



From degraded to functional restored forest land

Smallholder farmers curbing food insecurity in central Burkina Faso



Burkina Faso

Size: 274,200 km²
Population: 16.93 million
Capital: Ouagadougou

A nation reliant on forests

At a national and local level, Burkina Faso depends on forests and the services they provide. Agriculture and livestock are the country's main sectors of employment and revenue, woody vegetation is the primary energy source, and non-timber forest products contribute towards food security, medicine and cultural value systems. Agricultural expansion, overgrazing, population growth, mining and climate change, however, are leading to forest degradation and food insecurity throughout the country.

Households rely on restored plots for various products. Harvested resources, including non-timber forest products (NTFPs), are used either for household consumption, commercialisation, or both – making them indispensable to food security in the area.

Assisted natural regeneration

Ongoing restoration activities in Burkina Faso illustrate the country's engagement toward securing its environment. In the early 2000s, the Ouagadougou-based NGO Tiipaalga, began working with smallholder farmers in central Burkina Faso to restore plots of previously-cultivated land. After over a decade of work, this assisted natural regeneration of tree resources is improving the availability of forest and agricultural products, as well as increasing biodiversity.



The project:

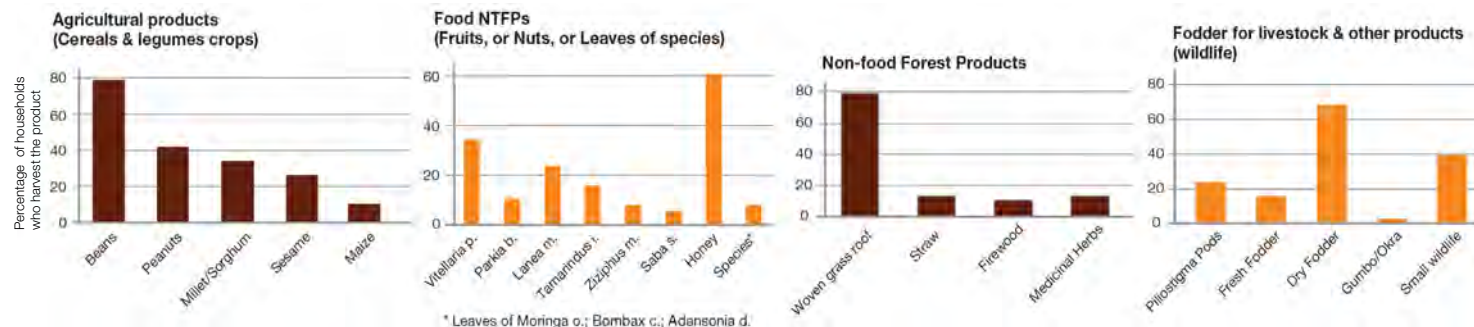
Three hectares per household of previously cultivated land is enclosed to allow the natural regeneration of woody and herbaceous vegetation. The area is fenced to protect it against livestock, and a 10-m strip (0.8 hectares) rings the perimeter and is cultivated to serve as a firebreak.

8
provinces

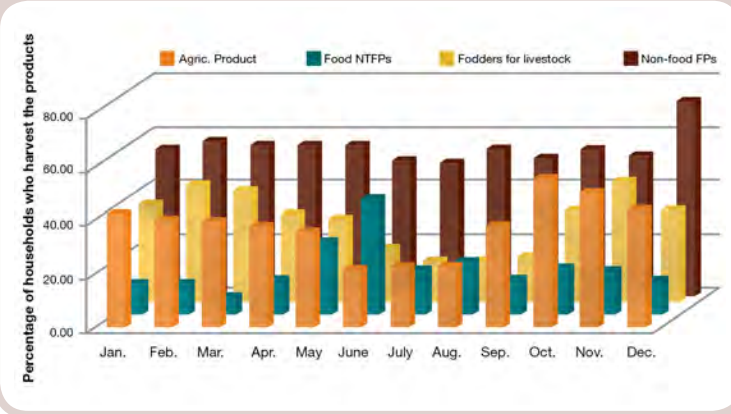
109
villages

247
plots

722
hectares of restored forests

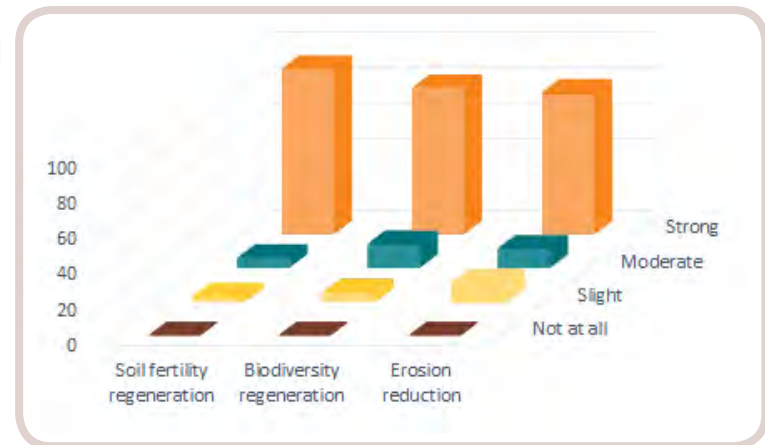


Small-scale reforested lands offer an appropriate strategy and means of diversification of food sources to help curb food deficits in the months before the major harvest of food grains.

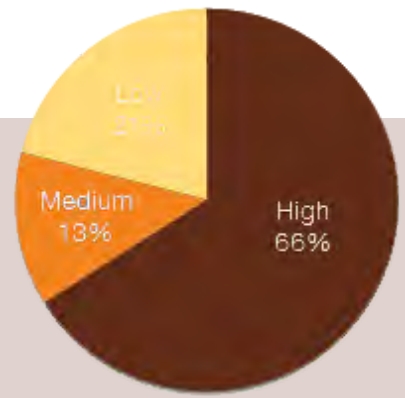


Restored forests can provide safety nets during months when grain is in short supply and during years of intense drought, as they are sources of food and income.

When interviewed, the majority of households said they recognise that the restored plots play a strong role in providing ecosystem services, such as conserving water and preventing erosion.



Community perceptions: The majority of interviewed households living around restored forests in three provinces of central Burkina Faso, consider restored land to be of high importance for food availability.



The Baobab, native to Burkina Faso, provides food and other livelihood products.

Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and Food Security

FLR has the potential to re-establish ecological integrity and enhance human well-being in deforested or degraded forest landscapes. It involves people coming together to restore land through seven place-based interventions.

Food security exists when all people have ongoing physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. These seven FLR interventions contribute to the security of food resources by increasing agricultural productivity and diversification while reducing resource depletion and vulnerability.

This factsheet illustrates the benefits of natural regeneration:

- Planted forests
- Natural regeneration
- Silviculture
- Agroforestry
- Improved fallow
- Mangrove restoration
- Erosion control

This factsheet is excerpted from:

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