposits.'
- *Lack of market access guarantees:* Reliable mechanisms to secure entry into international markets remain largely undeveloped.

To address these structural barriers, Component 2 will strengthen national initiatives through child projects to support the creation, adoption, and implementation of local enterprises in partnership with the private sector. The GGW region holds significant potential in NTFPs to transform rural economies that depend heavily on

fragile ecosystems. This is especially important for women, who frequently remain in rural areas to sustain households while men migrate for employment, deepening gender disparities.

Understanding these gendered dynamics is vital for equitable adaptation and livelihood resilience. The selection of NTFP value chains will therefore be informed by the UNCCD Science-Policy Interface's Vision for Adapted Crops and Soils (VACS). This framework prioritizes climate-resilient, locally adapted crops that enhance ecosystem restoration while opening viable market opportunities. Integrating VACS principles will ensure that the targeted value chains contribute simultaneously to environmental rehabilitation, economic diversification, and gender-responsive development. Accordingly, the project's approach under Component 2 will deliberately consider the differentiated roles of women and men in natural resource access and use. Through this, it aims to diversify resilient livelihoods, foster inclusive economic growth, and strengthen the sustainability of ecosystem restoration efforts across the GGW region.

Outcome 2.1: Local enterprises of selected value chains and NTFPs enhance PPPs and diversify local resilient livelihoods, enhancing women's access to socioeconomic opportunities and resilience.

Under this outcome, the Regional Coordination Project facilitates the development of gender-responsive value chains for non-timber forest products (NTFPs) and VACS-recommended climate-resilient crops that diversify livelihoods, enhance women's economic empowerment, and strengthen climate resilience across the GGW region. The outcome addresses a critical coordination gap: national child projects lack harmonized approaches to value chain development, access to market intelligence, and proven models for Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) that integrate sustainable natural resource management with economic development. By providing coordinated technical assistance, TALSIG ensures that national child projects adopt gender-responsive business models, access market opportunities, and establish PPPs that create sustainable income streams for women and youth while reducing pressure on fragile ecosystems.

The outcome recognizes that women constitute the backbone of NTFP production in the GGW region, yet face systemic barriers including limited access to finance, restricted market access, lack of processing technologies, and exclusion from decision-making in value chain governance. TALSIG facilitates regional coordination to address these barriers through three strategic interventions: (1) conducting gender-responsive value chain analyses that identify market opportunities for both traditional NTFPs (e.g., shea butter, baobab, moringa, gum arabic) and VACS-recommended climate-resilient crops (e.g., drought-tolerant cereals, indigenous vegetables, nitrogen-fixing legumes), (2) building capacity of local enterprises through targeted training on product quality improvement, market readiness, and business management, with specific focus on women-led cooperatives and youth entrepreneurs, and (3) developing at least three proven PPP models that facilitate women's access to finance, integrate sustainable resource management practices, and create formal agreements defining governance, benefit-sharing, and conflict resolution mechanisms.

Output 2.1.1: Gender-responsive enterprise training to strengthen the capacity of local entrepreneurs and promote equitable, gender-sensitive businesses developed and implemented.

Many women-led enterprises in the GGW region lack knowledge of market dynamics, product quality standards, and business management skills, resulting in low prices for raw materials, limited value addition, and missed market opportunities. This output focuses on conducting comprehensive gender-responsive value chain analyses for selected NTFPs and VACS-recommended climate-resilient crops, with targeted training to strengthen the capacity of local enterprises to identify market opportunities, improve product quality, and access markets through networks and trade fairs. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated technical assistance to national child projects in conducting value chain analyses that prioritize VACS-recommended crops suitable for Sahelian agroecological zones, identify market opportunities for both traditional NTFPs and climate-resilient crops, and design gender-sensitive training programs that address the specific needs of women-led enterprises.

Activity 2.1.1.1: Support national child projects to conduct gender-responsive value chain analyses, prioritizing VACS-recommended climate-resilient crops and NTFPs suitable for Sahelian agroecological zones.

Activity 2.1.1.2: Support national child projects to identify market opportunities for both traditional NTFPs and VACS-recommended climate-resilient crops.

Activity 2.1.1.3: Support national child projects to identify gender-sensitive and environmentally friendly training needs and conduct training sessions for local enterprises.

Activity 2.1.1.4: Establish gender-sensitive index-indicators to monitor and report the impact of trainings on business performance and gender equity uptake.

Output 2.1.2: Gender responsive value chain analyses of selected NTFPs performed, with training to identify actors and markets, improve processing, and facilitate market linkages via networks and trade fairs.

Fragmented data on GGW NTFPs, limited understanding of market dynamics, and weak linkages between producers (predominantly women) and buyers, processors, and financiers. TALSIG facilitates regional coordination to conduct comprehensive NTFP studies that analyze chemical properties, market demand, regulatory requirements, and business opportunities, with specific focus on identifying strategies that support value chain development and women's entrepreneurial opportunities. This output focuses on identifying and analyzing key actors and business opportunities in NTFP value chains to improve processing, enhance value addition, diversify economic activities, and facilitate market linkages through networks and trade fairs. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in mapping stakeholders from government, private sector, and local communities involved in NTFPs and natural resource management, conducting comprehensive studies of NTFPs in collaboration with research institutions, regional programmes, UNCCD SPI experts, and private sector actors, and supporting women's entrepreneurial activities through workshops and capacity building focused on product quality and market readiness. The output also monitors the impacts of value chain interventions on incomes, women's economic emancipation, and community benefits, ensuring that interventions deliver measurable improvements in livelihoods and gender equity.

Activity 2.1.2.1: Identify and map key stakeholders from government, private sector, and local communities involved in NTFPs and natural resource management.

Activity 2.1.2.2: Work with research institutions, regional programmes, UNCCD SPI experts, and private sector actors to conduct comprehensive NTFP studies and co-develop value chain strategies.

Activity 2.1.2.3: Support women's entrepreneurial activities through workshops and capacity-building trainings, focusing on product quality and market readiness.

Activity 2.1.2.4: Monitor the impacts of value chain interventions on incomes, women's economic emancipation, and community benefits.

Output 2.1.3: Gender responsive Public-Private Partnerships to enhance sustainable natural resource management and value-chain development for NTFPs Facilitated.

Women-led enterprises in the GGW region face severe constraints in accessing finance, lack formal agreements that protect their rights and ensure benefit-sharing, and have limited capacity to negotiate with private sector actors and government agencies. TALSIG facilitates the development of PPP models that specifically address these barriers by partnering with microfinance institutions to design gender-sensitive financial products that allow women and female youth to invest in land-based climate-resilient businesses, supporting the private sector in partner countries to develop business models and resource management plans

that integrate sustainable practices, and drafting formal agreements that define governance, financial arrangements, benefit-sharing mechanisms, and conflict resolution procedures.

This output focuses on developing and piloting at least three proven gender-responsive Public-Private Partnership (PPP) models that integrate sustainable natural resource management with value chain development for NTFPs. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated technical assistance to national child projects in reviewing existing PPP models linked to natural resources management and value chains, identifying three promising models for the GGW context, designing and delivering training modules on PPP concepts, sustainable resource management, business collaboration, and cooperative land governance, and facilitating the establishment of formal PPP agreements between government, private sector, and local communities.

Activity 2.1.3.1: Conduct a review of PPP models linked to natural resources management and value chains and identify three promising models for the GGW.

Activity 2.1.3.2: Design and conduct training modules for national partners on PPP concepts, sustainable resource management, business collaboration, and cooperative land governance.

Activity 2.1.3.3: Encourage and support the private sector in partner countries to develop business models and resource management plans that integrate sustainable practices.

Activity 2.1.3.4: Partner with microfinance institutions to design gender-sensitive financial products and facilitate women's access to finance for ecosystem-based enterprises.

Activity 2.1.3.5: Draft and negotiate formal PPP agreements that define governance, financial arrangements, benefit-sharing mechanisms, and conflict resolution procedures.

Activity 2.1.3.6: Facilitate the establishment of PPPs between government, private sector, and local communities to promote sustainable management of natural resources and value chain development.

Component 3: Building gender-responsive institutional capacity, strengthening policies, and mobilizing stakeholders to enhance climate impact planning, advocacy, and communication for GGW implementation.

The GGW region is characterized by low and weak institutional capacities and policies to strengthen the ability of the region to enhance its resilience to climate change, sound ecosystem management, and sustainable development of resources, safeguarding of material and immaterial rural heritage, and enhancement of the quality of life and livelihoods of communities. The capacities and policies are insufficient to address the complex and evolving challenges posed by changing climate and rapid population growth in the region. The institutional frameworks for climate change and natural resource management are often fragmented, poorly coordinated, and lack the necessary resources and expertise to implement effective policies and development programs. Furthermore, economic evidence demonstrating the costs of inaction and benefits of restoration investments remains limited, hindering resource mobilization and policy prioritization. This situation is further exacerbated by political instability, limited financial resources, and weak governance systems.

Outcome 3.1: Resilience and Capacity building, policy and institutional strengthening, stakeholder engagement and improved communication enhance the implementation of the GGWI.

Under this outcome, the Regional Coordination Project facilitates the strengthening of institutional capacity, policy coherence, stakeholder engagement, and communication systems to enhance the implementation of the Great Green Wall Initiative across nine countries. The outcome addresses a critical coordination gap: national child projects lack harmonized policy frameworks, face capacity constraints in climate adaptation planning and drought resilience, have limited access to economic evidence for investment prioritization, and operate

with weak resource mobilization mechanisms. By providing coordinated technical assistance, TALSIG ensures that national child projects develop robust institutional structures, adopt coherent policies aligned with global frameworks (NDPs, NAPs, NDCs, NBSAPs), access innovative financing mechanisms, and implement effective communication strategies that raise awareness and mobilize stakeholders.

The outcome recognizes that weak institutional capacity and policy fragmentation undermine the ability of GGW countries to respond effectively to environmental degradation and climate shocks. TALSIG facilitates regional coordination to address these barriers through four strategic interventions: (1) delivering gender-responsive training programs on technical, adaptation, policy (including National Drought Plans), and communication aspects of the GGW Initiative, in collaboration with the International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) to ensure alignment with global best practices, (2) developing and rolling out communication tools, methodologies, and advocacy approaches for effective awareness campaigns via social media, radio, TV, and print, (3) conducting multi-country policy analysis using the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) methodology to provide evidence-based justification for policy reforms and investment prioritization, and (4) establishing resource mobilization and stakeholder partnership mechanisms to secure and leverage support from governments, private sector, and international partners, including innovative local financing approaches piloted in Senegal, Niger, and Chad.

The outcome is grounded in the recognition that institutional capacity and policy coherence are essential enablers for effective GGW implementation. When national child projects have access to harmonized policies, trained personnel, economic evidence, and innovative financing mechanisms, implementation becomes more effective, resources are used efficiently, and regional-scale impact is achieved. TALSIG coordinates with policymakers, government agencies, research institutions, UNCCD SPI experts, IDRA, ELD network, and private sector actors to co-develop strategies, deliver training, conduct policy analysis, and establish partnership mechanisms.

Output 3.1.1: Training programs on technical, adaptation, policy, and governance aspects of GGWI to build stakeholders capacity developed and delivered

This output focuses on developing and delivering comprehensive gender-responsive training programs that build the capacity of stakeholders across GGW countries in technical aspects of land restoration, climate adaptation strategies, policy development (particularly National Drought Plans), and communication approaches for the GGW Initiative. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated technical assistance to national child projects in identifying capacity-building needs, addressing policy gaps (including drought), and designing tailored training modules that integrate the GGW policy framework, climate adaptation strategies, drought resilience approaches from IDRA, and best practices for land management.

TALSIG therefore facilitates the development of comprehensive guidelines and toolkits dedicated to inspiring multi-sectoral policy reforms and enhanced coherence, including alignment of National Drought Plans (NDPs), National Adaptation Plans (NAPs), Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs), National Action Programmes to Combat Desertification (NAP-CDs), Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Strategies, Agricultural Development and Food Security Plans, Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) Strategies, and Green Economy and job creation Strategies.

Activity 3.1.1.1: Review knowledge gaps identified during the PPG and identify capacity-building needs in each GGW partner country.

Activity 3.1.1.2: Identify policy gaps including on drought and support countries to bridge those gaps, particularly supporting NDP development in collaboration with IDRA.

Activity 3.1.1.3: Elaborate tailored comprehensive guidelines and toolkits to inspire multi-sectoral policy reforms and enhanced coherence, including alignment of NDPs, NAPs, NDCs, NBSAPs, NAP-CDs, SLM Strategies, Agricultural Development Plans, DRR Strategies, and Green Economy Strategies.

Activity 3.1.1.4: Design tailored training modules and operational toolkits integrating GGWI policy framework, climate adaptation strategies, drought resilience approaches from IDRA, and best practices for land management.

Activity 3.1.1.5: Develop tools to assess the effectiveness of training programs, uptake, and measure capacity improvements.

Output 3.1.2: Gender responsive communication tools, methodologies, and advocacy approaches for effective awareness campaigns via social media, radio, TV, and print developed and rolled out to National GGW Agencies

Many National GGW Agencies lack professional communication tools, methodologies, and advocacy approaches, resulting in low public awareness of the GGW Initiative, limited adoption of climate-resilient practices, and weak stakeholder engagement. TALSIG facilitates the development of tailored communication content and materials adapted for different channels, including social media posts, radio scripts, TV spots, brochures, and manuals that promote climate-resilient crops, climate-smart agricultural techniques, and climate-smart livestock management practices. This output focuses on developing and rolling out comprehensive gender-responsive communication tools, methodologies, and advocacy approaches that enable National GGW Agencies to conduct effective awareness campaigns via social media, radio, TV, and print media. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in identifying target audiences, developing communication and advocacy campaigns, drafting brochures and manuals, and assessing the most effective communication channels and messaging needs for different contexts.

Activity 3.1.2.1: Identify key target audiences and stakeholders for GGWI awareness campaigns.

Activity 3.1.2.2: Develop communication and advocacy campaigns to raise awareness about the GGW Initiative, promote equitable and gender-responsive policies, and secure land use rights.

Activity 3.1.2.3: Draft brochures and manuals to promote climate-resilient crops, climate-smart agricultural techniques, and climate-smart livestock management practices.

Activity 3.1.2.4: Assess most effective communication channels and develop tailored tools, content, and materials for different channels including social media, radio, TV, and print.

Output 3.1.3: Gender responsive multi-country policy analysis to identify areas where policy reform is necessary to support the Great Green Wall Initiative

This output focuses on conducting gender-responsive multi-country policy analysis to identify common needs, opportunities for harmonized regional policy strategy, mutualized advocacy efforts, and areas where policy reform is necessary to support the Great Green Wall Initiative. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in engaging policymakers, government agencies, local communities, experts, and civil society to gather insights on policy effectiveness, gaps, and challenges, building participative strategies suitable for multiple countries, and conducting economic analysis using the Economics of Land Degradation (ELD) methodology to provide evidence-based justification for policy reforms and investment prioritization.

GGW countries lack, or have weak harmonized policy frameworks, operate with fragmented and poorly coordinated policies, and have limited access to economic evidence demonstrating the costs of inaction and benefits of restoration investments. TALSIG facilitates cross-border cooperation for multi-country policy analysis in relation to climate threats (drought, floods, etc.) to identify common needs and opportunities for harmonized regional policy strategy and mutualized advocacy efforts. The integration of ELD economic analysis provides credible evidence on the return on investment for GGW interventions, enabling policymakers to prioritize resource allocation and justify policy reforms.

Activity 3.1.3.1: Engage policymakers, government agencies, local communities, experts, and civil society to gather insights on policy effectiveness, gaps, and challenges across targeted countries.

Activity 3.1.3.2: Work with national child projects to build a participative strategy suitable for several countries and facilitate exchanges and synergy actions across neighboring countries.

Activity 3.1.3.3: Conduct economic analysis of land degradation and restoration interventions using the ELD methodology to inform investment decisions and policy reforms.

Output 3.1.4: Gender responsive resource mobilization and stakeholder partnership mechanisms to secure and leverage support from governments, private sector, and international partners established

This output focuses on establishing gender-responsive resource mobilization and stakeholder partnership mechanisms to secure and leverage support from governments, private sector, and international partners for GGW implementation. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in identifying and mapping key potential financial partners, conducting stakeholder consultations, designing clear gender-responsive mechanisms, establishing partnership guidelines, facilitating formal agreements, and supporting gender-sensitive, transparent, and equitable initiatives for innovative financing tools.

The output addresses seeks to address the challenge that GGW countries face severe constraints in accessing finance for restoration and conservation activities, lack innovative financing mechanisms, and have limited capacity to mobilize resources from diverse sources. TALSIG facilitates the development of innovative local resource mobilization approaches already piloted in Senegal, Niger, and Chad, where private sector actors add small amounts to customer bills, with proceeds collected monthly and submitted to transparent mechanisms that finance youth and women's local initiatives on a competitive basis. This innovative approach not only provides local resources for local initiatives but also increases environmental stewardship in GGW countries and contributes to project sustainability.

Activity 3.1.4.1: Identify and map key potential financial partners including government bodies, private sector actors, international donors, NGOs, and community groups.

Activity 3.1.4.2: Conduct stakeholder consultations and identify National GGW Champions to back up the partnership.

Activity 3.1.4.3: Design a clear gender-responsive mechanism outlining goals, targeted funding sources, partnership models, governance structure, and efficient resource mobilization approaches informed by economic evidence from ELD analysis.

Activity 3.1.4.4: Establish partnership guidelines, roles, responsibilities, incentives, and benefit-sharing mechanisms to foster collaboration and trust.

Activity 3.1.4.5: Facilitate formal agreements or MoUs to solidify partnerships and commitments to resource contributions and joint actions.

Activity 3.1.4.6: Support gender-sensitive, transparent, and equitable initiatives for innovative financing tools (e.g., crowdfunding, REDD+ potential, PES opportunities).

Outcome 3.2: Capacity building, policy and institutional strengthening enhance planning for climate impacts and extreme weather events

Under this outcome, the Regional Coordination Project facilitates the strengthening of institutional and policy structures to enhance the ability of stakeholders to plan for and respond to climate impacts and extreme weather events, particularly droughts, floods, crop diseases, zoonotic diseases, and pest outbreaks. The

outcome addresses a critical capacity gap: weak institutional capacities negatively affect countries' ability to respond to environmental degradation and socioeconomic shocks, and also impede the ability of countries within the GGW region to provide early warning systems, good advisories, and alerts on disease and pest outbreaks. Partnership with the International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) strengthens drought monitoring and preparedness capabilities through access to the Drought Observatory and integration with global drought resilience frameworks.

The outcome recognizes that communities in the GGW region are particularly vulnerable to climate change and natural resource degradation, with impacts manifesting in food insecurity, displacement, and poverty, which undermine efforts to promote sustainable development and economic growth. TALSIG facilitates regional coordination to address these challenges through two strategic interventions: (1) strengthening institutional and policy structures to provide good weather advisories to inform farmers, pastoralist communities, and land managers to improve their preparedness, and (2) establishing climate and drought risk assessment systems with real-time data from IDRA's Drought Observatory for reporting droughts, floods, and disease and pest outbreaks across GGW countries.

Output 3.2.1: Gender responsive institutional and policy structures strengthened to provide good weather advisories to inform farmers, pastoralist communities and land managers to improve their preparedness

This output focuses on strengthening gender-responsive institutional and policy structures (line ministries, agencies, state services, offices) to provide good weather advisories that inform farmers, pastoralist communities, and land managers, improving their adaptation and readiness regarding upcoming climate-related potential threats. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in analyzing current policies related to weather advisories and climate information services, evaluating existing meteorological and advisory institutions to identify gaps, providing targeted training and resources to enhance forecasting and advisory service delivery capabilities, and establishing clear coordination mechanisms between meteorological services, agricultural departments, and community organizations. TALSIG facilitates the strengthening of institutional structures and development of standardized procedures for data reporting and information sharing among relevant institutions.

Activity 3.2.1.1: Analyze current policies related to weather advisories, climate information services, and disaster risk reduction.

Activity 3.2.1.2: Evaluate existing meteorological and advisory institutions to identify gaps in technical skills, infrastructure, and coordination.

Activity 3.2.1.3: Provide targeted training and resources to enhance forecasting, data management, and advisory service delivery capabilities.

Activity 3.2.1.4: Establish clear coordination mechanisms between meteorological services, agricultural departments, and community organizations, and develop standardized procedures for data reporting and information sharing.

Output 3.2.2: Gender responsive climate risks assessment and Climate change data focused system set up for reporting droughts, floods and disease (crop and zoonotic) and pest outbreaks (including locusts) in GGW countries

This output focuses on establishing a gender-responsive climate and drought risk assessment system with a climate change data-focused platform for reporting droughts, floods, crop diseases, zoonotic diseases, and pest outbreaks (including locusts) across GGW countries. Partnership with IDRA enables integration of real-time drought monitoring data from the Drought Observatory into the regional Early Warning System, enhancing drought preparedness and adaptive management capacity. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in analyzing historical and current data on climate risks,

establishing partnership with IDRA, building a centralized data-driven platform, training farmers and pastoralists, and establishing a regional and local Early Warning System.

GGW countries generally have limited, viable centralized systems for monitoring and reporting climate risks, have limited access to real-time drought monitoring data, and operate with weak early warning systems that fail to reach vulnerable communities in time. TALSIG facilitates the establishment of partnership with IDRA to integrate drought monitoring tools, access the Drought Observatory, and contribute GGW implementation experiences to the IDRA Communities of Learning and Practice on Drought Management. The output also supports participating countries to develop National Drought Plans (NDPs) with due consideration of the GGW Initiative, learning from the UNCCD Drought Initiative.

Activity 3.2.2.1: Analyze historical and current data on droughts, floods, crop diseases, zoonotic diseases, and pest outbreaks, map hazard hotspots, and forecast potential future risks under climate change scenarios.

Activity 3.2.2.2: Establish partnership with IDRA to integrate drought monitoring tools, access the Drought Observatory, and contribute GGW implementation experiences to IDRA Communities of Learning and Practice.

Activity 3.2.2.3: Build a centralized, data-driven platform to collect, store, analyze, and report climate-related risks and outbreak events.

Activity 3.2.2.4: Train farmers, pastoralists, and land managers on how to interpret and use weather advisories for decision-making, and build awareness among local communities and decision-makers on climate risks.

Activity 3.2.2.5: Establish a regional (digital, social media) and local Early Warning System (town criers, community radios, etc.).

Component 4: Support towards gender-responsive KM and regional monitoring and accountability

Component 4 addresses a critical coordination gap in the Great Green Wall Initiative: the absence of a functional regional knowledge management system, standardized monitoring and evaluation protocols, and coordinated accountability mechanisms that enable national child projects to learn from each other, track progress systematically, and report results credibly to stakeholders and global conventions. Without regional coordination for knowledge management and monitoring, national child projects operate in isolation, duplicate efforts, miss opportunities to replicate successful interventions, lack standardized data for regional-scale reporting, and face challenges in demonstrating impact to resource partners. TALSIG provides coordinated support to establish a functional regional knowledge management platform integrated with GEO-LDN geospatial data and satellite monitoring tools, deliver tailored training on sustainable land management and climate adaptation, develop robust protocols for collecting and sharing GGW information and best practices, and strengthen results-based management and finance systems with standards for capturing and storing national-level GGW implementation data accessible to stakeholders.

The component recognizes that knowledge management, monitoring, and accountability are essential enablers for effective regional coordination and programmatic coherence. When national child projects have access to a shared knowledge platform, standardized M&E protocols, satellite-based monitoring tools from GEO-LDN, and results-based management systems, implementation becomes more evidence-based, resources are used efficiently, learning is accelerated across borders, and regional-scale impact is credibly demonstrated. TALSIG coordinates with the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, national GGW focal points, GEO-LDN, UNCCD PRAIS platform, research institutions, and technical experts to co-develop the knowledge management system, deliver training, establish monitoring protocols, and strengthen accountability mechanisms.

Outcome 4.1: A functional platform enhances transparent regional and national implementation and reporting of the GGW Initiative.

Under this outcome, the Regional Coordination Project facilitates the establishment of a functional regional platform that enhances transparent regional and national implementation and reporting of the Great Green Wall Initiative. The outcome addresses a critical coordination gap: national child projects lack a shared knowledge management system, operate with inconsistent monitoring and evaluation protocols, have limited access to satellite-based monitoring and geospatial data for land degradation assessment, and face challenges in aggregating and reporting regional-scale results credibly to stakeholders and global conventions. By providing coordinated technical assistance, TALSIG ensures that national child projects have access to a functional knowledge management system integrated with GEO-LDN geospatial data, receive tailored training on sustainable land management and climate adaptation, use robust protocols for collecting and sharing GGW information and best practices, and implement results-based management and finance systems with standardized protocols for capturing and storing national-level GGW implementation data.

The outcome recognizes that knowledge management, capacity building, and standardized monitoring are essential enablers for programmatic coherence and regional-scale impact. TALSIG facilitates regional coordination through four strategic interventions: (1) strengthening institutional structures to develop and maintain a knowledge management system integrated with GEO-LDN satellite monitoring tools, (2) delivering tailored training on sustainable land management, climate adaptation, and biodiversity conservation using appropriate methodologies, (3) developing a functional knowledge management system with robust protocols for collecting, analyzing, and sharing GGW information and best practices, and (4) strengthening structures to develop results-based management and finance systems with standards and protocols for capturing and storing national-level GGW implementation data accessible to stakeholders.

Output 4.1.1: Institutional structures to develop gender responsive KM systems to share information and best practices including on adaptation with stakeholders are strengthened and enabled to deliver updated policies

This output focuses on strengthening institutional structures (Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, national GGW focal points, line ministries) to develop and maintain gender-responsive knowledge management systems that share information and best practices including on adaptation with stakeholders, enabling them to deliver materials capable of inspiring policy updates. The knowledge management system is integrated with GEO-LDN geospatial data and satellite monitoring tools to provide evidence-based tracking of restoration progress and land degradation trends. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in identifying gaps in information flow, technology, and human resources, establishing formal partnership with GEO-LDN, developing user-friendly digital platforms, using mobile and radio-based environmental education tools, and developing policies, roles, and procedures to govern knowledge management activities.

The output addresses the challenge that many GGW institutions lack functional knowledge management systems, have limited access to satellite-based monitoring and geospatial data for land degradation assessment, and operate with weak information flow and technology infrastructure. TALSIG facilitates the establishment of formal partnership with GEO-LDN to access satellite-based monitoring, GIS tools, and high-resolution geospatial data for baseline assessment, progress tracking, and reporting on Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets across GGW countries. The output also supports the development of inclusive communication campaigns in local languages using community radio, mobile apps, and town criers to disseminate decision-making opportunities and ecological knowledge to grassroots populations.

Activity 4.1.1.1: Identify gaps in information flow, technology, and human resources related to knowledge sharing and adaptation, including limited access to satellite-based monitoring and geospatial data.

Activity 4.1.1.2: Establish formal partnership with GEO-LDN to access satellite-based monitoring, GIS tools, and high-resolution geospatial data for baseline assessment, progress tracking, and reporting on LDN targets.

Activity 4.1.1.3: Develop user-friendly digital platforms and tools for capturing, storing, and disseminating knowledge and best practices, including integration of GEO-LDN satellite data visualization and land cover change maps.

Activity 4.1.1.4: Use mobile and radio-based environmental education tools to develop knowledge and share information at the grassroots level, designing inclusive communication campaigns in local languages.

Activity 4.1.1.5: Develop or strengthen policies, roles, and procedures to govern knowledge management activities, train institutional staff, and establish a helpdesk or support system.

Output 4.1.2: Tailored gender responsive training on sustainable land management, climate adaptation, sustainable land management, and biodiversity conservation for diverse stakeholders using appropriate methodologies conducted.

This output focuses on conducting tailored gender-responsive training on sustainable land management, climate adaptation, and biodiversity conservation for diverse stakeholders (decision-makers, women, youth, environmental groups) using appropriate methodologies (workshops, e-learning, field demonstrations, peer-to-peer learning, community engagement). The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in identifying specific learning needs and knowledge gaps, designing training modules tailored to each audience's context and level (including use of GEO-LDN satellite monitoring tools for land degradation assessment), organizing training sessions, supporting mentorship between women environmental leaders and local women, and establishing monitoring and evaluation tools to assess knowledge uptake and behavioral changes. Many stakeholders in GGW countries lack technical knowledge of sustainable land management practices, climate adaptation strategies, biodiversity conservation approaches, and use of satellite monitoring tools for land degradation assessment, resulting in weak implementation of restoration and conservation activities. TALSIG facilitates the delivery of tailored training using diverse methodologies to maximize reach and impact, including a mentorship program connecting female policymakers, conservation experts, and restoration leaders with grassroots minorities, women, and youth groups.

Activity 4.1.2.1: Identify specific learning needs, knowledge gaps, and preferences of diverse stakeholder groups (decision-makers, women, youth, environmental groups).

Activity 4.1.2.2: Design training modules on SLM, climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and use of GEO-LDN satellite monitoring tools tailored to each audience's context and level.

Activity 4.1.2.3: Organize training sessions using various techniques such as workshops, e-learning, field demonstrations, peer-to-peer learning, and community engagement.

Activity 4.1.2.4: Support mentorship between women environmental leaders and local women, creating a mentorship program connecting female policymakers and conservation experts with grassroots groups.

Activity 4.1.2.5: Establish monitoring and evaluation tools to assess knowledge uptake and behavioral changes.

Output 4.1.3: A functional gender responsive knowledge management system with robust protocols for collecting, analyzing, and sharing Great Green Wall Initiative information and best practices to support stakeholder engagement developed

This output focuses on developing a functional gender-responsive knowledge management system with robust protocols for collecting, analyzing, and sharing Great Green Wall Initiative information and best practices to support stakeholder engagement. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in building a digital, interactive, and scalable platform for storing and sharing GGWI-related data (including outcomes with specific adaptation interventions through LDCF resources in selected

countries), developing standardized procedures for data entry and quality control, creating user-friendly formats for knowledge products, collecting and using sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated data, and documenting and sharing gender-transformative restoration stories.

The output addresses a critical knowledge sharing gap: GGW countries lack a centralized, functional knowledge management system with robust protocols, resulting in fragmented information, inconsistent data quality, limited access to best practices, and weak stakeholder engagement. TALSIG facilitates the development of a digital platform that stores research, case studies, and best practices in user-friendly formats (briefs, infographics, toolkits, videos) tailored to different audiences (policymakers, practitioners, communities). The output also supports the development of a gender-sensitive M&E system that tracks participation, access, and benefits disaggregated by sex and age, and uses this data to adjust programming in real time. By the end of the project, this output will result in a functional knowledge management system operational and accessible to all nine countries, knowledge products (briefs, infographics, toolkits, videos) developed and disseminated, sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated data collected and used for adaptive management, and gender-transformative restoration stories documented and shared through radio, video, and regional knowledge platforms.

Activity 4.1.3.1: Build a digital, interactive, and scalable platform for storing and sharing GGWI-related data including outcomes with specific adaptation interventions through LDCF resources in selected countries.

Activity 4.1.3.2: Develop standardized procedures for data entry, quality control, validation, and versioning to ensure reliability and consistency, and provide training on data collection, analysis, and reporting.

Activity 4.1.3.3: Create user-friendly formats for knowledge products (briefs, infographics, toolkits, videos) tailored to different audiences (policymakers, practitioners, communities).

Activity 4.1.3.4: Collect and use sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated data, developing a gender-sensitive M&E system that tracks participation, access, and benefits and uses this data to adjust programming in real time.

Activity 4.1.3.5: Document and share gender-transformative restoration stories, collecting case studies and testimonies from women and youth leaders and disseminating them through radio, video, and regional knowledge platforms.

Output 4.1.4: Gender responsive structures to develop results-based management and finance systems, along with standards and protocols for capturing and storing national-level GGW implementation data accessible to stakeholders strengthened

This output focuses on strengthening gender-responsive structures (Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, national GGW focal points, line ministries) to develop results-based management and finance systems, along with standards and protocols for capturing and storing national-level GGW implementation data accessible to stakeholders. The Regional Coordination Project provides coordinated support to national child projects in evaluating current institutional capacities and systems related to results-based planning, monitoring, evaluation, and finance, designing a harmonized RBM/RBF system aligned with GGW goals with integration of GEO-LDN satellite-derived indicators for objective verification of results, and establishing standards and protocols to document environmental and socio-economic impacts.

The output addresses a critical accountability gap: many GGW institutions lack results-based management and finance systems, operate with weak data systems and financial tracking mechanisms, and have limited capacity to capture and store national-level GGW implementation data in formats accessible to stakeholders and credible for reporting to global conventions. TALSIG facilitates the design of a harmonized RBM/RBF system that includes indicators, results chains, performance measurement frameworks, and financial accountability tools, with integration of GEO-LDN satellite-derived indicators (land productivity, vegetation cover, soil organic carbon) for objective verification of results. By the end of the project, this output will

result in harmonized RBM/RBF systems operational in all nine countries, standards and protocols for data capture and storage adopted across all nine countries, integration with GEO-LDN satellite-derived indicators providing objective verification of results, and credible regional-scale results reported to GEF, UNCCD, CBD, and UNFCCC demonstrating measurable global environmental benefits.

Activity 4.1.4.1: Evaluate current institutional capacities, systems, and tools related to results-based planning, monitoring, evaluation, and finance to identify gaps in human resources, data systems, financial tracking, and reporting mechanisms.

Activity 4.1.4.2: Design a harmonized RBM/RBF system aligned with GGW goals, including indicators, results chains, performance measurement frameworks, and financial accountability tools, with integration of GEO-LDN satellite-derived indicators for objective verification of results.

Activity 4.1.4.3: Establish a results-based management/finance (RBM/RBF) system and standards and protocols to document environmental and socio-economic impacts.

Socioeconomic benefits of the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project

The TALSIG Regional Coordination Project is designed to deliver extensive and transformative socioeconomic benefits across the 9 participating Sahel countries. By establishing a coherent, coordinated framework for GGW implementation, the project will unlock significant economic opportunities, enhance livelihoods, and build long-term resilience for millions of people. The project provides a robust architecture for socioeconomic enhancement by harmonizing policies, scaling up successful interventions, and creating an enabling environment for both public and private investment. These integrated approaches, embodied across the project's four components, will collectively contribute to sustainable development, poverty reduction, and economic stability throughout the GGW region.

Employment creation and sustainable livelihoods: TALSIG is anticipated to catalyze the creation of 1.26 million green jobs across the 9 countries, providing a critical pathway out of poverty for vulnerable communities. These opportunities will be generated through large-scale land restoration activities, the development of sustainable value chains for non-timber forest products (NTFPs) such as gum arabic, shea butter, baobab, and moringa, and the growth of green enterprises in areas like biomass energy and eco-tourism. Through Component 2, the project will mobilize private sector investment through innovative financing mechanisms including green bonds, blended finance models, public-private partnerships (PPPs), and carbon markets. The project has already secured commitments from private sector partners including FAGRIB, Green United Development Limited (GUD Mata), Terra Global Capital, and national enterprises such as SOMIVAP Mali, ADDAX Niger, and Grenier du Paysan Burkina Faso, who will support value chain development, carbon market infrastructure, and de-risking of investments. These partnerships will foster entrepreneurship and provide reliable income sources, particularly for women and youth.

Food security and agricultural productivity: The project will significantly enhance food security and agricultural productivity by promoting the sustainable management of 325,900 hectares of land. Through Component 1, TALSIG will facilitate the adoption of integrated land, water, and forest management practices, including agroecology, drought-smart agriculture, and integrated watershed management. The project will establish formal partnership with the World Overview of Conservation Approaches and Technologies (WOCAT) to access the global database of proven sustainable land management (SLM) technologies and support national child projects in identifying and adapting WOCAT-documented practices to local contexts. These interventions will improve soil health, increase water availability, and boost crop and livestock productivity, directly benefiting 3.1 million people (53.6% of whom are women, totaling 1.66 million women). By building the capacity of national partners to implement these approaches at scale, the project will enhance the resilience of food systems to climate shocks and ensure long-term food security for the region.

Enhanced community and climate resilience: TALSIG will strengthen community resilience to climate change by promoting ecosystem-based adaptation and integrated drought risk management. The project's activities are projected to sequester or avoid 275,000 tons of CO2 equivalent, contributing to global climate mitigation efforts while delivering local adaptation benefits. Through Component 3, the project will strengthen regional and national institutional frameworks for climate-resilient development, including the integration of climate services and early warning systems into agricultural and pastoral planning, enabling farmers and pastoralists to make informed decisions about planting dates, livestock movements, and resource management in response to climate variability. The project will also support transboundary resource management agreements, including cross-border watershed management and migratory wildlife corridors. By fostering collaboration and knowledge sharing, TALSIG will enhance the capacity of communities and governments to anticipate, absorb, and adapt to climate variability and extreme weather events.

Gender equity and empowerment: The project adopts a gender-transformative approach, aiming not only to include women but to empower them as agents of change. With 53.6% of beneficiaries being women (1.66 million women), TALSIG will address systemic gender inequalities by promoting women's land tenure security and equitable access to resources. Component 2 will support the development of women-led enterprises and ensure their equitable participation in green value chains, including NTFP processing and marketing. The project will develop gender-responsive technical tools and policies for integrated natural resource management, ensuring that women's knowledge, priorities, and leadership are central to decision-making processes. By integrating gender considerations into all policies, tools, and institutional frameworks, the project will enhance women's economic empowerment, leadership, and decision-making power in natural resource governance.

Institutional capacity and regional public goods: A core benefit of TALSIG is the strengthening of institutional capacity at regional, national, and local levels. The project will enhance the capabilities of key institutions including the Pan-African Agency for the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW), national GGW agencies, Regional Economic Communities (RECs), civil society organizations, and local community institutions. Through Component 4, TALSIG will establish a harmonized Monitoring, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system using advanced tools like GEO-LDN (satellite-based land degradation monitoring) integrated with the UNCCD PRAIS reporting system, and a regional knowledge management platform to facilitate systematic knowledge exchange. The project will facilitate regular cross-border collaboration and peer-to-peer learning through annual regional workshops bringing together child project teams, thematic technical exchanges on specific topics (e.g., NTFP value chains, drought-smart agriculture, gender-responsive governance), study tours and field visits to successful implementation sites, online communities of practice and webinars, and joint pilot initiatives addressing transboundary challenges. These regional public goods will create a self-sustaining ecosystem of collaboration, ensuring that the benefits of the project endure long after its completion.

Measuring socioeconomic and resilience benefits with LSMS: To ensure a robust, quantitative assessment of the project's socioeconomic impacts across the 9 participating countries, the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project will leverage the World Bank's Living Standards Measurement Study (LSMS). The LSMS is a globally recognized household survey program that provides a standardized, yet adaptable, methodology for collecting high-quality, policy-relevant data on multiple dimensions of well-being[8][50]. Initiated in 1980, the LSMS has continuously evolved to contribute to methodological innovation and stay at the forefront of new data collection technologies, with the overarching goal of fostering the development and facilitating the adoption of new methods and standards in household data collection for evidence-based policymaking[9][51].

The LSMS is the most appropriate tool for this regional project because it is designed for cross-country comparability and is already operational in 5 of the 9 TALSIG countries (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Niger, and Nigeria) through its

LSMS-ISA (Integrated Surveys on Agriculture) program[10][52]. The LSMS-ISA partners with national statistical offices to implement nationally representative, multi-topic household surveys with a panel survey design that allows tracking of changes over time[11][53]. By promoting the adoption of LSMS-harmonized survey modules in the remaining TALSIG countries (Chad, The Gambia, Mauritania, and Senegal), the project will establish a unified framework for measuring key socioeconomic indicators, including income, consumption, employment, food security, agricultural productivity, health, education, and access to services. This will enable the project to track progress against its targets in a consistent manner, compare outcomes across countries, and provide a robust evidence base for adaptive management and policy development at both national and regional levels. The LSMS methodology's focus on capacity building with national statistical offices also aligns with TALSIG's institutional strengthening objectives, ensuring that data collection systems are sustainable and nationally owned.

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[11] Ibid: World Bank. (2023, November 14).

Institutional Arrangement and Coordination with Ongoing Initiatives and Project.

Please describe the Institutional Arrangements for the execution of this child project, including framework and mechanisms for coordination, governance, financial management and procurement. This should include consideration for linking with other relevant initiatives at country-level (if a country child project) or regional/global level (for coordination platform child project). If possible, please summarize the flow of funds (diagram), accountabilities for project management and financial reporting (organogram), including audit, and staffing plans. (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The Great Green Wall Program comprises 10 projects, including nine country projects and one regional coordination project. The GEF 8 GGW Regional Coordination will be the window bringing together the projects in one programme. The country projects are autonomous, and it is the regional project that will link them together, catalyse processes, provide demand driven technical, policy and political support where it can have added value and report on overall impact of the GGW Program, manage, integrate, and showcase lessons learnt and knowledge from the project to support regional decision-making processes and to strengthen regional information systems. Institutional arrangement has been discussed and validated by partner countries. It displays an efficient articulation between 5 bodies, linked by mechanisms of reporting, guidance & support, and flow of funds (see Figure 4)

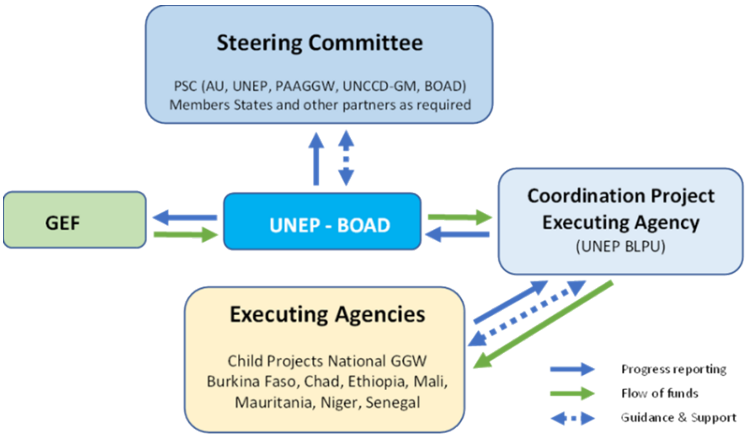

Figure 1. Institutional arrangements for the TALSIG project.

BLP Unit Executing Agency:

- Leads implementation via PMU; ensures coordination and reporting.

UNEP Implementing Agency:

- Oversees GEF project delivery; coordinates all Child Projects.

GGW Steering Committee Regional Oversight:

- Guides overall regional programme;

National Coalition Coordination Platform:

- Aligns national stakeholders and GGW objectives.

PSC Strategic Oversight:

- Provides high-level guidance and ensures cross-sector alignment.

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this child project?

Yes No

Implementation and Execution Arrangements

UNEP in this project will play both the Implementing Agency for the Project and as the Executing Agency for the Regional Coordination Child Project. The dual role will be executed within GEF rules and to maintain a firewall between the IA and EA to be performed by different Units of the organization. UNEP will be the Lead Implementing Agency of the initiative. UNEP's Ecosystems Division will execute the coordination child project. Country Child Projects will be executed each by the designated National Executing Agency and implemented (A) by West Africa Development Bank for the Mali and Burkina Faso projects, UNEP Adaptation Unit for Mauritania and UNEP Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit for Chad, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal Childs projects.

The UNEP's comparative advantage in the Great Green Wall initiative (GGWI) lies in its expertise in environmental assessment (e.g. Baseline assessment in 10 GGW countries which allow establishment of credible baseline which led to the GEF8 GGW programme), policy formulation, and sustainable development, particularly in the context of land restoration (UN Decade Flagship) and climate change mitigation in the Sahel region. UNEP's strengths include its ability to mobilize international support (GEF resources during 4 successive cycles), develop innovative financing mechanisms, and foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

UNEP's key contributions to the implementation of this regional; coordination project may rely on the following 4 elements:

1. **Expertise in Environmental Assessment and Monitoring**: UNEP utilizes frameworks like the Inclusive Wealth Index (IWI) to assess the economic benefits of land restoration, providing a comprehensive evaluation of the initiative's impact. The IWI framework helps quantify the value of natural capital, produced capital, and human capital, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the project's overall contribution to sustainable development. This expertise enables UNEP to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that the GGW initiative is effectively contributing to its goals.
2. **Policy Formulation and Advocacy**: UNEP plays a crucial role in shaping the policy landscape for the GGW initiative, advocating for sustainable land management practices and promoting integrated approaches to natural resource management. UNEP works with governments and other stakeholders to develop and implement policies that support the initiative's goals, ensuring that the initiative is aligned with national and regional development priorities. UNEP also facilitates knowledge sharing and capacity building, empowering local communities and national agencies to effectively implement and manage the GGW initiative.
3. **Mobilizing International Support and Financing**: UNEP leverages its global network and reputation to mobilize financial and technical support for the GGW initiative from international donors and development partners. The organization plays a key role in coordinating efforts among

various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and the private sector, ensuring a coordinated and effective approach. UNEP's involvement helps attract resources and expertise that are crucial for scaling up the initiative and achieving its ambitious goals. The UNEP decision to place a staff in the Pan-African Agency of the GGW has not only contributed to promote the initiative among stakeholders but also has help to build trust with some partners who were reluctant in engaging with Agency in a meaningful partnership. Currently, UNEP sems to gain the confidence of the African Union Commission in reshaping the partnership with the GGW countries and Agencies and this position will help reaching a continental consensus on the role of each entity in moving the GGW Agenda.

4. **Promoting Integrated Approaches and System Transformation**: UNEP emphasizes the need for integrated approaches to land restoration, recognizing that the GGW initiative is not just about tree planting but also about transforming livelihoods and landscapes. UNEP promote the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, community-based natural resource management, and other approaches that enhance the resilience of local communities and ecosystems. By fostering a holistic approach, UNEP ensures that the GGW initiative addresses the root causes of land degradation and contributes to long-term sustainability.

In summary, UNEP's comparative advantage in the Great Green Wall initiative lies in its ability to combine scientific expertise, policy leadership, and international collaboration to promote sustainable land restoration, climate change mitigation, and socio-economic development in the Sahel region.

In the context of GEF 8 Great Green Wall Regional Coordination Project, UNEP as the IA and EA of the project will ensure the value for money of the GEF investment by : (i) getting the right quality, quantity, and timely of goods and services: Ensuring the resources meet the specific needs; (ii) achieving the best possible outcomes: Maximizing the benefits gained from the resources used.; (iii) considering the entire lifecycle costs: Taking into account not just the initial purchase price but also the ongoing operational and maintenance costs; and (iv) making informed decisions: Evaluating the costs and benefits, assessing risks, and considering non-price attributes.

As the Lead Agency, UNEP will be responsible for:

- Coordinating progress between Child Projects to ensure project results are achieved;
- Convening workshops and meetings to ensure all partners and the countries understand, confirm and coordinate to achieve overall purposes of the program;
- Convening regional, and global high-level meetings;
- Initiating the annual report with the Country Child Projects;
- Compiling an annual report with contributions from all child project partners and submit to the GEF Secretariat;
- Conducting the mid-term and final evaluations and;
- Convening and chairs the Project Steering Committee;
- Seeking synergies with external institutions and partners.
- Ensure close collaboration with Panafrican Agency of the GGW, the African Union and other key partners

Implementation Roles and Responsibilities of the Regional Coordination

The GEF Implementing Agency represented by the GEF BD/LD Unit of Ecosystems Division will assume the overall responsibility of project supervision. The GEF BD LD unit (IA) will perform the two main tasks, Programmation and Administration:

Programmatic Tasks

- Project oversight
- Ensures the project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner
- Review and clear manuscripts prepared by executing partners before publication
- Provide strategic and technical directions to the project
- Oversee achievement of project outcomes and objectives
- Maximizes regional impact with strategic partnerships
- Maintain technical and strategic relationship with the PMU

Administrative and Financial Management Tasks

- Ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered
- Provide cash advances to the lead executing agency
- Have a representative in the project governance
- Perform the liaison function with the GEF Secretariat on the project
- Rate progress in meeting project objectives, project implementation progress and risk
- Report to the GEF Secretariat
- Undertake an independent midterm and terminal evaluation
- Clearance of procurement and service contracts which are not included in the approved procurement plan

In fact, the Regional Coordination, in cooperation with National partners, intervenes in a vast series of activities, deliverables and strategic operations:

Executing Agency (EA)

The **Executing Agency (EA)** is the Biodiversity, People and Landscapes Unit of Ecosystems Division. The day-to-day management of the project will be carried out by a Project Management Unit (PMU) based in Nouakchott, Islamic Republic of Mauritania. The PMU will be led by the Regional Great Green Wall Programme Coordinator (P4) with the Project Management Unit and will include in addition:

- A consultant at **P2** staff based in Nouakchott, Mauritania, who will support the Regional Coordination, and which task mainly will focus on Knowledge Management and Communication.
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Programmatic tasks of the EA through the PMU staff:

- Management of output deliverables.
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- Management and administration of the knowledge management.
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- **National Agencies/Coordinations/Focal Points** of the GGWI: The Great Green Wall General Directors or Focal Points in each country will play the role of Project Focal Point, who will serve as the liaison persons between the Panafrican Agency of The Great Green Wall and the project with regard to recruitment of national consultants, stakeholders consultations and between the project technical partners and relevant national institutions with regards to technical activities in the respective pilot countries. The National GGWI structures will facilitate as necessary the project execution with the partners and will ensure that the project fits into national development and reform agendas.
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- **Partners**: UNCCD / Global Mechanism initiatives through the Accelerator: The Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Global Mechanism have been engaged in an evaluation process of the Great Green Wall since the creation of the initiative. This assessment, help the GGW and Panafrican Agency of the GGW countries to measure progress, learn lessons and better prepare for the next cycle (2021-2025) of the Great Wall implementation strategy. In addition, the Secretariat through the Global Mechanism provides technical support to countries in the preparation of plans to define targets for neutrality in land degradation. UNEP and Accelerator have work jointly to establish a Stakeholder GGW Platform with each country having a dedicated page. Also, the 2 institutions have jointly support

establishment of national GGW coalition at national level. The partnership with Accelerator with the framework of current project will focus on: (i) supporting improvement of stakeholders platform and building countries capacity to make the platform as a real monitoring and reporting tool; (ii) support to National Coalitions; and (iii) Jointly working and contributing to the Knowledge Management and communication activities in support of the GGW initiative.

- **Other partners** (FAO-SURAGAWA, CIFOR-IRAF K4GGWA): These Partners are executing some regional projects linked to their comparative advantage. FAO is executing a multi-million program with GCF Financing. Though this program does not concern all the countries, the regional approach will allow synergy and complementarity and will allow the resources matching to achieve the GGW Initiative. The K4GGWA, executed by CIFOR-ICRAF focus mainly on knowledge Management and discussion have already been held to consider join programing to support KM activities in the GGW area. During the development of the Regional Coordination Project periodic consultations with all the key players including agencies implementing/executing GEF and GCF projects particularly IFAD, UNCCD Accelerator, FAO and African Union Commission, in order to agree on who should focus on what, taking into account comparative advantage of respective partners. For example, it is already discussed that UNEP will coordinate with IFAD through the UNEP Coordination Project to ensure that its Great Green Wall Climate Change Adaptation Regional Support Project (GEF ID 11000) outputs will be mainstreamed. The IFAD-GEF project's objective is to improve access to best practices, foster innovation and digital transformation and facilitate cross-learning across Great Green Wall countries for enhanced sustainability and resilience to climate change impacts; through Knowledge Management Platform; Innovation and Digital Transformation. The interconnected GGW Platform initiated by the UNCCD Accelerator which will be taken over by the Panafrican Agency of the GGW, will be the platform to support the mainstreaming of the IFAD project outputs including implementation of the adaptation actions in various sectors at national level through the capacity building of the multisector GGW National Coalition/National Alliance. The Africa Regional Cluster of WOCAT (AfriOCAT), established with AUDA-NEPAD, serves as WOCAT's representative, promoting South-South learning and integrating SLM/Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) into regional agendas, will be the project partner as the Africa arm of WOCAT. The project will engage with AfriOCAT to move the LDN and land restauration agenda in the GGW countries through establishing harmonized approach and identification of the most promising good practices. The partnership with AfriOCAT will be in the brother collaboration with Africa Union Commission with which the project has been collaborating throughout the PPG phase including during the validation workshop in Lome Togo in May 2025.
- **NGOs** – (ASWISSAID, Tree Aid, IPA Niger, Youths Network, One Billion Tree, etc.) – Even though, the project is not planned to have operations on field, it is expected that ad 'hoc support to selected NGO will contribute the advocacy and policy development particularly at local level, in favour of the GGW implementation. For example, Tree Aid is an international NGO which participates in the implementation of 17 land restoration and reforestation projects in the Sahel countries, including 4 GGW states: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali and Niger. To date, Tree Aid's interventions represent more than 1.2 million trees planted and more than 29,580 hectares of restored land and forest. More than 1.6 million vulnerable people in rural areas, including women and children, have directly benefited from Tree Aid activities thanks to improved legislation, access to and management of forests, resilience to change and income from income-generating activities. In addition, around 126,000 farmers have been trained in SLM techniques, including ANR and GRN, and in best harvesting practices of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). The Initiative for Trees (IPA) is an eco-citizen organization founded in 2021 and

firmly established in Niger. Active across all regions of the country, it currently mobilizes over 2,000 volunteers around a clear vision: to make trees a lever for climate resilience, social justice, and ecological sovereignty. IPA focuses its actions on five strategic intervention areas: ecosystem restoration, sustainable food security, disaster risk reduction, youth engagement, and multi-stakeholder advocacy.

Governance Structure of the Programme

The GGW Program will be supported by several-level governance structures

The Regional GGW Steering Committee: A regional GGW Steering Committee has been established by the African Union Commission and discussion are ongoing on reviewing the committee to make it more inclusive with specific mandate. The project makes use of that committee to ensure large range stakeholders' engagement in the project intervention. However, a core group of institutions will be identified to serve as specific Steering committee of the project. The core group will be representative of all stakeholders and will be closely working with African Union and other partners. The core group will be (co-)chaired by UNEP and Panafrican Agency of the GGW secretariat, with participation of all the countries National Agencies Head, the Panafrican Agency and will include African Union Commission Representative and representatives of key Agencies and programs working on the GGWI as observers. The GEF Secretariat will be represented at the Programme Steering Committee by the Africa Regional Coordinator. Representatives of the private sector as well as key regional civil society, women and youth networks will participate as observers in the PSC. The secretariat of the PSC will be ensured by UNEP, as the implementing agency of the program. The PSC will comprise no more than 30 people. The GEF Implementing Agencies of each of the eight country projects (BOAD, UNEP Adaptation and UNEP BDLD) will also be represented in the PSC. Any other key stakeholders will also be invited as observers. The PSC will be formed no later than six months after the Regional Child Project is CEO Endorsed.

The PSC serves as an advisory mechanism to improve coordination and maximize synergies among country child projects, and between country child projects and other donors' initiatives, increase knowledge and awareness of the GGW program and ensure the successful implementation of the program. It is a coordination body and a monitoring platform during the implementation phase of the Program to support and advance the partnerships established under the different technical components of the regional child project (for example, partnerships with African Union Commission, UNCCD Accelerator, African Development Bank (AfDB), the private sector, donors, research institutes, international NGOs, and knowledge networks).

Overall, the PSC will provide strategic guidance to the PMU (Programme Management Unit) and to the programme execution agencies, this by:

- Reviewing and endorsing the technical and financial progress reports, paying attention to and advising on the alignment of implementation and deliverables with programme objectives, requirements and timeline.
- Adopting work plans and budgets of the regional project.
- Formulating recommendations to guide programme delivery by the PMU and executing agencies.
- Making recommendations to strengthen the integration of programme results and lessons as contribution to national and sub-regional policies and strategies.

- Providing strategic orientations and guidance to the PMU and executing agencies as to the key policies and strategies against which to map and report the programme's contributions and impacts.
- Examining and formulating observations on the progress and the extent of implementation of the recommendations formulated by the PSC during previous meetings.

The Program SC will be co-chaired by Panafrican Agency of the GGW and UNEP to ensure ownership by countries. The Program PSC members will meet face-to-face once a year, or more frequently virtually upon request of one of its members, or of one of the national child projects' Project Steering Committees (Project SCs) or of the Program Management Unit. The nine national GGW child projects will be autonomous and each have its own PSC which will include the Regional Project Coordinator.

Programme Coordination Mechanism*:* Since 2021, UNEP through a dedicated programme coordinator, had engaged wide consultations with countries, agencies, CSO, indigenous people, parliamentarians, research institutions and other stakeholders. These consultations have led to the design of the programme and were further strengthen with support and guidance from GEF secretariat in order to ensure more synergy and complementarity but also to secure a real engagement of stakeholders which led during the PPG to an effective stakeholder's engagement plan. Engagement between agencies and commitment for continuous collaboration to be materialized by a dedicated coordination and collaboration platform which is agreed upon during the PPG and which is based on the African Union Commission mechanism which resulted from different stakeholders' consultations in Addis from 13 to 15 May 2025, in Lomé from 28 to 30th May 2025 during the Program Validation Consultation meeting. These consultations will continue under the leadership of African Union Commission on Environment and support from UNEP, UNCCD, and other partners till such a time a regional platform of coordination is adopted by the AU decision bodies.

Based on consultations during the PPG, evidence and lessons from GGW Phase I, a multi-tiered coordination mechanism is proposed to bridge institutional silos, ensure mutual accountability, and enable adaptive programming. There is a current process led by African Union and which involves all partners. The ultimate coordination mechanism will there be the one that will come up from this process and endorse by African Union Statutory bodies. In mean time, the coordination mechanism is suggested as follow:

At the National Level:

At the national level, historically, in each of the partner countries, there have been common features (shortcomings) that are challenges and barriers to the implementation of projects. If these challenges, rooted in habits, are slow to resolve themselves, they are no longer obstacles when the GGW's regional cooperation is fully implemented. Indeed, identified upstream, right from the conceptual phase, they have produced many strategic approaches and opportunities for the implementation of a harmonised and coherent approach to the implementation of the GGW Regional Project .

The GGW National Steering Committees (NSCs) will serve as the primary coordination hub. These committees, chaired by Ministries of Environment or Agriculture depending on the country's institutional setting, will include technical ministries, civil society, and local government representatives. Their mandate will extend beyond consultation to include joint workplan validation, results tracking, and issue resolution, such as:

- GGW National Steering Committees (NSCs): Chaired by Environment/Agriculture Ministries, with representation from Agriculture, Water, Gender, Finance ministries, civil society and private sector.

- Child Project Coordination Units: To work in close liaison with NSCs for aligned workplans, MEL systems, and visibility.
- GEF-8 Child Projects hosted by the National GGW Agencies to support formalize coordination roles.

Project Coordination Units for each GEF-8 child project will report to and liaise with these NSCs. In countries such as Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Mali, Chad and Burkina Faso, where GGW structures are already functional, this model will build on existing frameworks including the National Coalitions. In others, such as Mauritania or Djibouti, the GEF 8 project will support the creation or formalization of these platforms, operating within a National Focal Mechanisms (see Table 6).

Table 6. National GGW local mechanisms.

Countries	GGW Focal Mechanism	Status
Senegal	National multi-actor GGW platform	Active, Decree-backed
Niger	GGW Coalition with technical and donor links	Active, evolving
Burkina Faso	Focal unit integrated with national observatory	Partially functional
Ethiopia	Coordination through CSA framework	Functioning
Djibouti	Intermittent coordination unit	Weak / Inactive
Gambia	No formalized focal body	Emerging initiative
National GGW Units – Varying Maturity The maturity of institutionalization of national GGW coordination bodies differs substantially. **Opportunity**: Where units are weak or informal, legal and operational mandates need to be clarified and strengthened with dedicated staffing.		

Linkage with UNCT: Developed in consultation with the Governments and national partners including the United Nations System (UNS) and the civil society, United Nations Development Framework Documents of respective GGW countries represent UN's contribution to the national development strategies. The Theory of Change of the program is based on the assumption that the multidimensional poverty reduction for vulnerable populations, gender inequalities, and economic disparities including youth and women, and their resilience to the adverse effects of climate change, coupled with good democratic, judicial and security governance in the respect of human rights, will be ensured through the provision of decent and sustainable economic and employment opportunities, a better prevention of violent extremism, a sustainable management of natural resources and an improved access to renewable energies, the availability of quality public and judicial services in a context of demographic control, favorable political, security and social stability and availability of necessary resources.

At the Regional Level:

The project has been identified to contribute to the African Union new GGW Strategy. The project contribution will be mainly on Axis 1: Enhancing leadership, governance and political commitment; Axis 2: Co-design and deliver pathways toward transformative restauration, resilience and development and Axis 3: Enhancing the mean of implementation for resilient landscape restauration ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) plays a crucial role in this initiative, particularly in its member states, by promoting sustainable resource management, fostering regional cooperation, and supporting the implementation of the GGW, The second phase of SRAP/CD (SRAP2) is formulated in conjunction with the adoption of the ten-year (2008-2018) Strategic Programme of the UNCCD. It responds to the twin concerns of the now 17

countries of ECOWAS and CILSS for improving the implementation of the UNCCD in the sub-region The ECOWAS Environmental Policy aims at reversing the state of natural resources degradation, improving environmental and livelihood quality, conserving biological diversity for ensuring a productive and improved ecosystem health, and increasing the well-being of people. Its strategic objectives, from which a coherent set of activities were developed to provide sustainable solutions to major environmental problems of the region.

The PAGGW will convene a taskforce that aggregates reporting, tracks regional milestones, and provides a platform for exchange. Technical partners such as OSS and CILSS will support harmonization of MEL tools and geospatial monitoring systems. UNDP, UNEP, and FAO will continue their role as technical back stoppers and capacity builders.

- PAGGW Regional Taskforce: Facilitates alignment of national activities with AU strategies and coordinates technical backstopping.
- Technical Partners (e.g., FAO, UNDP, UNEP, OSS): Provide M&E frameworks, geospatial services, and thematic expertise.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- UN Agencies (FAO, UNDP, UNEP): Implementation support, safeguards compliance, knowledge transfer.
- OSS/CILSS: Data harmonization, early warning, MRV platforms.
- National Focal Ministries: Execution and coordination oversight.
- NGOs and CSOs: Local implementation and social mobilization.
- Finance Institutions (AfDB, BOAD, WB): Project co-financing, infrastructure, policy leverage.

Crucially, coordination must move beyond formal structures to enable functional alignment. For instance, the involvement of local NGOs (e.g., Tree Aid, COFERSA, ReSaD) as intermediaries between national platforms and community actors will ensure that engagement is not limited to capital-level stakeholders.

At the Local Level: The local approach will build on the existing coordination and frameworks currently operating in the participating countries and which clearly define role of local communities not only as beneficiaries but as active participants in the implementation of the GGW initiatives in each participating country. The National Coalition will play an important role in coordination of the project activities which will impact the countries. The objective is to inform the GEF-8 GGW Implementation Plan with a structured and realistic framework for coordination, based on concrete country experiences, thematic clustering, and functional partnerships. The proposed strategies are designed to enable coherence, facilitate resource optimization, and support inclusive governance in the Sahel and Horn of Africa.

Will the GEF Agency play an execution role on this child project? Yes

If so, please describe that role here and the justification.

Implementation and Execution Arrangements

UNEP in this project will play both the Implementing Agency for the Project and as the Executing Agency for the Regional Coordination Child Project. The dual role will be executed within GEF rules and to maintain a firewall between the IA and EA to be performed by different Units of the organization. UNEP will be the Lead Implementing Agency of the initiative. UNEP's Ecosystems Division will execute the coordination child project. Country Child Projects will be executed each by the designated National Executing Agency and implemented (A) by West Africa Development Bank for the Mali and Burkina Faso projects, UNEP Adaptation Unit for Mauritania and UNEP Biodiversity and Land Degradation Unit for Chad, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal Childs projects.

The UNEP's comparative advantage in the Great Green Wall initiative (GGWI) lies in its expertise in environmental assessment (e.g. Baseline assessment in 10 GGW countries which allow establishment of credible baseline which led to the GEF8 GGW programme), policy formulation, and sustainable development, particularly in the context of land restoration (UN Decade Flagship) and climate change mitigation in the Sahel region. UNEP's strengths include its ability to mobilize international support (GEF resources during 4 successive cycles), develop innovative financing mechanisms, and foster collaboration among diverse stakeholders.

UNEP's key contributions to the implementation of this regional; coordination project may rely on the following 4 elements:

1. **Expertise in Environmental Assessment and Monitoring**: UNEP utilizes frameworks like the Inclusive Wealth Index (IWI) to assess the economic benefits of land restoration, providing a comprehensive evaluation of the initiative's impact. The IWI framework helps quantify the value of natural capital, produced capital, and human capital, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of the project's overall contribution to sustainable development. This expertise enables UNEP to track progress, identify areas for improvement, and ensure that the GGW initiative is effectively contributing to its goals.
2. **Policy Formulation and Advocacy**: UNEP plays a crucial role in shaping the policy landscape for the GGW initiative, advocating for sustainable land management practices and promoting integrated approaches to natural resource management. UNEP works with governments and other stakeholders to develop and implement policies that support the initiative's goals, ensuring that the initiative is aligned with national and regional development priorities. UNEP also facilitates knowledge sharing and capacity building, empowering local communities and national agencies to effectively implement and manage the GGW initiative.
3. **Mobilizing International Support and Financing**: UNEP leverages its global network and reputation to mobilize financial and technical support for the GGW initiative from international donors and development partners. The organization plays a key role in coordinating efforts among various stakeholders, including governments, NGOs, and the private sector, ensuring a coordinated and effective approach. UNEP's involvement helps attract resources and expertise that are crucial for scaling up the initiative and achieving its ambitious goals. The UNEP decision to place a staff in the Pan-African Agency of the GGW has not only contributed to promote the initiative among stakeholders but also has help to build trust with some partners who were reluctant in engaging with Agency in a meaningful partnership. Currently, UNEP sems to gain the confidence of the African Union Commission in reshaping the partnership with the GGW countries and Agencies and this position will help reaching a continental consensus on the role of each entity in moving the GGW Agenda.

4. **Promoting Integrated Approaches and System Transformation**: UNEP emphasizes the need for integrated approaches to land restoration, recognizing that the GGW initiative is not just about tree planting but also about transforming livelihoods and landscapes. UNEP promote the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices, community-based natural resource management, and other approaches that enhance the resilience of local communities and ecosystems. By fostering a holistic approach, UNEP ensures that the GGW initiative addresses the root causes of land degradation and contributes to long-term sustainability.

In summary, UNEP's comparative advantage in the Great Green Wall initiative lies in its ability to combine scientific expertise, policy leadership, and international collaboration to promote sustainable land restoration, climate change mitigation, and socio-economic development in the Sahel region.

In the context of GEF 8 Great Green Wall Regional Coordination Project, UNEP as the IA and EA of the project will ensure the value for money of the GEF investment by : (i) getting the right quality, quantity, and timely of goods and services: Ensuring the resources meet the specific needs; (ii) achieving the best possible outcomes: Maximizing the benefits gained from the resources used.; (iii) considering the entire lifecycle costs: Taking into account not just the initial purchase price but also the ongoing operational and maintenance costs; and (iv) making informed decisions: Evaluating the costs and benefits, assessing risks, and considering non-price attributes.

As the Lead Agency, UNEP will be responsible for:

- Coordinating progress between Child Projects to ensure project results are achieved;
- Convening workshops and meetings to ensure all partners and the countries understand, confirm and coordinate to achieve overall purposes of the program;
- Convening regional, and global high-level meetings;
- Initiating the annual report with the Country Child Projects;
- Compiling an annual report with contributions from all child project partners and submit to the GEF Secretariat;
- Conducting the mid-term and final evaluations and;
- Convening and chairs the Project Steering Committee;
- Seeking synergies with external institutions and partners.
- Ensure close collaboration with Panafrican Agency of the GGW, the African Union and other key partners

Implementation Roles and Responsibilities of the Regional Coordination

The GEF Implementing Agency represented by the GEF BD/LD Unit of Ecosystems Division will assume the overall responsibility of project supervision. The GEF BD LD unit (IA) will perform the two main tasks, Programmation and Administration:

Programmatic Tasks

- Project oversight
- Ensures the project meets its objectives and achieves expected outcomes in an efficient and effective manner

- Review and clear manuscripts prepared by executing partners before publication
- Provide strategic and technical directions to the project
- Oversee achievement of project outcomes and objectives
- Maximizes regional impact with strategic partnerships
- Maintain technical and strategic relationship with the PMU

Administrative and Financial Management Tasks

- Ensure that GEF policies and criteria are adhered
- Provide cash advances to the lead executing agency
- Have a representative in the project governance
- Perform the liaison function with the GEF Secretariat on the project
- Rate progress in meeting project objectives, project implementation progress and risk
- Report to the GEF Secretariat
- Undertake an independent midterm and terminal evaluation
- Clearance of procurement and service contracts which are not included in the approved procurement plan

In fact, the Regional Coordination, in cooperation with National partners, intervenes in a vast series of activities, deliverables and strategic operations:

Executing Agency (EA)

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- **National Agencies/Coordinations/Focal Points** of the GGWI: The Great Green Wall General Directors or Focal Points in each country will play the role of Project Focal Point, who will serve as the liaison persons between the Panafrican Agency of The Great Green Wall and the project with regard to recruitment of national consultants, stakeholders consultations and between the project technical partners and relevant national institutions with regards to technical activities in the respective pilot countries. The National GGWI structures will facilitate as necessary the project execution with the partners and will ensure that the project fits into national development and reform agendas.
- **Private Sector**: FAGRIB, GUD Mata – to lead on value chains (Carbon MARKETS, SELECTED value chains to be promoted and linked to international market, capacity building on value chains promotion), SOMIVAP Mali, ADDAX Niger, Grenier du Paysan Burkina Faso, Schindel Emploi Sahel – to lead on local value chain development (eg. GUM ARABIC, Moringa, Pastoral value chains, etc). For example, FAGRIB, works with accredited agency in restoration and value chain projects in Member States; collaborate with accredited agency to work towards De-risking the investment; and Development of a buy-back system with value chains actors. The Green United Development Limited GUD Mata will be a partner in support the countries on Carbon Market Infrastructure (Equitable carbon programs and Article 6.2 systems), Capacity Building (Specialized carbon market workshops, training and digital infrastructure), Value-Chain Development (Global agricultural offtake partnerships and carbon-credit distribution channels to link land restoration with secure market opportunities), and Grassroots Engagement (Support for youth-driven climate action and rural enterprise under the One Billion Trees for Africa vocational training and mentoring programs).
- **Partners**: UNCCD / Global Mechanism initiatives through the Accelerator: The Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Global Mechanism have been engaged in an evaluation process of the Great Green Wall since the creation of the initiative. This assessment, help the GGW and Panafrican Agency of the GGW countries to measure progress, learn lessons and better prepare for the next cycle (2021-2025) of the Great Wall implementation strategy. In addition, the Secretariat through the Global Mechanism provides technical support to countries in the preparation of plans to define targets for neutrality in land degradation. UNEP and Accelerator have work jointly to establish a Stakeholder GGW Platform with each country having a dedicated page. Also, the 2 institutions have jointly support establishment of national GGW coalition at national level. The partnership with Accelerator with the framework of current project will focus on: (i) supporting improvement of stakeholders platform and building countries capacity to make the platform as a real monitoring and reporting tool; (ii) support to National Coalitions; and (iii) Jointly working and contributing to the Knowledge Management and communication activities in support of the GGW initiative.
- **Other partners** (FAO-SURAGAWA, CIFOR-IRAF K4GGWA): These Partners are executing some regional projects linked to their comparative advantage. FAO is executing a multi-million program with GCF Financing. Though this program does not concern all the countries, the regional approach will allow synergy and complementarity and will allow the resources matching to achieve the GGW Initiative. The K4GGWA, executed by CIFOR-ICRAF focus mainly on knowledge Management and

discussion have already been held to consider join programing to support KM activities in the GGW area. During the development of the Regional Coordination Project periodic consultations with all the key players including agencies implementing/executing GEF and GCF projects particularly IFAD, UNCCD Accelerator, FAO and African Union Commission, in order to agree on who should focus on what, taking into account comparative advantage of respective partners. For example, it is already discussed that UNEP will coordinate with IFAD through the UNEP Coordination Project to ensure that its Great Green Wall Climate Change Adaptation Regional Support Project (GEF ID 11000) outputs will be mainstreamed. The IFAD-GEF project's objective is to improve access to best practices, foster innovation and digital transformation and facilitate cross-learning across Great Green Wall countries for enhanced sustainability and resilience to climate change impacts; through Knowledge Management Platform; Innovation and Digital Transformation. The interconnected GGW Platform initiated by the UNCCD Accelerator which will be taken over by the Panafrican Agency of the GGW, will be the platform to support the mainstreaming of the IFAD project outputs including implementation of the adaptation actions in various sectors at national level through the capacity building of the multisector GGW National Coalition/National Alliance. The Africa Regional Cluster of WOCAT (AfriOCAT), established with AUDA-NEPAD, serves as WOCAT's representative, promoting South-South learning and integrating SLM/Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) into regional agendas, will be the project partner as the Africa arm of WOCAT. The project will engage with AfriOCAT to move the LDN and land restauration agenda in the GGW countries through establishing harmonized approach and identification of the most promising good practices. The partnership with AfriOCAT will be in the brother collaboration with Africa Union Commission with which the project has been collaborating throughout the PPG phase including during the validation workshop in Lome Togo in May 2025.

- **NGOs** – (ASWISSAID, Tree Aid, IPA Niger, Youths Network, One Billion Tree, etc.) – Even though, the project is not planned to have operations on field, it is expected that ad 'hoc support to selected NGO will contribute the advocacy and policy development particularly at local level, in favour of the GGW implementation. For example, Tree Aid is an international NGO which participates in the implementation of 17 land restoration and reforestation projects in the Sahel countries, including 4 GGW states: Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali and Niger. To date, Tree Aid's interventions represent more than 1.2 million trees planted and more than 29,580 hectares of restored land and forest. More than 1.6 million vulnerable people in rural areas, including women and children, have directly benefited from Tree Aid activities thanks to improved legislation, access to and management of forests, resilience to change and income from income-generating activities. In addition, around 126,000 farmers have been trained in SLM techniques, including ANR and GRN, and in best harvesting practices of Non-Timber Forest Products (NTFPs). The Initiative for Trees (IPA) is an eco-citizen organization founded in 2021 and firmly established in Niger. Active across all regions of the country, it currently mobilizes over 2,000 volunteers around a clear vision: to make trees a lever for climate resilience, social justice, and ecological sovereignty. IPA focuses its actions on five strategic intervention areas: ecosystem restoration, sustainable food security, disaster risk reduction, youth engagement, and multi-stakeholder advocacy.

Governance Structure of the Programme

The GGW Program will be supported by several-level governance structures

The Regional GGW Steering Committee: A regional GGW Steering Committee has been established by the African Union Commission and discussion are ongoing on reviewing the committee to make it more

inclusive with specific mandate. The project makes use of that committee to ensure large range stakeholders' engagement in the project intervention. However, a core group of institutions will be identified to serve as specific Steering committee of the project. The core group will be representative of all stakeholders and will be closely working with African Union and other partners. The core group will be (co-)chaired by UNEP and Panafrican Agency of the GGW secretariat, with participation of all the countries National Agencies Head, the Panafrican Agency and will include African Union Commission Representative and representatives of key Agencies and programs working on the GGWI as observers. The GEF Secretariat will be represented at the Programme Steering Committee by the Africa Regional Coordinator. Representatives of the private sector as well as key regional civil society, women and youth networks will participate as observers in the PSC. The secretariat of the PSC will be ensured by UNEP, as the implementing agency of the program. The PSC will comprise no more than 30 people. The GEF Implementing Agencies of each of the eight country projects (BOAD, UNEP Adaptation and UNEP BDLD) will also be represented in the PSC. Any other key stakeholders will also be invited as observers. The PSC will be formed no later than six months after the Regional Child Project is CEO Endorsed.

The PSC serves as an advisory mechanism to improve coordination and maximize synergies among country child projects, and between country child projects and other donors' initiatives, increase knowledge and awareness of the GGW program and ensure the successful implementation of the program. It is a coordination body and a monitoring platform during the implementation phase of the Program to support and advance the partnerships established under the different technical components of the regional child project (for example, partnerships with African Union Commission, UNCCD Accelerator, African Development Bank (AfDB), the private sector, donors, research institutes, international NGOs, and knowledge networks).

Overall, the PSC will provide strategic guidance to the PMU (Programme Management Unit) and to the programme execution agencies, this by:

- Reviewing and endorsing the technical and financial progress reports, paying attention to and advising on the alignment of implementation and deliverables with programme objectives, requirements and timeline.
- Adopting work plans and budgets of the regional project.
- Formulating recommendations to guide programme delivery by the PMU and executing agencies.
- Making recommendations to strengthen the integration of programme results and lessons as contribution to national and sub-regional policies and strategies.
- Providing strategic orientations and guidance to the PMU and executing agencies as to the key policies and strategies against which to map and report the programme's contributions and impacts.
- Examining and formulating observations on the progress and the extent of implementation of the recommendations formulated by the PSC during previous meetings.

The Program SC will be co-chaired by Panafrican Agency of the GGW and UNEP to ensure ownership by countries. The Program PSC members will meet face-to-face once a year, or more frequently virtually upon request of one of its members, or of one of the national child projects' Project Steering Committees (Project

SCs) or of the Program Management Unit. The nine national GGW child projects will be autonomous and each have its own PSC which will include the Regional Project Coordinator.

***Programme Coordination Mechanism**:* Since 2021, UNEP through a dedicated programme coordinator, had engaged wide consultations with countries, agencies, CSO, indigenous people, parliamentarians, research institutions and other stakeholders. These consultations have led to the design of the programme and were further strengthen with support and guidance from GEF secretariat in order to ensure more synergy and complementarity but also to secure a real engagement of stakeholders which led during the PPG to an effective stakeholder's engagement plan. Engagement between agencies and commitment for continuous collaboration to be materialized by a dedicated coordination and collaboration platform which is agreed upon during the PPG and which is based on the African Union Commission mechanism which resulted from different stakeholders' consultations in Addis from 13 to 15 May 2025, in Lomé from 28 to 30th May 2025 during the Program Validation Consultation meeting. These consultations will continue under the leadership of African Union Commission on Environment and support from UNEP, UNCCD, and other partners till such a time a regional platform of coordination is adopted by the AU decision bodies.

Based on consultations during the PPG, evidence and lessons from GGW Phase I, a multi-tiered coordination mechanism is proposed to bridge institutional silos, ensure mutual accountability, and enable adaptive programming. There is a current process led by African Union and which involves all partners. The ultimate coordination mechanism will there be the one that will come up from this process and endorse by African Union Statutory bodies. In mean time, the coordination mechanism is suggested as follow:

At the National Level:

At the national level, historically, in each of the partner countries, there have been common features (shortcomings) that are challenges and barriers to the implementation of projects. If these challenges, rooted in habits, are slow to resolve themselves, they are no longer obstacles when the GGW's regional cooperation is fully implemented. Indeed, identified upstream, right from the conceptual phase, they have produced many strategic approaches and opportunities for the implementation of a harmonised and coherent approach to the implementation of the GGW Regional Project .

The GGW National Steering Committees (NSCs) will serve as the primary coordination hub. These committees, chaired by Ministries of Environment or Agriculture depending on the country's institutional setting, will include technical ministries, civil society, and local government representatives. Their mandate will extend beyond consultation to include joint workplan validation, results tracking, and issue resolution, such as:

- GGW National Steering Committees (NSCs): Chaired by Environment/Agriculture Ministries, with representation from Agriculture, Water, Gender, Finance ministries, civil society and private sector.
- Child Project Coordination Units: To work in close liaison with NSCs for aligned workplans, MEL systems, and visibility.
- GEF-8 Child Projects hosted by the National GGW Agencies to support formalize coordination roles.

Project Coordination Units for each GEF-8 child project will report to and liaise with these NSCs. In countries such as Nigeria, Niger, Senegal, Mali, Chad and Burkina Faso, where GGW structures are already functional, this model will build on existing frameworks including the National Coalitions. In others, such as Mauritania or Djibouti, the GEF 8 project will support the creation or formalization of these platforms, operating within a National Focal Mechanisms (see Table 6).

Table 6. National GGW local mechanisms.

Countries	GGW Focal Mechanism	Status
Senegal	National multi-actor GGW platform	Active, Decree-backed
Niger	GGW Coalition with technical and donor links	Active, evolving
Burkina Faso	Focal unit integrated with national observatory	Partially functional
Ethiopia	Coordination through CSA framework	Functioning
Djibouti	Intermittent coordination unit	Weak / Inactive
Gambia	No formalized focal body	Emerging initiative
National GGW Units – Varying Maturity The maturity of institutionalization of national GGW coordination bodies differs substantially. **Opportunity**: Where units are weak or informal, legal and operational mandates need to be clarified and strengthened with dedicated staffing.		

Linkage with UNCT: Developed in consultation with the Governments and national partners including the United Nations System (UNS) and the civil society, United Nations Development Framework Documents of respective GGW countries represent UN's contribution to the national development strategies. The Theory of Change of the program is based on the assumption that the multidimensional poverty reduction for vulnerable populations, gender inequalities, and economic disparities including youth and women, and their resilience to the adverse effects of climate change, coupled with good democratic, judicial and security governance in the respect of human rights, will be ensured through the provision of decent and sustainable economic and employment opportunities, a better prevention of violent extremism, a sustainable management of natural resources and an improved access to renewable energies, the availability of quality public and judicial services in a context of demographic control, favorable political, security and social stability and availability of necessary resources.

At the Regional Level:

The project has been identified to contribute to the African Union new GGW Strategy. The project contribution will be mainly on Axis 1: Enhancing leadership, governance and political commitment; Axis 2: Co-design and deliver pathways toward transformative restauration, resilience and development and Axis 3: Enhancing the mean of implementation for resilient landscape restauration ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) plays a crucial role in this initiative, particularly in its member states, by promoting sustainable resource management, fostering regional cooperation, and supporting the implementation of the GGW, The second phase of SRAP/CD (SRAP2) is formulated in conjunction with the adoption of the ten-year (2008-2018) Strategic Programme of the UNCCD. It responds to the twin concerns of the now 17 countries of ECOWAS and CILSS for improving the implementation of the UNCCD in the sub-region The ECOWAS Environmental Policy aims at reversing the state of natural resources degradation, improving environmental and livelihood quality, conserving biological diversity for ensuring a productive and improved ecosystem health, and increasing the well-being of people. Its strategic objectives, from which a coherent set of activities were developed to provide sustainable solutions to major environmental problems of the region.

The PAGGW will convene a taskforce that aggregates reporting, tracks regional milestones, and provides a platform for exchange. Technical partners such as OSS and CILSS will support harmonization of MEL tools and geospatial monitoring systems. UNDP, UNEP, and FAO will continue their role as technical back stoppers and capacity builders.

- PAGGW Regional Taskforce: Facilitates alignment of national activities with AU strategies and coordinates technical backstopping.
- Technical Partners (e.g., FAO, UNDP, UNEP, OSS): Provide M&E frameworks, geospatial services, and thematic expertise.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- UN Agencies (FAO, UNDP, UNEP): Implementation support, safeguards compliance, knowledge transfer.
- OSS/CILSS: Data harmonization, early warning, MRV platforms.
- National Focal Ministries: Execution and coordination oversight.
- NGOs and CSOs: Local implementation and social mobilization.
- Finance Institutions (AfDB, BOAD, WB): Project co-financing, infrastructure, policy leverage.

Crucially, coordination must move beyond formal structures to enable functional alignment. For instance, the involvement of local NGOs (e.g., Tree Aid, COFERSA, ReSaD) as intermediaries between national platforms and community actors will ensure that engagement is not limited to capital-level stakeholders.

At the Local Level: The local approach will build on the existing coordination and frameworks currently operating in the participating countries and which clearly define role of local communities not only as beneficiaries but as active participants in the implementation of the GGW initiatives in each participating country. The National Coalition will play an important role in coordination of the project activities which will impact the countries. The objective is to inform the GEF-8 GGW Implementation Plan with a structured and realistic framework for coordination, based on concrete country experiences, thematic clustering, and functional partnerships. The proposed strategies are designed to enable coherence, facilitate resource optimization, and support inclusive governance in the Sahel and Horn of Africa.

Also, please add a short explanation to describe cooperation with ongoing initiatives and projects, including potential for co-location and/or sharing of expertise/staffing (max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

Baseline projects and linkages to the TALSIG

The TALSIG Regional Coordination Project builds upon a rich foundation of baseline projects and programs that have been implemented across the Sahel over the past two decades. These baseline initiatives provide critical lessons that inform TALSIG's design and implementation strategy. This section first describes the key baseline projects, then synthesizes the lessons learned and demonstrates how TALSIG systematically incorporates these lessons to avoid past pitfalls and scale up proven approaches.

Regional baseline projects

The most significant regional baseline is the Sahel and West Africa Program (SAWAP), implemented by the World Bank from 2012-2019 with $100 million in GEF funding and $1.2 billion in IDA resources across 12 countries, including 8 of the 9 TALSIG countries[1][54]. SAWAP achieved notable results: 1.6 million hectares under improved sustainable land management and 19.4 million direct beneficiaries.

The Great Green Wall Accelerator, launched at the 2021 One Planet Summit with $14.3 billion in pledges, represents the current regional baseline[2][55]. However, as of 2020, only 4% of the 100 million hectare restoration target had been achieved, with implementation remaining fragmented across countries and weak M&E systems preventing learning and adaptive management[3][56].

The GEF-8 TALSIG program, with a total investment of $87 million across 9 countries, represents the immediate baseline that this Regional Coordination Project will support[4][57]. These child projects focus on land degradation, biodiversity, and climate adaptation at the national level. The Regional Coordination Project ($7.14 million) provides the 'connective tissue' to ensure these national efforts are strategically aligned, share knowledge, and contribute to coherent regional outcomes[5][58].

National baseline projects

Each of the 9 TALSIG countries has a portfolio of baseline GEF and multilateral projects that provide context-specific lessons.

In Burkina Faso, GEF-7 investments in land degradation total approximately $10.2 million in GEF grants, leveraging an additional $95.5 million in co-financing[6][59]&[7][60]. These investments include two key projects that directly inform the TALSIG approach. The Sustainable Land Management to Strengthen Social Cohesion in the Drylands of Burkina Faso (GEF ID: 11003), a $3.5 million GEF project implemented by UNDP, focuses on achieving Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets while promoting social cohesion in the conflict-affected Centre-Nord region[8][61]. Approved in 2023, it pioneers approaches to integrating SLM with peacebuilding, a critical lesson for TALSIG's work in fragile transboundary areas. The Sustainable management of dryland landscapes in Burkina Faso (GEF ID: 10291), implemented by IUCN, is a $6.7 million GEF project that aims to achieve large-scale restoration of dryland landscapes and enhance sustainable livelihoods for rural communities[9][62]. Its multi-focal approach, addressing biodiversity and climate change alongside land degradation, provides a model for the integrated landscape management that TALSIG will promote at a regional scale. Burkina Faso was also a pioneer in testing programmatic approaches to sustainable land management through the GEF-3 Country Partnership Program (CPP) before the Great Green Wall initiative gained momentum[10][63]. The CPP: Sub-programme of the Northern Region (GEF ID: 3567), a $2 million GEF project implemented by IFAD and completed in 2014, successfully tested a participatory watershed management approach across five provinces in Northern Burkina Faso, covering over 21,000 km² and 358,000 people[11][64]. The project's emphasis on land tenure security, co-management of natural resources, and multi-stakeholder partnerships (involving the World Bank, FAO, UNEP, and AfDB) demonstrated the viability of the coordinated, decentralized model that TALSIG now aims to scale up regionally.

In Chad, the SAWAP component ($35 million) focused on transhumance corridors but achieved 0 hectares of farmland restoration due to diluted SLWM objectives. The project did develop management plans for 235,000 hectares of transhumance corridors at a cost of approximately $2/ha, but these had questionable attribution[12][65]. Ethiopia's SLMP2 demonstrates what is possible with focused SLWM investment, land tenure security, and decentralized implementation[13][66]. The project's success catalyzed follow-on investments of $100 million (Resilient Landscapes and Livelihoods Project, 2018) and $500 million (Ethiopian Climate Action through Landscape Management Program for Results, 2019)[14][67]. In Niger, the Community Action Project for Climate Resilience successfully scaled FMNR practices through knowledge management, farmer study visits, and spontaneous adoption—not through cash-for-work payments. Nigeria's NEWMAP project demonstrated that multiple entry points are possible for SLWM, successfully addressing peri-urban gully erosion through community-based watershed management[15][68]. In Mali, Mauritania, and Senegal, SAWAP projects achieved limited hectares of SLWM (3,600 ha, 3,000 ha, and minimal hectares respectively) despite significant budgets, due to combining SLWM with broader agricultural and energy objectives[16][69].

Other multilateral baseline projects

In addition to the SAWAP and national GEF projects, several other major multilateral initiatives provide a critical baseline for TALSIG. These programs offer complementary investments, technical expertise, and established networks that TALSIG will coordinate with to maximize regional impact.

The World Bank's Regional Sahel Pastoralism Support Project (PRAPS-2) is a cornerstone of regional efforts to support pastoralism, with $375 million in IDA financing across six Sahel countries (Burkina Faso, Chad, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Senegal)[17][70]. Building on the successes of its first phase, PRAPS-2 aims to improve the productivity and resilience of pastoral systems, benefiting approximately 13 million people. The project focuses on establishing robust animal health systems, increasing access to natural resources, supporting peaceful cross-border mobility, and improving livestock value chains. For TALSIG, PRAPS-2 represents a significant complementary investment in pastoral land management and rangeland restoration, providing a strong foundation for TALSIG's Component 1 activities related to transboundary pastoralism.

The African Development Bank's Desert to Power Initiative is a transformative effort to harness the Sahel's immense solar potential, with a $10 billion investment target to generate 10 GW of solar energy and supply 250 million people across 11 Sahel countries with clean electricity[18][71]. The initiative focuses on mobilizing private capital for green infrastructure, developing both grid and off-grid solar installations, and fostering a solar manufacturing ecosystem in the Sahel. TALSIG will coordinate with this initiative under Component 2 to ensure that the creation of 1.26 million green jobs is aligned with both renewable energy development and sustainable land management, particularly through the development of sustainable biomass value chains that can complement solar energy expansion.

FAO's Action Against Desertification (AAD) program is a key technical partner for the Great Green Wall, providing expertise on large-scale land restoration across the Sahel and other African regions[19][72]. The program focuses on restoring drylands and degraded lands to tackle the social, economic, and environmental impacts of desertification. AAD's successful approach has paved the way for large-scale restoration in support of small-scale farming, with a focus on mechanized land preparation, training of master trainers, and biophysical data collection using tools like Collect Earth. TALSIG will provide the coordination platform for FAO's country-level activities, ensuring that technical expertise is delivered in a harmonized and strategic manner to support the project's restoration goals.

Lessons learned and incorporation into TALSIG design

Past and ongoing baseline projects reveal several critical lessons that have directly informed the design of the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project. These lessons (Table 1), drawn from a wide range of regional and national initiatives, highlight both the challenges and opportunities of working in the complex Sahelian context.

Table 1. Lessons learned from past and ongoing projects and programs and how they are incorporated into TALSIG's components, outputs, and outcomes.

Lesson learned	Projects & programs	How lesson is incorporated into TALSIG Design	Relevant TALSIG Outcome(s) / Output(s)
1. Focused SLWM approaches are more effective than combining with broader rural development.	SAWAP (Burkina Faso, Mali, Mauritania, Senegal)	TALSIG maintains a clear focus on integrated land, water, and forest management, avoiding mission creep into general rural development.	Outcome 1.1: Improved management of transboundary landscapes Output 1.1.1: Regional framework for integrated landscape management
2. Decentralized implementation outperforms centralized government-led approaches.	SAWAP (Ethiopia SLMP2)	TALSIG emphasizes community-based natural resource management, local enterprises, and decentralized decision-making.	Outcome 2.1: Strengthened local enterprises Output 1.2.1: Community-based NRM plans developed
3. Land tenure security is a foundational enabler for long-term SLM investment.	SAWAP (Ethiopia SLMP2)	TALSIG has a dedicated focus on supporting policy reforms for land certification, community bylaws, and strengthening user rights.	Outcome 3.1: Strengthened policy and institutional frameworks Output 3.1.1: Regional policy dialogue on land tenure
4. Cost-effectiveness is essential for scaling up SLM practices.	SAWAP (Niger)	TALSIG promotes low-cost, replicable practices like FMNR and water harvesting, with a target cost of less than $500/ha.	Outcome 1.1: Improved management of transboundary landscapes Output 1.1.2: Best practices for low-cost restoration disseminated
5. Fragmentation and lack of coordination are the primary barriers to GGW success.	GGW Accelerator	TALSIG's core mandate is to provide the regional coordination mechanism, breaking down silos between countries and projects.	All Outcomes
6. The land degradation-conflict nexus must be explicitly addressed.	Burkina Faso GEF-7 (ID 11003)	TALSIG integrates conflict-sensitive natural resource management and	Outcome 2.2: Reduced conflict over natural resources

		equitable benefit-sharing into its approach.	Output 2.2.1: Conflict resolution mechanisms established
7. Peer-to-peer learning is more effective than external incentive payments for scaling.	Niger Community Action Project for Climate Resilience	TALSIG establishes a regional knowledge management platform to facilitate cross-country learning exchanges and farmer study visits.	Outcome 4.1: Enhanced knowledge management and learning Output 4.1.1: Regional knowledge management platform operational
8. Multi-stakeholder coordination at the national level is a prerequisite for regional success.	Burkina Faso CPP (GEF-3)	TALSIG builds upon the lessons of the CPP by scaling up the coordinated, decentralized model to the regional level.	Outcome 3.2: Strengthened national coordination mechanisms Output 3.2.1: National multi-stakeholder platforms supported
9. Pastoral systems require a specific and transboundary focus.	PRAPS-2	TALSIG includes explicit focus on pastoral land management and cross-border transhumance corridors.	Outcome 1.2: Improved management of pastoral systems Output 1.2.2: Transboundary agreements on rangeland management
10. Technical expertise must be coordinated to be effective.	FAO Action Against Desertification	TALSIG provides the coordination platform for technical partners like FAO to deliver support in a harmonized and strategic manner.	Outcome 4.2: Strengthened technical capacity Output 4.2.1: Coordinated technical assistance delivery

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[8] Ibid: GEF (2023).

[9] Ibid: GEF (2021).

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[12] Ibid: World Bank (2021a).

[13] Ibid: World Bank (2021a).

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[15] Ibid: World Bank (2021a).

[16] Ibid: World Bank (2021a).

[17] World Bank (2021b). World Bank Provides $375 Million to Boost Efforts Towards Realizing the Full Potential of Pastoralism in the Sahel. Link: https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2021/03/30/world-bank-provides-375-million-to-boost-efforts-towards-realizing-the-full-potential-of-pastoralism-in-the-sahel

[18] African Development Bank. Desert to Power Initiative. Link: https://www.afdb.org/en/topics-and-sectors/initiatives-partnerships/desert-power-initiative

[19] FAO. Action Against Desertification. Link: https://www.fao.org/in-action/action-against-desertification

Table On Core Indicators

Core Indicators

Indicate expected results in each relevant indicator using methodologies indicated in the GEF-8 Results Measurement Framework Guidelines. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF and SCCF.

Indicator 1 Terrestrial protected areas created or under improved management

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
193000	193000	0	0

Indicator 1.1 Terrestrial Protected Areas Newly created

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
193000	193000	0	0

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
			193,000.00	193,000.00		

Indicator 1.2 Terrestrial Protected Areas Under improved Management effectiveness

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)
0	0	0	0

Name of the Protected Area	WDPA ID	IUCN Category	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)	METT score (Baseline at CEO Endorsement)	METT score (Achieved at MTR)	METT score (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3 Area of land and ecosystems under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
132900	132900	0	0

Indicator 3.1 Area of degraded agricultural lands under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.2 Area of forest and forest land under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 3.3 Area of natural grass and woodland under restoration

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
Woodlands	132,900.00	132,900.00		

Indicator 3.4 Area of wetlands (including estuaries, mangroves) under restoration

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4 Area of landscapes under improved practices (hectares; excluding protected areas)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
459560	459560	0	0

Indicator 4.1 Area of landscapes under improved management to benefit biodiversity (hectares, qualitative assessment, non-certified)

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
459,560.00			

Indicator 4.2 Area of landscapes under third-party certification incorporating biodiversity considerations

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Type/Name of Third Party Certification

Indicator 4.3 Area of landscapes under sustainable land management in production systems

Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)
	459,560.00		

Indicator 4.4 Area of High Conservation Value or other forest loss avoided

Disaggregation Type	Ha (Expected at PIF)	Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Ha (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 4.5 Terrestrial OECMs supported

Name of the OECMs	WDPA-ID	Total Ha (Expected at PIF)	Total Ha (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Total Ha (Achieved at MTR)	Total Ha (Achieved at TE)

Documents (Document(s) that justifies the HCVF)

Title

Indicator 6 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Mitigated

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	275000	275000	0	0
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)	0	0	0	0

Indicator 6.1 Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)	275,000	275,000		
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting		2026		
Duration of accounting		20		

Indicator 6.2 Emissions Avoided Outside AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) Sector

Total Target Benefit	(At PIF)	(At CEO Endorsement)	(Achieved at MTR)	(Achieved at TE)
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (direct)				
Expected metric tons of CO_2e (indirect)				
Anticipated start year of accounting				

Duration of accounting				

Indicator 6.3 Energy Saved (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Total Target Benefit	Energy (MJ) (At PIF)	Energy (MJ) (At CEO Endorsement)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at MTR)	Energy (MJ) (Achieved at TE)
Target Energy Saved (MJ)				

Indicator 6.4 Increase in Installed Renewable Energy Capacity per Technology (Use this sub-indicator in addition to the sub-indicator 6.2 if applicable)

Technology	Capacity (MW) (Expected at PIF)	Capacity (MW) (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at MTR)	Capacity (MW) (Achieved at TE)

Indicator 11 People benefiting from GEF-financed investments

	Number (Expected at PIF)	Number (Expected at CEO Endorsement)	Number (Achieved at MTR)	Number (Achieved at TE)
Female	1,637,589	1,666,400		
Male	1,471,371	1,442,560		
Total	**3,108,960**	**3,108,960**	0	**0**

Explain the methodological approach and underlying logic to justify target levels for Core and Sub-Indicators (max. 250 words, approximately 1/2 page)

These proposed figures emerged during consultations in Ghana, Mali and Togo based on national level estimated demographics within the GGW Region, but also the estimates that individual countries participating in the Program have envisaged to be able create as protected areas or bringing under improved management (hectare), that is, 193,000 ha. The same is true for area of land and ecosystems under restoration (132,900 ha) and the area of landscapes under improved practices (459,560). The same logic has been applied to the estimation of the level of carbon emissions to be mitigated through the use of improved practices on production landscapes (275,000 metric ton of CO2e). The figures therefore are summations that take into account population densities and household sizes at national level but also estimations within the GGW Regions of each participating country.

Strengthening capacity to assess, map and monitor biophysical and land health indicators:

- Supporting stakeholders to co-develop and disseminate targeted outreach products and hold events
- Supporting policy engagement and Advocacy
- Monitoring at the local and global levels through Citizen Science and the Regreening App

The monitoring system is participatory: integration of a field data feedback system by the young people themselves (photos, data sheets, GPS data), to ensure transparency and ongoing evaluation of actions. For a coordinated response, it is imperative to create a clear, inclusive and sustainable organizational architecture.

Structuring the network

- Network structuring: Identification and mobilization of young leaders in the various regions affected by desertification.
- Regional consultation workshops: Holding workshops to identify local priorities, share experiences and encourage young people to take ownership of the process.
- National founding assembly: Organization of a founding event bringing together regional delegates to formalize the network

Key Risks

	Rating	Explanation of risk and mitigation measures
CONTEXT		
Climate	High	Assessment: The Sahel is warming 1.5 times faster than the global average, with temperatures projected to rise by at least 2°C by 2040. This is leading to more frequent and intense droughts, erratic rainfall, and extreme heat events, which threaten the success of land restoration activities under Component 1 and the sustainability of livelihoods under Component 2. A return to severe drought conditions, as seen in the 1970s and 1980s, could undermine the project's core objectives and exacerbate resource competition and displacement. The region faces imminent return to drought conditions, with seasonal climate forecasts signaling potential worsening of droughts in 2025. Mitigation: The project will promote the adoption of drought-smart land management and agroecological techniques through its support to national child projects. TALSIG will leverage its partnership with WOCAT to disseminate proven SLM technologies and will support the integration of climate services and early warning systems into national and regional planning under Component 3. Partnership with the International Drought Resilience Alliance (IDRA) strengthens drought monitoring and preparedness capabilities through access to the Drought Observatory. By Month 30, risk mapping tools and climate information systems will be developed and deployed across all countries. By Month 60, early warning systems will be operational in 100% of rural zones.
Environmental and Social	Moderate	Assessment: The Sahel region, particularly the central Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, is experiencing a severe security crisis driven by violent extremism, inter-communal conflict, and political instability. This insecurity restricts access to project areas, endangers staff and beneficiaries, and disrupts implementation of child projects. The withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from ECOWAS in January 2025 further complicates regional cooperation and security coordination. The region has experienced over 5.5 million internally displaced people due to a mix of climate shocks and insecurity. Mitigation: The project will adopt a conflict-sensitive and fragility-aware approach. This includes conducting regular conflict analysis to inform project activities, working through local partners with deep contextual knowledge, and ensuring that project benefits are distributed equitably to avoid exacerbating tensions. The project will align with and support existing peacebuilding and stabilization efforts in the region. Security

		protocols for staff and partners will be developed and regularly updated. By Month 60, vulnerability assessments and adaptive management reviews will be conducted in fragile contexts using UNDP's Conflict Sensitivity Toolkit. Risk-adjusted phased exits will be deployed, ensuring secure continuation of restoration work under local leadership. Partnerships with UNHCR, UN Peacebuilding Fund, and civil society will facilitate peacebuilding continuity.
Political and Governance	Moderate	Assessment: The project's success depends on the sustained political will and institutional capacity of 9 national governments and multiple regional bodies (AUDA-NEPAD, PAAGGW, CILSS, ECOWAS). All nine GGW countries rank in the bottom third globally on the ND-GAIN Country Index, with Chad ranking as the second most vulnerable country worldwide (score 25.0, rank 187), indicating severely limited adaptive capacity and governance readiness. Political instability, coups, and changes in government priorities can disrupt project implementation and undermine long-term sustainability. The central Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger have experienced significant political transitions, and their withdrawal from ECOWAS in January 2025 complicates regional cooperation and security coordination. Weak governance, corruption, and limited institutional capacity at national and sub-national levels hinder the effective use of project resources and the enforcement of policies and regulations. Inconsistencies in mandates across ministries (Environment, Agriculture, Forestry, Land) may impede policy harmonization and implementation coordination. Mitigation: The project will build strong relationships with key government partners at all levels and across political transitions. The establishment of a Regional Steering Committee chaired by PAAGGW with representation from AUDA-NEPAD, CILSS, and national GGW focal points will ensure high-level political buy-in and cross-sectoral coordination. National Steering Committees will be established in each of the 9 countries with representation from key ministries and CSOs. The project will invest in capacity building for national and local institutions under Component 3, focusing on project management, fiduciary oversight, and M&E. By Month 12, national GGW focal points and regional coordination platforms will finalize institutional capacity-building roadmaps. By Month 24, regional GGW institutions and national agencies will finalize capacity-building plans using UNDP's Institutional Strengthening Toolkit. By Month 48, all countries will have active national GGW coalitions with women, youth, and IPLC representation. Alignment with national development plans, NDCs, NAPs, NBSAPs, and GGW investment frameworks will help to embed the project within national priorities and ensure continuity across political transitions.
INNOVATION		
Institutional and Policy	Moderate	Assessment: The project's success depends on the sustained political will and institutional capacity of 9 national governments and multiple regional bodies (AUDA-NEPAD, PAAGGW, CILSS, ECOWAS). All nine GGW countries rank in the bottom third globally on the ND-GAIN Country Index, with Chad ranking as the second most vulnerable country worldwide (score 25.0, rank

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Technological	Moderate	.Assessment: While proven SLM technologies exist (agroforestry, ANR, water harvesting), their systematic dissemination and adoption across 9 countries with varying technical capacities is challenging. Communities and extension agents may have limited familiarity with advanced techniques such as GIS-based land-use planning, satellite monitoring (GEO-LDN), digital M&E platforms, or climate information services. There is a risk that the regional knowledge platform and harmonized M&E system (Component 4) are poorly adopted if they are not user-friendly, relevant to national needs, or compatible with existing systems. Technical challenges such as limited internet connectivity, weak data infrastructure, and language barriers can hinder adoption. The project must also ensure that WOCAT technologies, ELD economic valuation tools, SPI/VACS approaches, IDRA drought monitoring, and GEO-LDN satellite data are accessible and actionable for national partners with varying technical capacities. Mitigation: The knowledge platform and M&E system will be co-designed with national partners to ensure they are user-friendly, relevant to their needs, and compatible with existing systems. The project will implement a hands-on, modular training approach using demonstration sites, peer-to-peer learning

		networks, and South-South exchanges among the 9 countries. Tools will be contextualized to local settings and languages (French, English, Arabic, local languages). Technical packages will be co-developed with communities and aligned to traditional ecological knowledge. Extension agents and youth trainers will receive intensive capacity building. By Month 36, the regional Knowledge Management System will be operational and integrated with the AU-led GGW M&E framework, following protocols compatible with UNCCD PRAIS, FAO WaPOR, and UNDP's SDG-based monitoring. The project will provide extensive training and technical support, and the benefits of participation (access to regional data, expertise, funding intelligence) will be clearly demonstrated. Partnership with CIFOR-ICRAF K4GGWA will strengthen knowledge management capacity.
Financial and Business Model	Moderate	Assessment: Mobilizing private sector investment in the Sahel is extremely challenging due to the high-risk environment, political instability, conflict, weak enabling conditions, and limited financial infrastructure. There is a significant risk that the project will not be able to attract the targeted level of private investment, which is critical for the sustainability of green value chains and restoration activities under Component 2. The project targets 275 enterprises (203 women-led) and 1.26 million green jobs, requiring substantial private capital mobilization. Without sustainable revenues and market linkages, conservation and restoration benefits may not be maintained beyond the project period. Weak rural markets, lack of buyer linkages, insufficient monetization of ecosystem services, and limited access to finance for women and youth entrepreneurs further compound this risk. The economic sustainability of restoration, community woodlots, NTFPs value chains, and potential PES schemes depends on functional financial models that are currently underdeveloped across most GGW countries. Mitigation: The project will work to de-risk private investment by providing technical assistance, supporting policy reforms, and developing innovative financing mechanisms such as blended finance, guarantees, carbon markets, and biodiversity offsets. TALSIG will partner with established financial institutions (BOAD, AfDB) and impact investors with experience in the region. The project will facilitate access to biodiversity-friendly markets and support aggregation through cooperatives. Pilot PES schemes will be co-designed with national agencies, communities, and private actors, and linked to emerging funding sources. Technical assistance and seed capital will be bundled with training and follow-up support. Partnership with FAGRIB will support carbon market infrastructure and value-chain development. Partnership with GUD Mata will support equitable carbon programs, Article 6.2 systems, and global agricultural offtake partnerships. By Month 54, each supported enterprise will finalize sustainability and financing strategies, linked to national green investment platforms and banks. Over 60% of 1.26 million green jobs created will transition to independent or cooperatively sustained employment. A partnership with local microfinance institutions will

		explore green credit lines for restoration enterprises. The project will showcase successful examples to attract further investment.
EXECUTION		
Capacity	Substantial	Assessment: The implementing agency, the Pan-African Agency for the Great Green Wall (PAAGGW), is a relatively new institution with limited experience in managing large-scale, multi-country projects. There is a risk that the agency will face challenges in financial management, procurement, and overall project oversight. The project must coordinate across 9 national child projects while maintaining effective relationships with regional bodies including AUDA-NEPAD, CILSS, and ECOWAS. Capacity gaps exist at sub-national levels across all countries, especially in fiduciary management, restoration supervision, M&E, and safeguards implementation. National GGW focal points and agencies have varying levels of institutional maturity, with countries like Niger, Nigeria, and Burkina Faso having more mature coordination structures, while less structured contexts such as Mauritania and The Gambia require prioritized institutional strengthening. CBOs and community-level institutions may lack the administrative systems needed to absorb funds or report reliably. Mitigation: The project includes a significant capacity building component for PAAGGW, including the recruitment of experienced project management staff and the establishment of robust financial and administrative systems. A dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU) with decentralized technical staff will oversee coordination. By Month 12, national GGW focal points and regional coordination platforms will finalize institutional capacity-building roadmaps. The project will be supported by technical backstopping from UNEP and other partners (UNCCD, FAO, CIFOR-ICRAF). TALSIG will establish a Regional Steering Committee and National Steering Committees to ensure high-level political buy-in and cross-sectoral coordination. Local government officers, national agencies, and user groups will receive targeted capacity development in planning, budgeting, safeguards, M&E, and reporting. Institutional mentoring and field-based coaching will be used to strengthen skills. The project will facilitate peer-to-peer learning and problem-solving among the 9 child projects through regional workshops, South-South exchanges, and online platforms
Fiduciary	Moderate	Assessment: Managing funds across 9 countries with different financial regulations, currencies, and varying levels of fiduciary capacity presents a high risk of financial mismanagement and corruption. Tracking and reporting on expenditures from multiple national child projects will be complex. The project manages USD 7.78 million GEF grant and USD 523 million co-financing over 72 months, requiring stringent oversight mechanisms. Disbursement related to contracts and other activities carries potential risks in financial tracking and compliance, particularly given the fragile state context in several countries (Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, Chad). Weak public sector capacity and limited transparency in some countries increase fiduciary risks. The regional coordination structure adds complexity to financial flows and

		accountability. Mitigation: The project will establish a stringent financial management and reporting system, with clear guidelines and procedures for all partners. PAAGGW will oversee compliance with support from UNEP, and independent external audits will be conducted annually. The project will invest in financial management capacity building for national partners and will explore the use of digital financial tracking systems for real-time monitoring of expenditures and budget utilization. Additional measures include: (1) Clear segregation of financial duties and approval processes to prevent conflicts of interest; (2) Quarterly internal audits in addition to annual external audits to ensure continuous compliance monitoring; (3) Financial literacy training and template-based reporting at national and community levels. All project documents, including safeguard documents, will be publicly accessible through the project's website, GEF website (www.thegef.org/projects), and UNEP website (www.open.unep.org) to ensure transparency and allow stakeholders to remain informed throughout the project's lifecycle.
Stakeholder	Low	Assessment: Engaging a wide range of stakeholders across 9 countries, from high-level policymakers to local community members, is a complex undertaking. There is a risk of consultation fatigue, elite capture of benefits, and insufficient participation by marginalized groups, particularly women, youth, displaced populations, and pastoralist communities. The project targets 3.1 million beneficiaries (53.6% women), requiring extensive and inclusive engagement mechanisms at regional, national, and local levels. Limited or unequal participation by vulnerable groups can undermine the legitimacy and effectiveness of the project. There may also be skepticism from communities and national partners if they do not see tangible benefits early or if the regional coordination is perceived as top-down or disconnected from local realities. Language barriers (French, English, Arabic, local languages) and cultural differences across 9 countries add complexity to stakeholder engagement. Mitigation: The project will implement a comprehensive stakeholder engagement plan with clear roles and responsibilities for all partners at regional, national, and local levels. FPIC principles will be systematically applied where relevant. Representation targets (minimum 50% women and significant youth representation) will be enforced in all governance structures. The project will use a variety of engagement methods, including regional and national workshops, online platforms, community-level consultations, and mobile outreach for pastoralist communities. Grievance redress mechanisms will be established at all levels and made locally accessible. Early delivery of quick wins (e.g., training, knowledge platforms, technical guidelines, policy support) will help build trust and demonstrate value. Social inclusion and equity metrics will be embedded in the M&E system. By Month 24, all safeguard frameworks will be in place with sex-, age-, and ethnicity-disaggregated baseline data. By Month 48, at least 50% of land restoration governance committees will meet gender and

		minority inclusion quotas. Community institutions will begin assuming roles in grievance redress, resource management, and monitoring.
Other	Moderate	A. TRANSBOUNDARY ISSUES. Assessment: The Sahel's geographic and political complexity exposes the project to transboundary risks including illegal resource extraction, poaching, trafficking, cross-border conflict spillovers, and unregulated pastoralist movements. The withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from ECOWAS complicates cross-border cooperation mechanisms. These activities can undermine the project's conservation and restoration efforts and pose threats to the security of project staff and beneficiaries. Achieving consensus and harmonizing policies and practices across 9 sovereign states with different legal systems, languages, and priorities is a significant challenge. Pastoralist mobility across borders requires coordinated approaches to land use, water access, and conflict prevention. The project's core mandate is transboundary coordination, yet this is also one of its highest risks. Mitigation: The project's core mandate is to address this risk through dedicated platforms for regional dialogue and joint planning. TALSIG will work with relevant government agencies to strengthen cross-border cooperation with neighboring countries on natural resource management and law enforcement. The project will promote joint monitoring, intelligence sharing, and cross-border surveillance of illegal activities in and around project sites. The project will support the establishment of community-based surveillance systems to monitor and report illegal activities. The development of a harmonized M&E system (Component 4) and shared technical guidelines (Component 1) will provide a common framework for collaboration. The project will facilitate bilateral and multilateral agreements on specific transboundary issues, such as pastoralist mobility corridors, shared water resources, and transboundary protected areas. By Month 36, the regional Knowledge Management System and digital dashboards will be operational, sharing lessons learned, tools, and disaggregated M&E data with all countries. The project will work pragmatically with both ECOWAS member states and non-member states to maintain functional cooperation on environmental and development issues. B. LAND TENURE CONFLICTS. Assessment: The complex interplay of modern and customary land rights across the 9 GGW countries creates a significant risk of land tenure conflicts. Insecure land tenure deters long-term investments in restoration and sustainable land management, and disputes over land ownership can undermine community cohesion and project implementation. Women hold less than 15% of land ownership rights across GGW countries, and customary systems often discriminate against women's land access and inheritance. Pastoralist communities face particular challenges in securing access to traditional grazing routes and water points. Restoration activities, if not carefully planned, can inadvertently restrict access to land and resources, triggering conflicts. The regional coordination project must ensure that child projects address land tenure issues systematically and harmonize approaches across borders, particularly for

		transboundary pastoralist mobility. Mitigation: The project will support child projects to conduct comprehensive land tenure assessments in project areas to identify potential sources of conflict and inform the design of appropriate mitigation measures. TALSIG will facilitate the development of regional guidelines for land tenure clarification and documentation, working with relevant government agencies and community leaders to support the clarification and documentation of land rights, thereby increasing tenure security for local communities, particularly women and pastoralists. The project will support the establishment of community-based conflict resolution mechanisms to address land-related disputes in a timely and transparent manner. Legal recognition of customary and communal land rights will be pursued, with particular attention to joint land titling for women and recognition of pastoralist mobility rights. By Month 48, legal recognition of customary and communal land rights will be secured in 100% of project zones with IPLC presence. Restoration zones will be planned to avoid displacement of settlements and critical livelihoods through participatory land-use planning. The project will support the integration of land tenure security into national GGW investment frameworks and policies. C. FRAGILITY AND GOVERNANCE. Assessment: The Sahel region, particularly the central Sahel countries of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger, is experiencing a severe security crisis driven by violent extremism, inter-communal conflict, and political instability. This insecurity restricts access to project areas, endangers staff and beneficiaries, and disrupts implementation of child projects. The region has experienced over 5.5 million internally displaced persons due to a mix of climate shocks and insecurity. Violent extremism, terrorism, and armed conflict create a highly fragile operating environment. The withdrawal of Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger from ECOWAS in January 2025 further complicates regional cooperation and security coordination. Weak public sector capacity, political instability, social tensions, and limited state presence in remote areas can hinder project implementation, disrupt service delivery, and undermine the sustainability of project outcomes. The regional coordination project must navigate this complex security landscape while maintaining neutrality and ensuring the safety of staff and partners. Mitigation: The project will adopt a conflict-sensitive and fragility-aware approach throughout all components. This includes conducting regular conflict analysis to inform project activities, working through local partners with deep contextual knowledge, and ensuring that project benefits are distributed equitably to avoid exacerbating tensions. The project will align with and support existing peacebuilding and stabilization efforts in the region. Security protocols for staff and partners will be developed and regularly updated. The project will strengthen local governance structures and provide targeted training and mentoring to key government institutions and local authorities involved in project implementation. The project will promote inclusive and participatory decision-making to ensure that all stakeholders, including marginalized groups, have a voice in project planning and implementation, thereby

		reducing the risk of social conflict. The project will build community ownership through participatory approaches, grievance redress mechanisms, and benefit-sharing arrangements that reduce the risk of unrest or opposition. By Month 60, vulnerability assessments and adaptive management reviews will be conducted in fragile contexts (Mali, Burkina Faso, Chad, Niger) using UNDP's Conflict Sensitivity Toolkit and IASC GBV Guidelines. Risk-adjusted phased exits will be deployed, ensuring secure continuation of restoration work under local leadership. Partnerships with UNHCR, UN Peacebuilding Fund, and civil society will facilitate peacebuilding continuity. D. Drought Assessment: The increasing frequency and intensity of drought poses a significant threat to the success of restoration efforts coordinated by TALSIG and the sustainability of livelihood benefits across all 9 child projects. The Sahel is experiencing an imminent return to severe drought conditions, with scientific evidence indicating that changes in global ocean surface temperatures are the dominant cause. Seasonal climate forecasts for 2025 show increased risks, with potential worsening of drought conditions. Future drought characteristics are projected to have lower frequency but extended duration and more intense severity. Prolonged dry spells can lead to high seedling mortality rates, reduced agricultural productivity, and increased competition over scarce water resources, potentially undermining the project's core objectives of supporting 325,900 hectares under improved management or restoration and providing livelihood opportunities to 3.1 million people. Mitigation: The project will invest in drought-smart sustainable land management practices through its coordinated support to child projects within project sites. TALSIG will scale up the adoption of water-efficient irrigation technologies, such as drip irrigation and solar-powered water pumps, for both agricultural and restoration activities. The project will work with national meteorological agencies and IDRA to improve the dissemination of drought forecasts to local communities, enabling them to take timely adaptive actions. Partnership with IDRA enables integration of real-time drought monitoring data from the Drought Observatory into the regional Early Warning System, enhancing drought preparedness and adaptive management capacity. The project will support participating countries to develop National Drought Plans (NDPs) with due consideration of the GGW Initiative, learning from the UNCCD Drought Initiative. By Month 30, risk mapping tools and climate information systems will be developed and deployed across all countries, with tailored delivery for women and pastoralists. By Month 60, early warning systems will be operational in 100% of rural zones. E. Knowledge Platform and M&E System Adoption. Assessment: The success of the regional knowledge platform and harmonized M&E system (Component 4) depends on their active use by national partners. There is a risk that countries will continue to use their own systems, leading to a lack of data comparability and limited knowledge sharing. Technical challenges, such as internet connectivity and data infrastructure, can also hinder adoption. The project must integrate with UNCCD PRAIS and GEO-LDN satellite monitoring tools for credible regional-scale reporting. Mitigation: The knowledge platform and

		M&E system will be co-designed with national partners to ensure they are user-friendly, relevant to their needs, and compatible with existing systems. The project will provide extensive training and technical support for their use. The benefits of participation, such as access to regional data and expertise, will be clearly demonstrated. By Month 36, the regional Knowledge Management System will be operational and integrated with the AU-led GGW M&E framework, following protocols compatible with UNCCD PRAIS, FAO WaPOR, and UNDP's SDG-based monitoring. F. Child Project Implementation Delays. Assessment: The success of the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project is highly dependent on the timely and effective implementation of the 9 national child projects (Burkina Faso, Chad, Ethiopia, The Gambia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal). Delays in the approval or implementation of these projects due to national-level issues (e.g., political instability, capacity constraints, security challenges) could significantly impact the achievement of regional outcomes and the delivery of the targeted 325,900 hectares under improved management or restoration. Mitigation: TALSIG will provide intensive support to the child projects throughout their lifecycle, from design to implementation and M&E. The regional hub will facilitate peer-to-peer learning and problem-solving among the child projects. By Month 24, all safeguard frameworks will be in place with disaggregated baseline data. By Month 48, all countries will have active national GGW coalitions with women, youth, and IPLC representation. The project will maintain a flexible and adaptive management approach, allowing for adjustments to workplans and budgets in response to changing circumstances. Regular vulnerability assessments and adaptive management reviews will be conducted in fragile contexts.
Overall Risk Rating	Moderate	While the TALSIG Regional Coordination Project is exposed to significant systemic risks typical of fragile, conflict-affected regions with extreme climate vulnerability, these risks are mitigable through targeted institutional investments, regional cooperation platforms, adaptive planning, conflict-sensitive approaches, and early delivery of coordination benefits. The project carries a moderate level of risk considering environmental and social risks in conflict situations. However, political support for the GGW, existing regional frameworks (AU, UNCCD, CILSS, ECOWAS), strong partnerships (WOCAT, ELD, IDRA, SPI/VACS, GEO-LDN), and the project's emphasis on national ownership and capacity building provide a favorable enabling environment for risk management. The project's flexible, adaptive management approach and phased implementation with regular vulnerability assessments will enable responsive adjustments to changing contexts. All project documents, including safeguard documents, will be publicly accessible through the GEF and UNEP websites, ensuring transparency and allowing stakeholders

C. ALIGNMENT WITH GEF-8 PROGRAMMING STRATEGIES AND COUNTRY/REGIONAL PRIORITIES

Explain how the proposed interventions are aligned with GEF- 8 programming strategies, including the specific integrated program priorities, and country and regional priorities, Describe how these country strategies and plans relate to the multilateral environmental agreements, such as through NDCs, NBSAPs, etc.

For projects aiming to generate biodiversity benefits (regardless of what the source of the resources is - i.e., BD, CC or LD), please identify which of the 23 targets of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework the project contributes to and explain how.

(max. 500 words, approximately 1 page)

The GEF-8 GGW Initiative is strategically designed to align with and support both national and international commitments on gender equality and environmental sustainability across the 11 participating countries (Table 11).

The alignment ensures that the project not only addresses land degradation and climate challenges but also supports member states in fulfilling their gender and environmental obligations under the multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) and national policy frameworks. GGW regional coordination strengthens implementation of these national strategies, particularly by supporting capacity building, policy reform, and inclusive governance platforms.

Table 11. Alignment and support to national gender and environmental policies.

Country	Gender Policy	Gender Mentions in NDC or NAP	GGW-related Policy Reference
Burkina Faso	National Gender Policy (2016)	NDC & NAP include gender-specific adaptation	GGW integrated in national restoration strategy
Chad	National Gender Strategy (2017)	Women in agro-ecosystem adaptation	GGW is national development pillar
Ethiopia	National Gender Policy (2019)	Gender in agriculture, forestry, energy	GGW linked with CRGE strategy
The Gambia	Women's Act (2010), Gender Policy	Focus on women in farming, water, DRR	GGW aligned with national forest policy
Mali	Gender Policy (2011–2023)	NDC recognizes rural women's vulnerabilities	GGW linked to Ten-Year Plan for Sustainable Development
Mauritania	Gender Equality Strategy (2016)	Women in resilience strategies	GGW mainstreamed in national adaptation roadmap
Niger	Gender Equity and Equality Strategy	Targets female farmers and herders	GGW part of national land reform program
Nigeria	National Gender Policy (2006)	Gender featured in NDC; climate-smart agriculture	GGW integrated in Great Green Wall Agency mandate
Senegal	National Gender Strategy (2016–2026	Gender-responsive adaptation pathways	GGW operationalized through National Plan of Action
Sudan	Women Empowerment Framework	Women & displaced communities in adaptation	GGW tied to Land Restoration Roadmap
Eritrea	Gender Policy (2019	Emphasis on rural women's resilience	GGW aligned with national SLM agenda

Stocktaking and Mapping of Existing and Planned Interventions

An extensive stocktaking of more than 50 GEF and non-GEF funded initiatives has been conducted across the 11 GGW countries. The GEF-8 pipeline alone includes national child projects in each country, covering themes such as land restoration (Senegal, Mali, Niger), climate-smart agriculture (Nigeria, Ethiopia, The Gambia), biodiversity corridors (Burkina Faso, Chad), institutional governance (Mauritania, Nigeria), and agro-sylvo-pastoral livelihoods (Niger, Ethiopia). In contrast, Niger and Nigeria showcase mature coordination mechanisms anchored in dedicated national agencies. This disparity underscores the need for a tailored coordination approach that matches each country's institutional maturity and project density.

Before thinking about synergies, and with the aim of improving efficiency and therefore value for money, it was necessary to carry out in-depth research and analysis with the member and partner countries. These analyses aimed to assess and compare the different institutional contexts in which the countries operate. These analyses, conducted jointly with the partners, revealed (sometimes significant) disparities from one country to another. These disparities are all challenges that need to be resolved. Common institutional aspects between countries were identified. It is on these common points that the project has been able to devise and build institutional arrangements, prior to defining the contours of the necessary regional coordination.

Operationally, many countries are already using shared tools such as WaPOR (remote sensing), KoboToolbox (data collection), and Collect Earth (forest monitoring). The coordination project will institutionalize these tools as standard, reducing redundancy and building shared capacity. In addition, the coordination will capitalise on existing and well-functioning Training Platforms: FAO field schools, UNDP capacity programs linked to GGW. Strategically, the use of harmonized indicators (e.g., NDVI, household livelihood scores, gender-based access metrics) will allow for cross-country learning and shared reporting across GEF portfolios.

The GEF-8 Coordination Project will thus serve as the hub for interlinking child projects and legacy GEF interventions. The coordination project under GEF-8 is uniquely positioned to act as a catalytic hub connecting thematic investments across restoration, governance, food systems, and biodiversity. This goes beyond alignment—it requires deliberate integration at operational, strategic, and data levels. As shown in Table 12 the Coordination Project will be in the position to frame and facilitate programmatic synergies.

Programmatic Synergies

- Senegal & Mali: REDD+ and GGW planning integrated into territorial development.
- Nigeria & Ethiopia: GGW embedded in state and regional adaptation frameworks.
- Mauritania & Chad: Water-energy-food nexus projects embedded in GGW zones.

Table 12. Opportunities for programmatic and geographic synergies.

Programmatic Geographic Synergies **Opportunity:** Formalize country level "GGW Coordination Clusters" led by the national GGW Focal units to streamline donors and projects coordination.	**Opportunities**	**Action Step**
	Leverage common partners for joint training	Develop shared capacity-building framework via FAO/UNDP
	Consolidate focal Institutions	Mandate GGW national platforms with cross-ministerial Authority
	Professionalize Coordination Units	Budget for full time coordinators and data specialists
	Link ministries via GGW data platforms	Use dashboards to synchronize contribution across sectors

Elements of strategy

- **Synergies:** Shared indicators (e.g., NDVI, livelihoods, biodiversity), tools (e.g., Kobo Collect Toolbox, Collect Earth), and reporting frameworks.
- **Complementarity:** Spatial targeting (e.g., LDN in Senegal + REDD+ in Mali), thematic reinforcement (e.g., CSA + water governance), and institutional coherence (e.g., same Steering Committees).
- **Collaboration Platforms:** GGW National Observatories, M&E portals, South-South knowledge events via OSS, AUDA-NEPAD, and PAGGW.
- **AU Agenda 2063**: GGWI contributes to Goals 6 & 7 (climate resilience and gender equality).
- **SDGs**: Especially Goals 5 (Gender Equality), 13 (Climate Action), and 15 (Life on Land).
- **Bonn Challenge and AFR100**: The project supports restoration pledges with a gender lens, including through green jobs for women and youth.

Institutionally, linking GEF-8 child projects to existing governance structures—such as REDD+ committees (Mali, Senegal), LDN working groups (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia), and water basin agencies (Chad, Mauritania) ensures coherence and impact scaling. It also creates pathways for integrating GGW achievements into NDCs, SDG reporting, and national planning frameworks.

This integrated coordination strategy provides both the logic and mechanisms to ensure that GEF-8 investments are not only complementary but mutually reinforcing—maximizing value-for-money and long-term resilience in the Sahel and Horn of Africa. The strategy ensures that the GEF-8 program adds value by enhancing coherence, boosting efficiency, and amplifying the impact of ongoing investments in the Sahel and Horn of Africa drylands.

The objective is to inform the GEF-8 GGW Implementation Plan with a structured and realistic framework for coordination, based on concrete country experiences, thematic clustering, and functional partnerships. The proposed strategies are designed to enable coherence, facilitate resource optimization, and support inclusive governance in the Sahel and Horn of Africa.

Alignment with International Commitments and global multilateral agreements with focus on gender action plans

The GGWI is explicitly aligned with several **global multilateral agreements and gender action plans**:

- Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD): Targets 21–23 (Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework)
    - **Target 21**: Equitable participation in decision-making – GGWI supports gender-balanced NRM committees and stakeholder forums.
    - **Target 22**: Gender-responsive approaches in biodiversity governance – GGWI integrates gender indicators and safeguards into biodiversity projects.
    - **Target 23**: Gender equality in biodiversity conservation – Women's leadership in restoration and eco-enterprise is promoted across components.

All 11 GGW countries are Parties to the CBD and have submitted NBSAPs (National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans), most of which identify gender as a cross-cutting theme.

- UNFCCC: Gender Action Plan (GAP) and NDCs
    - **GGWI supports the UNFCCC Lima Work Programme on Gender and GAP by:**
        - Enhancing women's participation in climate governance.
        - Promoting gender-responsive climate finance.
        - Building institutional capacity on gender and climate linkages.
    - **All 11 countries have submitted NDCs; 9 explicitly mention gender (e.g., Mali, Ethiopia, Nigeria, Senegal).**
        - GGWI reinforces these NDCs through its work on **SLM, climate-smart agriculture, agroforestry**, and inclusive adaptation planning.

- There is a substantial amount of untapped revenue that could be earned through carbon markets. Already in the Great Green Wall, some private carbon credit deals are taking place off-market, but this is (today) a low-hanging revenue opportunity. Just recently, the private sector partner GUD Mata received a commitment from a major organisation to purchase 10 million carbon credits generated within the Great Green Wall. Carbon markets take into account realised and unrealised carbon sequestration over a 15yr period and buyer sentiment is evolving towards creating impact.

- UNCCD: Gender Action Plan (2017)
  - **GGWI strongly aligns with UNCCD's GAP through:**
    - Promoting **equal land access and tenure rights** for women (Output 2.1.1).
    - Facilitating **sex-disaggregated data collection** in M&E (Component 4).
    - Supporting women's leadership in land governance and restoration.
  - **GGWI also contributes to Land Degradation Neutrality (LDN) targets under UNCCD, many of which include gender-sensitive indicators.**

All GGW countries are Parties to UNCCD and have developed or updated national GAPs or gender mainstreaming strategies.

- Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction
  - **GGWI supports Sendai's priority on "gender-responsive and inclusive risk governance" by:**
    - Establishing early warning systems that target **women's access to climate data** (Component 3.2).
    - Building capacity among women's groups for disaster preparedness and ecological recovery.
    - Targeting women and marginalized groups in drought and flood risk reduction activities.

D. POLICY REQUIREMENTS

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:

We confirm that gender dimensions relevant to the project have been addressed during Project Preparation as per GEF Policy and are clearly articulated in the child Project Description (Section B).

Yes

1) Does the project expect to include any gender-responsive-measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women's empowerment?

Yes

If the child project expects to include any gender-responsive measures to address gender gaps or promote gender equality and women empowerment, please indicate in which results area(s) the project is expected to contribute to gender equality:

Closing gender gaps in access to and control over natural resources;

Yes

Improving women's participation and decision-making; and/or

Yes

Generating socio-economic benefits or services for women.

Yes

2) Does the child project's results framework or logical framework include gender-sensitive indicators?

Yes

Stakeholder Engagement

We confirm that key stakeholders were consulted during Project Preparation as required per GEF policy, their relevant roles to project outcomes has been clearly articulated in the Child Project Description (Section B) and that a Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been developed before CEO endorsement.

Yes

Select what role civil society will play in the Project:

Consulted only; Yes

Member of Advisory Body; Contractor; Yes

Co-financier; Yes

Member of project steering committee or equivalent decision-making body ; Yes

Executor or co-executor; Yes

Other (Please explain) Yes

Private Sector

Will there be private sector engagement in the Child project?

Yes

And if so, has its role been described and justified in section B "Child project description"?

Yes

Environmental and Social Safeguards

We confirm that we have provided information regarding Environmental and Social risks associated with the proposed child project or program, including risk screenings/ assessments and, if applicable, management plans or other measures to address identified risks and impacts (this information should be presented in Annex E).

Yes

Please provide overall Project/Program Risk Classification

Overall Project/Program Risk Classification

PIF	CEO Endorsement/Approval	MTR	TE
	Medium/Moderate		

E. OTHER REQUIREMENTS

Knowledge management

We confirm that an approach to Knowledge Management and Learning has been clearly described during Project Preparation in the Project Description and that these activities have been budgeted and an anticipated timeline for delivery of relevant outputs has been provided. This includes budget for linking with and participation in knowledge exchange activities organized through the coordination platform.

Yes

Socio-economic Benefits

We confirm that the child project design has considered socio-economic benefits to be delivered by the project and these have been clearly described in the Project Description and will be monitored and reported on during project implementation (at MTR and TER).

Yes.

ANNEX A: FINANCING TABLES

GEF Financing Table

Trust Fund Resources Requested by Agency(ies), Country(ies), Focal Area and the Programming of Funds

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	Grant / Non-Grant	GEF Project Grant($)	Agency Fee($)	Total GEF Financing ($)
UNEP	GET	Regional	Land Degradation	LD Global/Regional Set-Aside	Grant	7,139,450.00	642,550.00	7,782,000.00
Total GEF Resources ($)						**7,139,450.00**	**642,550.00**	**7,782,000.00**

Project Preparation Grant (PPG)

Was a Project Preparation Grant requested? true

PPG Amount ($) 200000

PPG Agency Fee ($) 18000

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	PPG($)	Agency Fee($)	Total PPG Funding($)

UNEP	GET	Regional	Land Degradation	LD Global/Regional Set-Aside	200,000.00	18,000.00	218,000.00
Total PPG Amount ($)					**200,000.00**	**18,000.00**	**218,000.00**

Please provide Justification

Sources of Funds for Country Star Allocation

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Sources of Funds	Total($)
Total GEF Resources					**0.00**

Focal Area Elements

Programming Directions	Trust Fund	GEF Project Financing($)	Co-financing($)
LD-1	GET	7,139,450.00	58074920
Total Project Cost		**7,139,450.00**	**58,074,920.00**

Confirmed Co-financing for the project, by name and type

Please include evidence for each co-financing source for this project in the tab of the portal

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Investment Mobilized	Amount($)
Recipient Country Government	National Great Green Wall Agency, Burkina Faso	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200000
Recipient Country Government	Projects Executed by the NGGWA , Burkina Faso	Grant	Investment mobilized	6000000
Recipient Country Government	Donor Funded Project Managed by the Agency (Desert to Power, etc Senegal	Grant	Investment mobilized	6000000
Recipient Country Government	National Great Green Wall Agency, Nigeria	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	1000000
Recipient Country Government	Projects Managed by the Agency (Desert to Power, etc) Nigeria	Grant	Investment mobilized	6200000
Private Sector	Future Agribussiness (FAGRIB)	Grant	Investment mobilized	20000000

Private Sector	Green United Development Ltd	Grant	Investment mobilized	13800000
Donor Agency	SWISSAID	Grant	Investment mobilized	3454920
Private Sector	One Billion Trees for Africa	Grant	Investment mobilized	100000
Private Sector	One Billion Trees for Africa	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	20000
Private Sector	Future Agribussiness (FAGRIB)	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	500000
Recipient Country Government	National Government Mali	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200000
Recipient Country Government	National Great Green Wall Agency, CHAD	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200000
Recipient Country Government	National Great Green Wall Agency, Niger	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200000
Recipient Country Government	Donor Funded Project Managed by the Agency (Desert to Power, etc Senegal	In-kind	Recurrent expenditures	200000
Total Co-financing				**58,074,920.00**

Please describe the investment mobilized portion of the co-financing

The participating Countries have mobilised cofinancing together with other partners supporting the GGW initiative.

ANNEX B: ENDORSEMENT

GEF Agency(ies) Certification

GEF Agency Coordinator	Date	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email
GEF Agency Coordinator	6/20/2025	Ersin Esen		ersin.esen@un.org
Project Coordinator	6/20/2025	Emmanuel Adonsou		Emmanuel.Adonsou@un.org

Record of Endorsement of GEF Operational Focal Point (s) on Behalf of the Government(s):

Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template.

Name of GEF OFP	Position	Ministry	Date (MM/DD/YYYY)

Mr. Oumar Gadji Soumaila	Climate Change Director, Chad	Ministry of Environment, Fisheries and Sustainable Development	
Mr. Mensur Dessie Nuri	Director, Multilateral Environmental Negotiation Coordination Environmental Protection Authority, Ethiopia	Ministry of Planning and Development	
Mr. Amidou Goita	Chef Section Donnees sur l'Environnement Agence de l'Environnement et du Developpment Durable, Mali	Ministry of Economy and Finance	
Pamoussa OUEDRAOGO	Permanent Secretary	National Council for Environment and Sustainable Development	
Mr. Badgie Dawda	Executive Director NEA	National Environment Agency	
Mr. Yakoubou Mahaman Sani	Directeur General Direction General de la Programmation du Développement, Niger	Ministry of Economy and Finance	
Mr. Stanley Jonah	Operational Focal Point, Nigeria	Federal Ministry of Environment	
Mr. Baba Drame	Directeur de l'Environnement et des Establissements classes, Senegal	Ministere de l'Environnement et du Developpement Durable	
Ms. Lalya Kamara	Minister, Mauritania	Ministry of Environment and Sustainable Development	

ANNEX C: PROJECT RESULTS FRAMEWORK

Please indicate the page number in the Project Document where the project results and M&E frameworks can be found. Please also paste below the Project Results Framework from the Agency document. For the Integrated Programs' global/regional coordination child project, please include the program-wide results framework, inclusive of results specific to the coordination child project. For any country child project, please ensure that relevant program level indicators are included.

Results Framework: Page 91-95

M&E: Refer to Annex H

ANNEX D: STATUS OF UTILIZATION OF PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)

Provide detailed funding amount of the PPG activities financing status in the table below:

Project Preparation Activities Implemented	GETF/LDCF/SCCF Amount ($)

	Budgeted Amount	Amount Spent To date	Amount Committed
International consultant drafting of the CEO project document and responding to internal and GEF review comments, working collaboratively with local consultants	50,000.00	50,000.00	
Consultancies for various thematic studies - including 1) Analysis and the development of the Gender Action Plan, 2) the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, 3) climate change adaptation and natural resources management and 4) Policy analysis-related studies 5) Environment context & GIS/georeferencing of child projects sites 6) Knowledge Management and communication that have informed the preparation of the CEO project document	72,340.00	72,340.00	
Regional consultation meetings and Validation workshop	77,660.00	77,660.00	
Total	200,000.00	**200,000.00**	**0.00**

ANNEX E: PROJECT MAP AND COORDINATES

Please provide geo-referenced information and map where the project interventions will take place

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Boumdeid	17.4636999	-11.3405202	9,212,638

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Maghtalahja	17.5127405	-13.0927887	9,212,635

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Maal	16.9554755	-13.3802032	2,598,201

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Aleg	17.0544525	-13.9157426	2,381,659

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Djiguéni	15.7334621	-8.6657412	9,226,996

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Timbédra	16.2432075	-8.6657412	2,376,115

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Néma	16.6173344	-7.2663798	2,377,539

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Tamchekett	16.9557062	-13.3802032	9,226,673

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Aioun	16.6597742	-9.6178808	2,381,291

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Tintane	16.3954331	-10.1673276	6,911,696

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Moudjeria	17.8787994	-12.3321238	9,212,633

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Ganzourgou	12.2899154	-0.8083428	2,360,627

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kourwéogo	12.6630268	-1.8974878	2,362,024

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Oubritenga	12.6043185	-1.2962095	2,356,983

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Raya Azebo (Tigray)	12.66667	39.75	7,670,652

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Chilga	12.5000	36.5	340,770

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Aguié (Maradi)	14.2000	13.0000	2,438,678

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Birnin konni (Tahoua	14.5000	5.0000	6,783,520

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kebbi	12.4965	4.1971822	3,630,931

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Michemire (Barh El Ghazel)	13.8573	15.7744167	2,428,024

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Dababa (Hadjer Lamis)	13.0035362	15.7337990	12,186,908

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Fass Ngom	15.9297176	-16.3244454	2,251,926

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Gandon	15.9664	-16.3416	2,251,684

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Nioro (Kayes)/	15.2304528	-9.5899063	2,449,536

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Yelimane	15.1189000	-10.5728390	8,631,403

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Gulina (Afar)	12.2500	40.0000	8,643,589

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Ndiebene Gandiole	15.9664	-16.3416	2,247,807

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Kiffa	16.6161559	-11.4002038	2,378,538

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Baroueli	13.0728274	-6.8317734	7,701,201

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Lower fuladu West	13.6102571	-14.9778258	2,413,461

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Jarra Central	13.5102740	-14.6680997	2,412,890

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Filingué	14.3582435	3.3238741	2,444,994

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Boboye	13.0934874	2.9057158	2,444,270

Location Description:

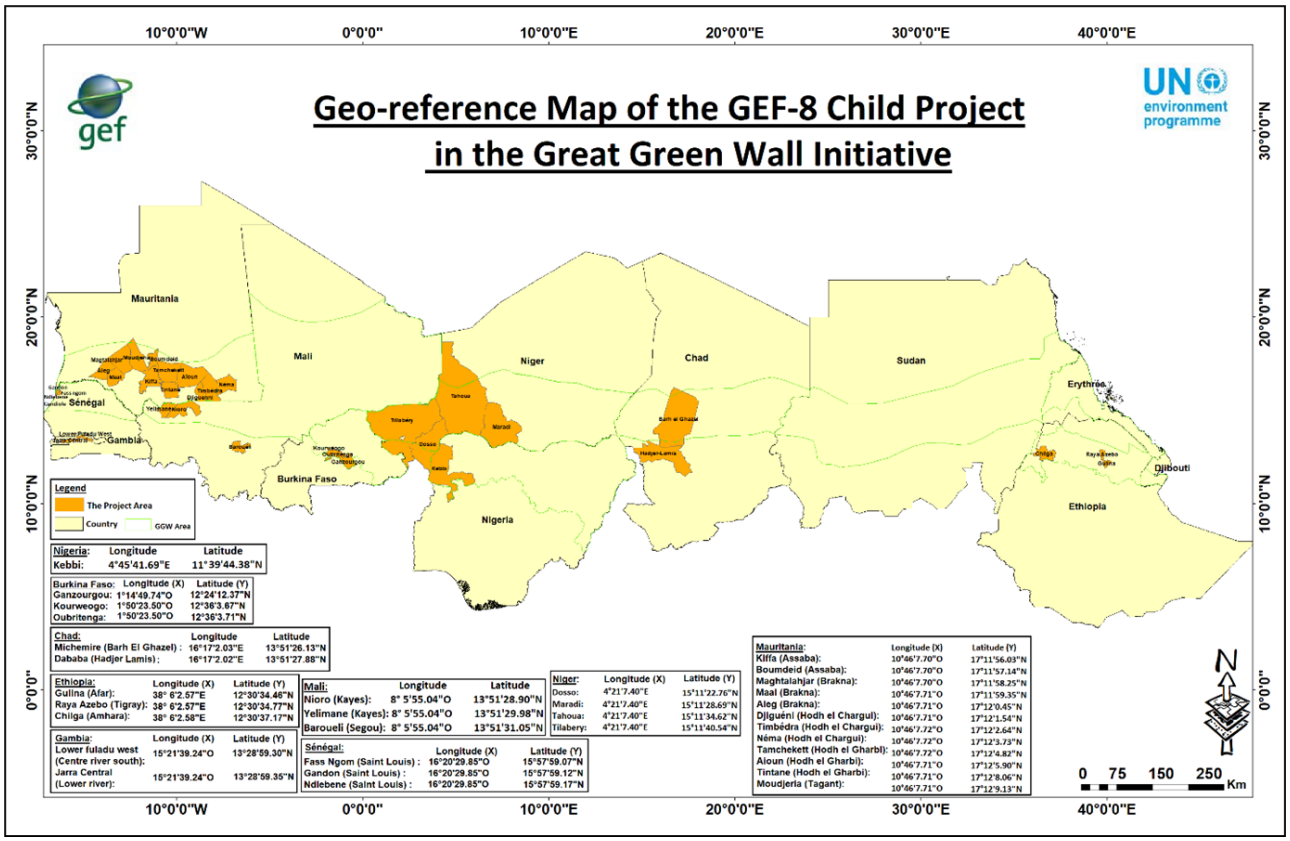
Activity Description:

Location Name	Latitude	Longitude	GeoName ID
Gulina	12.14523	39.98045	8,643,589

Location Description:

Activity Description:

Please provide any further geo-referenced information and map where project interventions are taking place as appropriate.



ANNEX F: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS DOCUMENTS INCLUDING RATING

Attach agency safeguard datasheet/assessment report(s), including ratings of risk types and overall project/program risk classification as well as any management plans or measures to address identified risks and impacts (as applicable).

Title

SRIFRegionalsigned01

ANNEX G: BUDGET TABLE

Please upload the budget table here.

Appendix A: Project Budget Template												
Expenditure Category		**Detailed Description**	**Component (USDeq.)**								**Total**	**Responsible Entity** (Executing Entity receiving funds from the GEF Agency) [1]
			Component 1	***Component 2***	***Component 3***		***Component 4***	***Sub-Total***	***M&E***	***PMC***		
			Outcome 1.1	***Outcome 2.1***	***Outcome 3.1***	***Outcome 3.2***	***Outcome 4***					
Vehicles												
Cars rental for use during in-countries or subregional field visits.			10,000	10,000				20,000				UNEP Biodiversity Landscape and People Unit (BLPU)
Salaries/Personnel								-				
Contractual service individual	**Contractual service individual**	Identify gender-sensitive enterprises and support capacity building for the identified enterprises in business develop	100,000	250,000	100,000			450,000			450,000	UNEP Biodiversity Landscape and People Unit (BLPU)

		ment, available market opportunities, management, and marketing tools. Conduct value-chain analysis to identify high-potential value chains for these enterprises, develop a comprehensive capacity-building plan, and deliver national-level training in nine (9) countries, with a budget of USD 50,000 per country.										
	Contractual service individual	Conduct gender-responsive stocktaking of key policy areas related to climate change risks—including droughts, floods, adaptation, and related issues—in nine (9) countries. Identify gaps and	200,000		100,000			300,000			300,000	UNEP Biodiversity Landscape and People Unit (BLPU)

		enabling policies that need to be developed or strengthened and conduct training for key stakeholders to support effective policy implementation.										
	Contractual service individual	Community based natural resources management assessment and related training sessions to support national child projects teams	200,000					200,000			200,000	UNEP Biodiversity Landscape and People Unit (BLPU)
	Contractual service individual	Creating Enabling Conditions for development in 9 countries of Gender responsive Public-Private Partnerships (e.g. with FAGRIP GUD MATA and Partners on carbon market value chain) to enhance sustainable natural resource		259,636				259,636			259,636	BLPU

		management and value-chain development at national level under the leadership of national child project teams										
	Contractual service individual	Communication tools, methodologies, training and products to support national child projects communication strategies in 9 countries			300,000	100,000		400,000			400,000	BLPU
	Contractual Services – Company	Ad 'hoc technical support for targeted themes in collaboration with specialised entity including birdlife, Wetlands International, IUCN (wetlands management, transboundary issues, security risk assessment and consideration, etc.) stocktaking and	200,000	40,000	100,000	299,900		639,900			639,900	BLPU

		strategic technical guidelines for countries consideration										
	Contractual Services – Company	Support national project in design and implementation of Advisory services and training on drought and weather monitoring		80,000		53,361		133,361			133,361	BLPU
	Contractual Services – Company	Regional KM System with national entry point Development and implementation					416,716	416,716			416,716	BLPU
	Contractual Services – Company	Supporting national project team in developing Standards and Protocols for collecting data and monitoring implementation					265,212	265,212			265,212	BLPU
Equipment		Communication equipment (1Cameras, 1 smartphone, meetings laptops, network infrastructure like			39,923			39,923			39,923	BLPU

		routers, switches, Fiber optics, specialized gear like radios, satellites, and antennas) to support regional communication strategy through PAAGGGW										
		Office Equipment 2 - 3 Laptops, 1 big Printer and 2 small printers (1 for meetings outside office and 1 for Project Coordinator, 2 servers for the observatory, etc to build technical capacity in implementation of the GGW initiative						-		41,000	41,000	BLPU
Contractual Services – Individual		Consultant to conduct trainings for national Child Projects team to support SLM good practices deployment	40,000					40,000			40,000	BLPU
International Consultants		Int'l consultant 1 to help national	50,000					50,000			50,000	BLPU

		team to adapt to their national context SLM good practices in 9 child project countries										
		Int'l consultant 2 Capacity building training expert	50,000					50,000			50,000	BLPU
		2 consultancies (1 for a group of 4or5 countries) on National policy analysis on droughts (stocktaking, definition of monitoring and EW indicators, Vulnerability assessment, preparedness and mitigation, response, recovery and coordination and communication) and drought Management Plan. 30 days at $400 daily rate	187,974	51,040	3,359			242,373			242,373	
		2 consultancies (1 for a group of	187,974	51,040	3,359			242,373			242,373	

		4or5 countries) Financing Opportunities for drought management, natural resources management- 30 days at $400 daily rate										
		2 consultancies (1 for a group of 4or5 countries) Natural resources Management in support of child projects policies analysis and review - 30 days each at $400 daily rate -	187,974	51,040	3,359			242,373			242,373	BLPU
Local Consultants		5 Ad hoc consultants for 30 days per year for 6 years at a rate of $444.5 per day to support technical project implementation (See ToR)	100,000			140,106	160,004	400,110			400,110	
Salary and benefits / Staff costs		Program Technical Coordinator (P4 Nouakchott Based)	413,322	150,000			100,000	663,322		18,349	681,671	BLPU

		Finance Assistant						-		180,000	180,000	BLPU
		UNV-Program Assistant Nouakchott Based		60,000		60,000		120,000			120,000	BLPU
Trainings, Workshops, Meetings		Inception Workshop, 6 Steering committee meetings, international knowledge sharing, Participation to relevant MEA meetings, training on tools and good practices for SLM	636,679	250,000	150,000			1,036,679			1,036,679	BLPU
		Capacity building (targeted training relevant to GGW objectives, organisational strengthening) for the GGW Women Platform + GGW Youths Caravane + GGW Parliamentarians Platform	15,000	15,000				30,000			30,000	BLPU
		National Child Projects Team KM training					141,129	141,129			141,129	BLPU
Travel		Project Coordination Experts and Consulta	300,000					300,000		14,972	314,972	BLPU

		nt travels										
Other Operating Costs		MTR						-	45,000		45,000	BLPU
		Terminal evaluation						-	72,220		72,220	BLPU
		Contribution to Office Rental (The Panafrican Agency is now renting building on cost sharing basis with all Agencies staff (AfDB, IFAD, UNCCD Accelerator, FAO. UNEP) based in the Agency						-		59,802	59,802	BLPU
Office Supplies		Writing tools, paper products, organization tools, desk accessories and tech consumables						-		25,000	25,000	BLPU
Grand Total			2,878,923	1,267,756	800,000	653,367	1,083,061	6,683,107	117,220	339,123	7,139,450	

Budget Narrative	
Vehicle justification	The Project's Regional Coordination Unit is in Nouakchott, Mauritania. This location justifies the necessity for at least one (1) project vehicle for the following reasons: 1) Regional proximity of project sites: Project sites in Mauritania, Senegal, and Mali—and to a large extent The Gambia—are located in neighbouring border areas, allowing for combined field missions. Road travel between these countries offers significant efficiencies in terms of time and cost savings compared to air travel. 2) Limited air connectivity to Nouakchott: Nouakchott is among the more challenging capitals in the region in terms of air connectivity. Airline services are limited, often operate only on selected days of the week, and are frequently subject to cancellations and delays. As a result, many partners rely on road travel to Dakar to access more reliable international flights. 3) Limited availability of institutional vehicles: The Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, which hosts the Project Coordination Unit, has limited availability of field vehicles. This constraint significantly hampers the coordination unit's ability to conduct regular monitoring, supervision, and field visits, including within Mauritania. 4) Project visibility and credibility: Access to a dedicated project vehicle is essential to maintain the project's professional image and credibility. During joint missions and field activities with partners and stakeholders, the inability of the project to provide transportation for its own staff would negatively affect its visibility and standing. Based on the above considerations, it is necessary for the Project Coordination Unit to be equipped with at least one (1) vehicle in Nouakchott. This vehicle will support effective project implementation and facilitate field missions in Mauritania as well as in neighbouring Senegal, Mali, and The Gambia.

Please explain any aspects of the budget as needed here

The Regional Coordination project is based in Nouakchott, Mauritania. This location justifies the necessity of at least one project vehicle for the following reasons: **Regional mobility and efficiency:** Project sites in Mauritania, Senegal, and Mali—and to a large extent The Gambia—are located near border areas. Their proximity allows for combined field visits, which saves time and resources. Having a dedicated vehicle would greatly facilitate such coordinated missions. **Limited air transport options to Nouakchott:** Nouakchott faces significant challenges in terms of flight availability. There are few airlines serving the city, flights operate only on selected days, and cancellations and delays are frequent. As a result, many partners travel by road to Dakar in order to access more reliable international flights. A project vehicle would therefore be essential to support this commonly used alternative. **Insufficient vehicles within the host institution:** The Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall, which hosts the Project Coordination Unit, does not have enough field vehicles. Consequently, even site visits within Mauritania are constrained by vehicle availability, limiting effective project monitoring and coordination. **Project visibility and professional image:** During joint field missions and activities with partners, the absence of a project vehicle negatively affects the project's image. It reflects poorly if the project is unable to provide transportation for its own staff, potentially undermining its credibility and standing among stakeholders. Based on the above considerations, it is essential for the Project Coordination Unit to have at least one vehicle in Nouakchott. This vehicle would support field visits within Mauritania and facilitate missions to neighboring Senegal, Mali, and The Gambia.

ANNEX I: RESPONSES TO PROJECT REVIEWS

From GEF Secretariat and GEF Agencies, and Responses to Comments from Council at work program inclusion and the Convention Secretariat and STAP at PIF.

STAP COMMENTS	RESPONSE
1. Given the Sahel's vulnerability to climate change, economic instability, conflict, population growth, and possibly other key drivers, STAP highly recommends that each country project to develop simple future narratives that describe interactions between the key drivers and uncertainties, as well as response measures that ensure the proposed interventions are necessary and sufficient to achieve the proposed GEBs and climate adaptation benefits. This process is rooted in applying resilience thinking through project interventions to ensure they are robust to different plausible futures. STAP recommends its advice on future narratives as well as the World Bank's resilience methodology.	**1**.The Project addressed the comment on Section A project Rational and other part of the document The Project intervention particularly components 3 and 4 shall support country to put in place enabling conditions and capacities aiming at reducing reasonably, the vulnerability to climate change and other key drivers, The non-intervention will escalate the vulnerabilities of the communities to the phenomena of climate change and identified other key drivers. Table 2 Section A. Include a climate change risk and the mitigation measures

	The interlinkage of climate change and other drivers is also developed in the description of the output 4.1.4
2. The PFD lists several ongoing and past initiatives as part of the baseline. In each of the individual projects, STAP recommends that the appropriate links be made, demonstrating how learning will be leveraged between this project and ongoing, or past, initiatives.	**2.** On the PFD, Section 3: Rationale and Objectives – Justification for GEF funding, paragraphs 24 to 26 addressed the issue of the Project leveraging on the lessons learnt from either past and ongoing initiatives at the national or subnational level. During the PPG of the Regional Coordination Project detailed analysis of the KM and communication was conducted and a strategy and Action to be implemented is developed. The Child projects will be trained on the strategy and guidance for choosing specific KM and communication activities will be provided, **See Annex K.**
3. For each individual project, it is necessary for the theory of change to identify assumptions tied to each outcome, and which will be verified and tracked to ensure the GEBs and adaptation outcomes are realized. There are multiple assumptions made, including on farmers and communities changing mindsets to adopt new sustainable land management, or ecosystem-based management practices, which will need to be confirmed and monitored, potentially leading to adaptive management of the proposed interventions. This learning should be reflected in the overall Program's theory of change and knowledge management, as innovation and scaling are dependent on learning. STAP also recommends strengthening the narrative describing the theory of change, as this is currently weak. STAP's theory of change primer is a useful resource for project developers to use	3. In the theory of Change of the Project, assumptions and basic risks were tied to the various outcomes of the components to ensure global environmental benefits (GEBs) and adaptation outputs and outcomes are seamlessly achieved. The theory of change narrative has been strengthened. The learning and scaling up is mainstreamed in all the project components and the KM and Communication Action Plan for the project (Annex K) is design on the basis on the learn from the entire project framework and build on it to scale up good practices for Social Benefits and behavioral change to make the initiative more innovative and sustainable.
4. STAP encourages the project proponents to develop a separate theory of change on scaling. This process will provide close attention to changes and innovation in policies and governance arrangements (tied to component 1 and 2), changes in cultural norms and values (component 2 and 3), and other powerful levers for scaling and transformation.	The revised Theory of Change has clearly indicated the scaling up potential and intention throughout the components.

Furthermore, STAP encourages the adoption of steps similar to those in a policy cycle, outlined in STAP's policy coherence paper. These steps help with a policy analysis process (component 1), which can contribute to identifying coherence and incoherence between policies supporting climate resilience, sustainable land management and biodiversity conservation. For component 2 and 3, close monitoring of changes in land management practices and cultural values and norms, will be necessary. While STAP embraces innovative financing mechanisms, such as Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES), as incentives to adopt and scale a nature positive practice, STAP recommends validating (test, monitor, and learn for scaling purposes) key assumptions affiliated with PES adoption and GEB and climate adaptation impacts.	
5. To design and implement component 4, focused on the regional integrated knowledge management platform (IKMP), STAP recommends collaborating and coordinating with existing Pan-African open access platforms, such as Digital Earth Africa. A successful transformative approach goes beyond technological and financial innovation. This effort also requires partnerships of knowledge with local stakeholders such as African Universities of the Sahel. Scaling up, resilience and sustainability of outcomes could be further enhanced through partnerships with organizations such as the African Research Universities Alliance (ARUA). STAP agrees with the recommendations of a 2022 Danish report on The Great Green Wall: An Overview and Lessons Learnt that emphasizes "… Collaboration with national-level organizations that understand contextualized livelihood vulnerabilities is also recommended; …. promote improved coordination of activities and consistent monitoring across partner countries and subprojects; …More qualitative analyses of project site contexts should also be included among monitoring tools". STAP recommends that the proponent consult its 2022 document titled 'Understanding South–South Cooperation for Knowledge Exchange" and the recent paper of Goffner et al (2019), "The Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative", as sources for understanding how to create knowledge management and adaptive learning systems that enhance resilience in the Sahelian landscapes and livelihoods	**5.** Indeed, the Project leveraged on the existing Knowledge Management hubs Like that of CIFOR-ICRAF, IFAD and collaboration with Knowledge-sharing and institutional (Universities and Research institutes) learning platforms to scale up resilience and sustainability of project outcomes.