ACReSAL

# Redefining Landscape Restoration through Technology and Inclusion



818,546 ha
Under Restoration

4,445,569
Direct Beneficiaries

44.7%
Women Among All Beneficiaries



APRIL, 2026

FGN

THE WORLD BANK

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# Foreword



*"ACReSAL is not simply a conservation project. It is an investment in Nigeria's future — in the land, the people, and the generations yet to come."*

Nigeria stands at a pivotal moment in its environmental and development history. The forces of climate change, land degradation, and desertification — which have long threatened the livelihoods of tens of millions of our citizens across the northern states — are intensifying. And yet, in the midst of these profound challenges, this publication stands as compelling evidence that Nigeria is not merely responding to the climate crisis. We are leading from the front.

The Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) project is one of the most ambitious and consequential integrated landscape restoration initiatives ever undertaken on the African continent. Spanning nineteen northern states and the Federal Capital Territory, implemented across six years with the support of the World Bank, design to touch the lives of millions of Nigerians, ACReSAL is the operational expression of our government's unwavering commitment to a green, resilient, and prosperous Nigeria.

What distinguishes ACReSAL from interventions that have come before it is its ambition of integration. It does not treat landscape restoration as separate from food security, or water management as separate from gender equity, or institutional reform as separate from community empowerment. It understands — as the evidence has long demanded — that these challenges are indivisible, and that only solutions which address them together can produce change that lasts.

The achievements documented in these pages speak for themselves. Over 818,546 hectares of degraded land placed on the path to recovery. Communities lifted from subsistence through targeted finance, training, and enterprise support. Women — so often the first to bear the cost of a failing environment — placed at the centre of decision-making, land management, and economic life. Wetlands revived. Gullies tamed. Wildlife sanctuaries reborn. Farmers who once watched their crops wither in drought now harvesting abundance through climate-smart techniques that will serve their children and their grandchildren.

These outcomes reflect the dedication of a great many people: the rangers who patrol our reserves at dawn, the women who lead their community funds with precision and pride, the extension workers who carry knowledge across vast and difficult terrain, and the state-level teams who translate policy into practice day after day. To each of them, this publication is a tribute.

ACReSAL also demonstrates what becomes possible when nations align their domestic programmes with the global frameworks that define our shared ambitions. Our contributions to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, our Nationally Determined Contributions under the Paris Agreement, our commitments under the Bonn Challenge and the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative — all of these are given concrete expression through this project. Nigeria is not merely a signatory to these agreements; through ACReSAL, we are one of their most active and measurable contributors.

As we approach this Mid-Term Review, we do so with justified confidence in what has been accomplished — and with a clear-eyed appreciation of the work that remains. The target of one million hectares by 2028 is within reach. The communities served by this project are stronger, more resilient, and more capable than when we began. And the institutional architecture we have built — the Strategic Catchment Management Plans, the digital monitoring systems, the policy reforms at state and federal level — will endure long after the project's formal cycle has concluded.

I commend the World Bank, the governors and governments of our implementing states, our international research and civil society partners, and the entire ACReSAL team for their extraordinary commitment to this work. I am honoured to present this publication to participants at the April 2026 Mid-Term Review, and I look forward to the continued collaboration that will carry these gains forward.

The land can be healed. The people can prosper. And Nigeria can show the world how it is done.

**Mallam Balarabe Abbas Lawal**
*Honourable Minister of Environment*
*Federal Republic of Nigeria*
*Chairman, Federal Steering Committee, ACReSAL Project*



# Publisher's Note

## *A New Covenant for Nigeria's Landscapes*

> *"When this project was conceived, the question was not whether Nigeria could afford to restore its degraded northern landscapes. It was whether Nigeria could afford not to"*

In 2022, the Federal Government of Nigeria, in partnership with the World Bank, launched the Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) Project. At the time, northern Nigeria faced serious challenges: widespread desertification, growing competition for land and water due to climate change, and communities struggling to survive on increasingly poor soil.

The project set a clear target: to restore one million hectares of degraded land and improve the livelihoods of the people who depend on it. To date, 818,546 ha have been successfully put under restoration.

This is more than just a numbers victory. It shows what is possible when strong political will, good science, and real community involvement come together. By restoring this land, Nigeria is meeting its commitments under the Bonn Challenge and the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100). The country is now seen as a serious and results-driven leader in the global effort against land degradation.

However, the real success of ACReSAL is not measured only in hectares. It is measured in the lives of 4,445,569 direct beneficiaries — farmers, herders, processors, women entrepreneurs, community leaders, and young people across the 19 northern states and the Federal Capital Territory. Their lives have been greatly improved.

Our goal was never just to repair the land. It was to restore the dignity of the people living on it. ACReSAL has broken down the old barriers between environment, agriculture, and water resources. It recognises that a dry well is an agricultural problem, and a degraded forest is a poverty problem. This integrated approach has created a strong model of resilience that is now gaining attention beyond Nigeria's borders.

As we look ahead to the end of the project in 2028, our main focus is on sustainability. We are embedding digital monitoring systems in state ministries and agencies. We are also building strong institutional frameworks to protect the gains we have made even after external funding ends. We are building lasting systems, not just temporary results.

I invite you to read this publication not just as a report of what we have achieved, but as a practical blueprint for Nigeria's climate-resilient future. It is also a call to all partners, policymakers, and community leaders to keep this momentum going.

Together, we are not merely surviving the climate crisis — we are overcoming it.

**Abdulhamid Umar**
*National Project Coordinator (NPC),*
ACReSAL Project | Federal Republic of Nigeria

# Publication Committee



**Christiana Omosebi**
*Member, Publication Commitee*



**Sule James**
*Chairman, Publication Commitee*



**Helen John**
*Member, Publication Committee*



**Mukhtar Tanko**
*Member, Publication Committee*



**Olaitan Ogunsemoyin**
*Member, Publication Committee*

## Contributors

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Abdulkareem Suleiman* | *Timothy Butu Mwada* | *Matthew Bawul* | *Maryam Abdulqadir* |
| *Zaharadeen Sani* | *Maiwada Bala* | *Ohikere Angela Enechoje* | *Yahaya Yusuf* |
| *Jamilu Abdullahi* | *Richard James* | *Ephraim Hemben* | *Okanlawon Taiwo* |
| *Jennifer Magawata* | *Jessica Ishaku* | *Awwal Hassan Wara* | *Emmanuel Bongnwi* |
| *Zubairu Suleiman* | *Birnin Kudu* | *Ibrahim Baba Saleh* | *Lawal Musa Kallah* |
| *Zakari Aliyu* | *Mbalamen Yuwa* | *Sylvester Ibeneme* | *Eniola Saheed Adedayo* |
| *Rizqiya Ahmad* | *Utennami Sarki* | *Karima Jibril* | *George Imama* |

# Editor's Desk

## *The Human Heart of 818,546 hectares*



*"My editorial office for this publication was rarely a desk. More often, it was a newly planted shelterbelt in Kano, a rehabilitated gully in Gombe, or a cassava processing centre in the FCT — the places where the language of agro-climatic resilience becomes simply the language of life."*

While compiling this edition, I kept returning to one clear observation: the speed of change has been remarkable. In just four years since ACReSAL was launched, we have moved from talking about what could happen to showing real, measurable results. The northern Nigerian landscape is visibly changing from brown to green.

The most powerful message in this publication is not the number of hectares restored, impressive as that is. It is the 4.4million people whose lives have been changed by this project.

During my visits to the project states, I saw a simple but powerful definition of resilience. It is the look of relief on a farmer's face when a power tiller triples his harvest and he no longer carries debt from one planting season to the next. It is the quiet confidence of a community leader who no longer fears the rainy season, because the drainage systems built by ACReSAL now protect their land. It is the woman in Jigawa who now walks into a fund management committee meeting, sits at the head of the table, and leads the discussion — because ACReSAL deliberately gave her that opportunity.

*"When a woman accesses a revolving fund or receives training in climate-smart agriculture, she does not just improve her own life — she stabilises her household, strengthens her community, and quietly architects a greener Nigeria."*

Gender inclusion is not a side feature of this project. It is at its core. Forty-Four Point Seven percent (44.7%) of ACReSAL's beneficiaries are women. This was achieved through careful planning, not by chance. As a result, the project has created a positive ripple effect across rural Nigeria that will last long after the project ends.

This magazine is dedicated to these women — the processors, farmers, fund committee chairs, and conservation stewards who are the quiet architects of the success you are about to read.

The stories in these pages cover everything ACReSAL has achieved: new technology through geospatial mapping and remote sensing, stronger institutions through State Project Management Units that are delivering excellent results, and real community transformation that is hard to capture in photos but changes lives completely.

You will find it all here — the numbers and the personal stories, the situation before and after, the policies and the people behind them.

As you read these pages, I hope you feel what I felt in the field: the heartbeat of a landscape coming back to life, and the strong determination of people who have decided that the desert will advance no further.

ACReSAL has given this determination the tools, knowledge, and support it deserves. What you hold in your hands is the record of what happened next.

**Jane Ozuruoke**
*Editor-in-Chief, Communication Specialist*
*ACReSAL Project | Federal Republic of Nigeria*

# Acknowledgements

*Recognitions and Gratitude*

A project as large, complex, and ambitious as ACReSAL cannot succeed through government mandate alone. It succeeds because of the daily commitment of many individuals, organisations, and communities who believe in the project and work hard to make it happen across nineteen states and the Federal Capital Territory.

This publication gives us the opportunity to thank them and give them the recognition they deserve.

### THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT OF NIGERIA

We thank the Federal Government of Nigeria for the vision and political will that made ACReSAL possible. The steady leadership of the Federal Ministry of Environment and the support of the Federal Steering Committee have provided the direction and authority needed to run a project of this size.

### THE WORLD BANK

ACReSAL exists because of a strong and productive partnership with the World Bank. Their financial support, technical expertise, and focus on accountability have been very important to the project's success. The World Bank's confidence in Nigeria's ability to lead large-scale land restoration has been both encouraging and challenging — in a good way. It has pushed us to measure what really matters and to be honest about the results.

### STATE GOVERNMENTS AND IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

We give special thanks to the nineteen state governments and the FCT administration. They have provided political leadership, funding support, and day-to-day operational help. A project like ACReSAL can only succeed when state governments match the federal government's ambition — and they have done so.

We also thank the State Project Coordinating Units, State Technical Teams, and the many committed civil servants who have turned plans into real action in communities across northern Nigeria.

### INTERNATIONAL AND RESEARCH PARTNERS

ACReSAL has gained a lot from the knowledge and expertise of its international partners. We thank the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) for its technical guidance on sustainable land and water management.

We also thank the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), the University of Northumbria, National Geographic, and other research institutions. Their support has strengthened our conservation work and helped put Nigerian landscapes on the global scientific map.

Special thanks go to the Netherlands Government through the SoilValues collaboration, and to the National Bureau of Statistics under the 50x2030 initiative. These partnerships have greatly improved our data quality and institutional strength.

### COMMUNITY LEADERS, TRADITIONAL RULERS, AND RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS

No community-level project can succeed without the trust and support of local leaders. We thank the traditional rulers, community chiefs, religious leaders, and community-based organisations in all the implementing states. Their cooperation opened doors, resolved conflicts, and ensured that ACReSAL's work was accepted and welcomed by the people.

Their role as keepers of local knowledge and community trust has been very important.

## THE WOMEN OF ACReSAL

We owe a special thank you to the women of northern Nigeria. They have not only benefited from the project — in many cases, they have driven its success.

From the farmers in Niger State whose yields increased five times, to the cassava processors in Sheda whose higher incomes changed their families' lives, to the women in Jigawa who chair fund committees and show that leadership has no gender — these women have proved the project's main message: when women are supported, entire communities grow stronger.

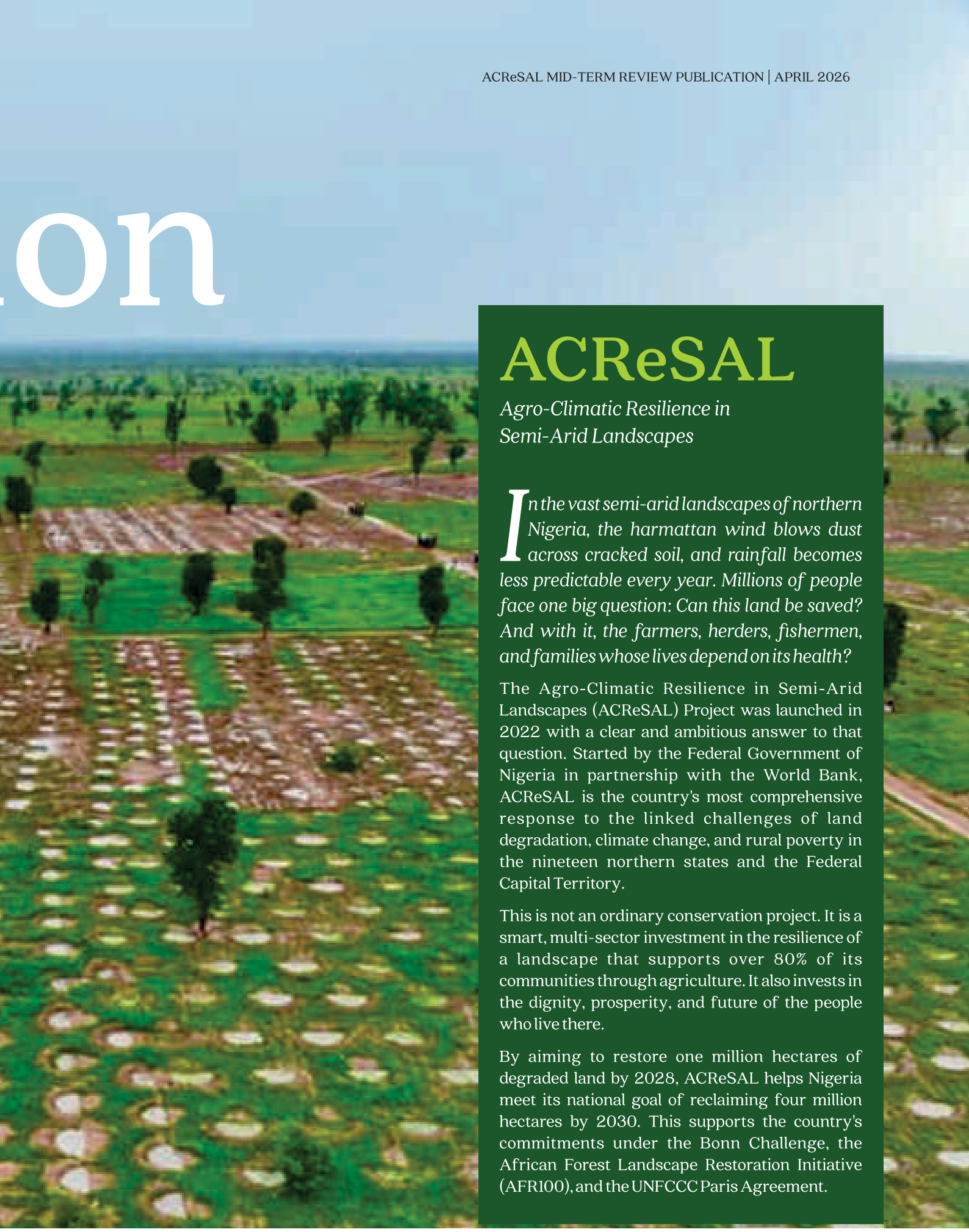
## THE ACReSAL PROJECT TEAM

Finally, we warmly thank the men and women of the ACReSAL project team at both federal and state levels — the project coordinators, environmental specialists, communication officers, gender officers, monitoring and evaluation experts, community mobilisers, and administrative staff.

They have carried out this work with professionalism, creativity, and real care for the communities they serve. Their dedication is the hidden foundation behind every success shown in this publication.

# Introducti





# ACReSAL

*Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes*

*In the vast semi-arid landscapes of northern Nigeria, the harmattan wind blows dust across cracked soil, and rainfall becomes less predictable every year. Millions of people face one big question: Can this land be saved? And with it, the farmers, herders, fishermen, and families whose lives depend on its health?*

The Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) Project was launched in 2022 with a clear and ambitious answer to that question. Started by the Federal Government of Nigeria in partnership with the World Bank, ACReSAL is the country's most comprehensive response to the linked challenges of land degradation, climate change, and rural poverty in the nineteen northern states and the Federal Capital Territory.

This is not an ordinary conservation project. It is a smart, multi-sector investment in the resilience of a landscape that supports over 80% of its communities through agriculture. It also invests in the dignity, prosperity, and future of the people who live there.

By aiming to restore one million hectares of degraded land by 2028, ACReSAL helps Nigeria meet its national goal of reclaiming four million hectares by 2030. This supports the country's commitments under the Bonn Challenge, the African Forest Landscape Restoration Initiative (AFR100), and the UNFCCC Paris Agreement.

| 818,546 Hectares | 19 States + FCT | 4.4 Million | 1.99 Million |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under restoration | Geographic reach | Direct beneficiaries | Women beneficiaries |

## Four Components, One Integrated Vision

ACReSAL's design reflects a sophisticated understanding that no single intervention can reverse decades of environmental degradation or insulate communities from the accelerating impacts of climate change. The project is therefore structured around four mutually reinforcing components, each targeting a distinct dimension of the challenge:

**A**

### Component A: Dryland Management

The ecological engine of the project — restoring degraded watersheds, rehabilitating rangelands, stabilising gullies, and reviving wetlands through a combination of structural engineering, bioengineering, and community-led land stewardship.

**B**

### Component B: Community Climate Resilience

The human dimension — equipping farming households, women entrepreneurs, herding communities, and local enterprises with the tools, finance, training, and infrastructure needed to withstand climate shocks and build lasting economic security.

**C**

### Component C: Institutional Strengthening and Project Management

The governance backbone — strengthening the Ministries, Departments and Agencies responsible for natural resource management, embedding digital platforms for precision monitoring, and advancing the policy frameworks that will sustain ACReSAL's gains beyond the project lifecycle.

**D**

### Component D: Contingent Emergency Response (CERC)

The safety valve — providing rapid, flexible resources to protect project communities and preserve progress when climate-related emergencies strike, ensuring that the unexpected does not undo what has been carefully built.

## A Project in Step with the World

ACReSAL does not work alone. It is deliberately aligned with the most important global frameworks for sustainable development and climate action.
Its interventions directly support six of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



Beyond the SDGs, ACReSAL helps Nigeria meet its Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Paris Agreement. It reduces land-based emissions, strengthens the ability of communities to adapt to climate change, and promotes low-carbon farming methods needed for a climate-resilient future.

The project also contributes to the AFR100 commitment and the Bonn Challenge. This positions Nigeria as a serious and credible player in the global effort against desertification and land degradation.

## Tech-Driven Transformation:

ACReSAL is revolutionizing landscape restoration in Semi-Arid regions! Leveraging cutting-edge tech like geospatial mapping, remote sensing, and solar-powered solutions, they're boosting efficiency and equity. Real-time data tracking + community feedback = impactful, sustainable change .

ACReSAL recognizes that restoring landscapes at scale requires more than goodwill and labour — it requires precision, data, and innovation. Geospatial mapping and remote sensing technologies enable the project to monitor land health in real time, track restoration progress across vast catchments, and direct resources to where they are needed most. Solar-powered irrigation and off-grid energy solutions reduce community dependence on erratic rainfall and fossil fuels, creating green livelihoods that are both productive and sustainable.

A sophisticated Management Information System (MIS) underpins the entire monitoring and evaluation framework — facilitating real-time progress tracking, gender-disaggregated data analysis, and participatory community feedback. This infrastructure of accountability ensures that ACReSAL's investments are transparent, adaptive, and continuously improving in response to emerging needs on the ground.

## Putting Women and Vulnerable Communities at the Centre

In northern Nigeria, women carry a heavier burden from climate change. They are mainly responsible for collecting water, producing food, and caring for their families. When rains fail or harvests are poor, women are often the first to suffer.

ACReSAL does not treat this issue as an afterthought. It is a core part of the project's design.

Out of the project's 4.4 million direct beneficiaries, 1.99 million are women. The project supports them through land access programmes, community revolving funds, enterprise development, leadership training, and gender-sensitive infrastructure.

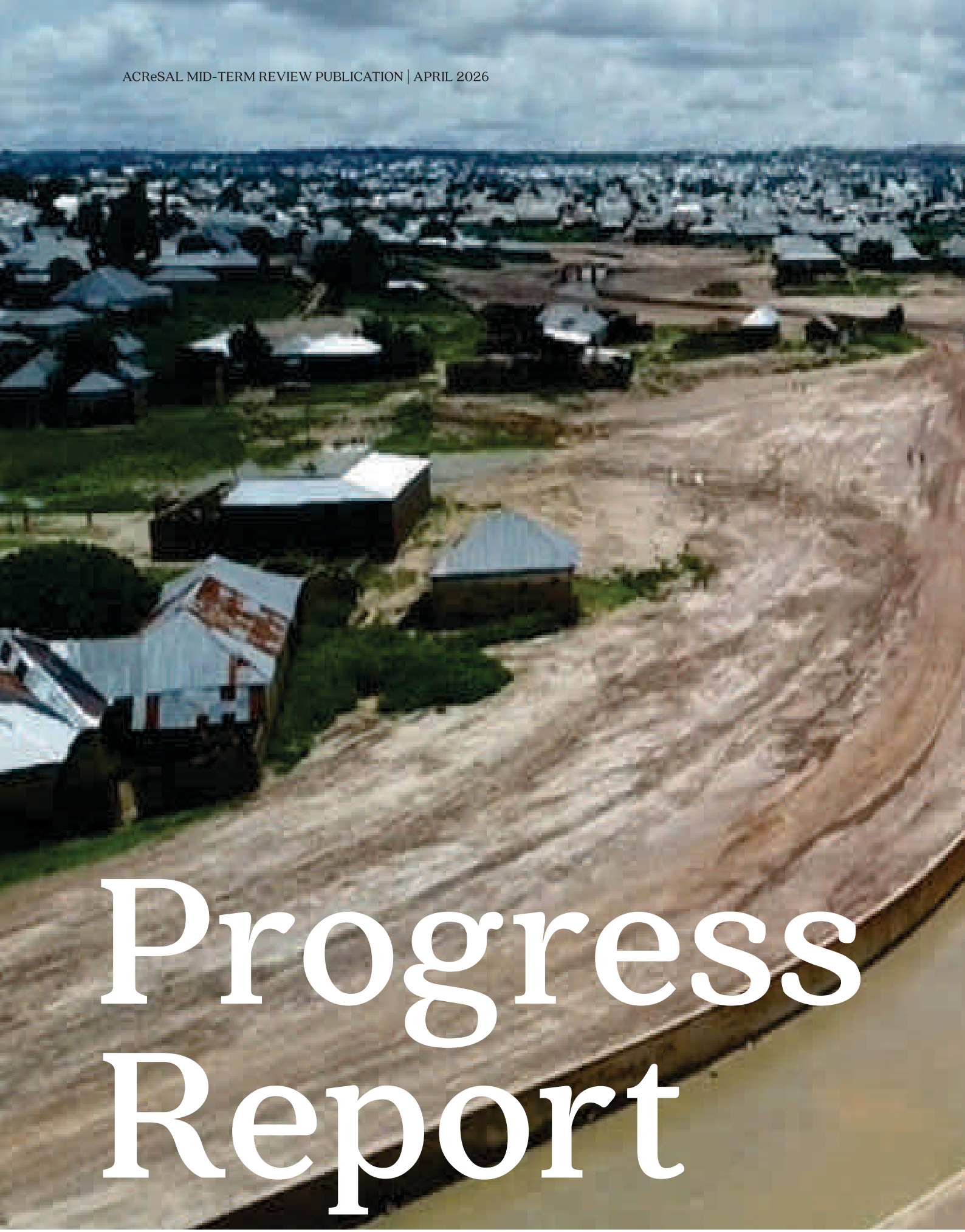
By combining traditional knowledge with modern solutions and giving women a stronger voice in environmental decisions, ACReSAL builds stronger communities and improves social cohesion — which is itself an important form of climate resilience.

## A Vision for a Resilient Nigeria — and a Replicable Model for the World

The following pages share real stories of what ACReSAL has achieved on the ground — in the lives of farmers and processors, in restored wetlands and reclaimed rangelands, and in communities that once feared the rains but now welcome them. These stories show not just progress, but real transformation.

They also point to what is still possible. With 818,546 hectares of degraded land under restoration, and 26,292 community members gaining access to finance for the first time, ACReSAL is proving something the world needs to see.

Strategic, inclusive, and technology-enabled investment in land and people can turn climate vulnerability into climate resilience. A more sustainable and prosperous Nigeria is not a distant dream — it is an achievable and measurable reality.



# Progress Report



## A Message of Transformation

At the midpoint of the ACReSAL Project, we pause to reflect on what has been achieved — and to look forward with confidence to what lies ahead. Landscapes once scarred by erosion and desertification are greening. Communities once vulnerable to climate shocks are resilient. Women who once lacked voice and resources are leading community groups, owning land, and driving local economies.

This publication celebrates the people at the heart of this transformation — the farmers, community leaders, state officials, and technical partners whose collective effort is reshaping northern Nigeria's relationship with its land, water, and future.

*— Federal Project Management Unit (FPMU), February 2026*

## Project at a Glance

ACReSAL by the Numbers — February 2026

ACReSAL — the Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes Project — represents one of the most ambitious integrated landscape restoration and climate resilience investments on the African continent. Approved by the World Bank Board in December 2021 with US$700 million in IDA financing, the Project operates across all 19 northern states and the FCT.

| | |
|---|---|
| **818,546 ha**<br>Degraded Land Under Restoration | **4.4 Million**<br>Direct Beneficiaries |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 44.7%<br>Women Among Beneficiaries | 4,701<br>Community Interest Groups | 965<br>Solar Boreholes Installed | 96,963<br>Farmers Reached with Inputs |

## Project Architecture

| Component A | Component B | Component C | Component D |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dryland Management | Community Climate Resilience | Institutional Strengthening & Project Management | Contingent Emergency Response |
| *Watershed planning · land restoration · ecosystem conservation* | *Micro-watershed plans · CRF · farm inputs · water infrastructure* | *Policy reform · digital systems · green bonds · M&E* | *Investment project financing* |

# Component A: Dryland Management

Restoring Landscapes at Scale

Component A is the ecological backbone of ACReSAL — translating watershed science into landscape-scale action. From sand dune stabilisation in the far north to gully rehabilitation in the Middle Belt, it is reversing decades of land degradation and building communities' defences against climate change.

### Strategic Catchment Planning

All 20 Strategic Catchment Management Plans (SCMPs) have been completed — a landmark achievement reflecting deep inter-ministerial collaboration.

Key outcomes:

- Strengthened federal–state technical coordination
- Climate resilience mainstreamed into state planning frameworks
- Enhanced political ownership at executive and legislative levels

### Ecosystem Conservation

In Yankari Game Reserve and Jos Wildlife Park: 6 new ranger posts, 11 safari trucks, solar installations, indigenous tree planting, and strengthened anti-poaching systems — enhancing eco-tourism potential and state revenue.

*SDG 15 — Life on Land: Every restoration intervention directly advances biodiversity and ecosystem health.*

### Landscape Investments — 818,546 ha under Restoration.

Multi-sectoral interventions have delivered transformation at scale:

| | |
|---|---|
| Afforestation & Agroforestry | Millions of trees planted across degraded drylands |
| Gully Rehabilitation | Engineered stabilisation protecting communities |
| Drainage Reconstruction | Restoring waterflow, preventing urban flooding |
| Irrigation Canal Rehab. | Reviving dry-season farming for thousands |
| Sand Dune Stabilisation | Reclaiming land from the advancing desert |

### Urban & Community Greening

'One House, One Tree' campaigns and over 1 million seedlings distributed in Adamawa State are embedding environmental stewardship across the north.

*SDG 13 — Climate Action: Land restoration sequesters carbon and builds lasting climate resilience.*

★ FLAGSHIP: Balanga Irrigation Canal, Gombe State

Rehabilitation of the Balanga Irrigation Canal has transformed livelihoods across 18 communities, benefiting over 5,000 farmers. Dry-season farming revived, cropping intensity increased, household incomes improved, and rural out-migration reversed.

# Component B: Community Climate Resilience

Empowering Communities, Transforming Livelihoods

Component B places communities at the heart of climate resilience. Through participatory planning, targeted investments, and inclusive economic instruments, it is transforming how northern Nigerian communities manage their land, water, and livelihoods — from the ground up.

| 4,701 | 1,105 | US$9.275M | 26,292 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Community Interest Groups Formed | Women-Led Community Groups | Community Revolving Fund Disbursed | CRF Beneficiaries |

## Community Mobilisation and Peacebuilding

Through 106 Micro-Watershed Management Plans co-developed with communities, ACReSAL has catalysed a shift from passive recipients to active stewards of natural resources. Early Warning and Early Response (EWER) committees have resolved 25 conflicts across six states.

*SDGs 16, 10 & 5: Conflict resolution and inclusive governance ensure no-one is left behind in Nigeria's climate resilience journey.*

### Community Revolving Fund

US$9.275 million disbursed to 371 communities across 17 states. CIGs have diversified into Non-Timber Forest Products — locust beans, cassava flour, baobab powder — generating income and self-reliance. Weekly savings have grown to NGN 42.25 million across 7 states.

*SDG 8 - Decent Work: The CRF builds local economic ecosystems that generate employment*

### Climate-Smart Agriculture & Inputs

96,963 farmers — including 40,143 women — received climate-smart inputs. 328 tractors cultivated 48,054 hectares, generating NGN 141 million in revenue. 965 solar boreholes provide year-round water access.

*SDG 2 & 6: Climate - smart imputs and reliable water are rebuilding food security across the north.*

## Technical Partnerships

**FAO**

Introducing Delfino ploughs, half-moon demonstration models, and training 322+ master trainers across 10 states. A study tour to Mauritania and Senegal in January 2026 imported best practices in sand dune fixation directly applicable to northern Nigeria.

**IITA**

Advancing Climate Smart Agriculture and Farmer-Led Irrigation Development. The 21,300-beneficiary Regenerative Agriculture programme in Adamawa — scaling to Bauchi — trains farmers in composting, mulching, agroforestry, and water conservation. Twenty Landscape Management Centres trained over 21,000 farmers, nearly half of them women.

**Greenhouses & Climate-Resilient Structures:** Facilities in Kebbi, Gombe, Kogi, Benue, Plateau, and Bauchi. In Kogi, 58 participants (46 women) produced 611.9 kg cucumbers and 135 kg bell peppers, generating NGN 486,500 in the first cycle.

**Community Aqua-Forestry:** Over 20,000 farmers trained in fisheries using 50 hectares of demonstration earth ponds. The integrated Numan LGA model combines fisheries, agroforestry, crop production, duck and snail farming.

# Component C: Institutional Strengthening & Project Management

Building the Enabling Environment for Lasting Impact



Component C ensures that ACReSAL's gains endure long after the project's March 2028 closing date. By anchoring results in policy, law, data systems, and sustainable finance, it is building a nationally-owned framework for climate-resilient landscape management that will serve Nigeria for generations.

## Policy and Institutional Innovation

**National Farmers' Soil Health Card Scheme**
Launched October 2025, this scheme will establish 774 soil-testing laboratories nationwide — enabling precision fertiliser application and climate-smart agriculture.

**Third Sovereign Green Bond — NGN 50 Billion**
ACReSAL supported Nigeria's NGN 50 billion Third Sovereign Green Bond, with NGN 16 billion for reforestation. The Fourth Green Bond — with NGN 250+ billion under review — is in advanced preparation, mobilising sustainable finance at scale.

**Two New State Agencies Established**
BENAWMA (Benue) and NASEWMA (Nasarawa) created, embedding integrated landscape management permanently in state government.

**NASRDA Geospatial Hub**
Nigeria's NASRDA upgraded with AI/ML processing, drone technology, and high-end servers as the national hub for watershed monitoring and policy analytics.

## Digital Innovation

| | |
|---|---|
| Digital Precision Agriculture Extension (DPAE) | 15,403 farmers profiled across 8 states with geo-referenced data, agro-ecological crop calendars, and Hausa-language advisories. 42% female participation. |
| Management Information System (MIS) | 95% completion — architecture finalised, system testing concluded, and data synchronisation ongoing. |
| 50x2030 Agricultural Data Initiative | National Agricultural Sample Survey launched October 2025 across all 36 states, with fieldwork complete. Closing critical data gaps for evidence-based policy. |

## Safeguards, Gender & Social Inclusion

| 31 of 40 | 98% | 9,659 | 4,040 |
|---|---|---|---|
| ESMPs Cleared by World Bank | Grievances Resolved Within 21 Days | Women Granted Land Access Rights | Project-Affected Persons Compensated |



*SDGs 5, 16 & 10: 9,659 women granted 10-year land access rights; 42.16% of CRF beneficiaries are women. SEAH sensitisation completed across all implementing entities.*

# Component D: Contingent Emergency Response

Investment Project Financing

# Looking Ahead: 2026–2028

Accelerating Impact Through the Final Mile

With two years remaining before the March 2028 closing date, ACReSAL is well-positioned to achieve — and exceed — its development objectives. The foundation is solid; the momentum is clear. The remaining period will focus on deepening reach, scaling proven models, and generating quantified evidence of transformative impact.

**Scale Community Revolving Fund Reach**
Accelerating disbursement to the remaining 2,429 communities will unlock economic opportunity for tens of thousands of additional households.

**Expand Farm Input Distribution**
Intensifying distribution of climate-smart inputs to close the gap toward the 750,000-farmer target — reaching more women, youth, and smallholder farmers.

**Finalise Delfino Plough Procurement**
Completing procurement to enable FAO-supported restoration of 350,000 additional hectares, maximising the value of the FAO technical partnership.

**Generate Quantified Outcome Evidence**
Producing rigorous evidence on restoration impact, yield increases, livelihood improvements, and carbon sequestration ahead of the Mid-Term Review.

**Policy Frameworks**
All SCMPs have been validated, ESMP disclosures, and state-level integrated landscape management policies to ensure durable institutional foundations.

**Champion ACReSAL's Success Story**
Shifting communications toward 'before and after' storytelling — demonstrating the human face of climate resilience and sustaining political commitment.

## A Continental Model for Climate Resilience

ACReSAL's combination of landscape-scale ecological intervention, community empowerment, inclusive governance, and durable institutional reform positions it as a model not just for Nigeria, but for the Sahel and sub-Saharan Africa. The Project demonstrates that with the right partnerships and unwavering commitment to people and planet, transformation is possible — one watershed, one community, one life at a time.



*ACReSAL supports Nigeria's delivery of 10 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals*

# From Cracked Earth to Green Abundance

## — Regenerative Farming Rewrites the Rules in Adamawa



The dryland of Girei, Adamawa State before the regenerative farming intervention

### When the Rains Stopped in Adamawa

In mid-2024, the rains stopped falling for forty long days in Adamawa State. The dry landscape told two very different stories. The same hot sun, the same cracked soil, and the same empty skies brought completely different results — depending on whether a farmer had benefited from ACReSAL's training in regenerative agriculture.

### A Season of Reckoning

Umaru Musa, a conventional farmer from Dadiri, had risked everything on this harvest. He borrowed ₦100,000, applied chemical herbicides, and planted his seeds with hope. Then the rains disappeared. Without any techniques or tools to save water, his crops withered and died.

"Now, I am worse off than before," he said sadly, looking at his dusty fields. He had no food for his family and no money to repay his debt. His story is common among many smallholder farmers across the Sahel — vulnerable and at the mercy of a climate that is becoming harsher every year.

### A Different Reality, Just Miles Away

Yet, only a short distance away, the fields told a different story. The farms of ACReSAL-trained farmers remained green and healthy, even during the drought.

Fatima Tanimu's farm showed what the right knowledge can do. She used simple water-harvesting structures called "Halfmoons" —



# Impact Stories



# A World Bank-Supported Initiative | Northern Nigeria

This publication brings together **22 inspiring impact stories** and **three special features.**

The special features focus on:

- Strategic Catchment Management Plan
- Gender Equality and Social Inclusion
- ACReSAL's alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

Together, these stories and features showcase the real-life transformations driven by the ACReSAL Project — the Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes initiative. The project is supported by the World Bank and implemented across northern Nigeria.

From restored wetlands to empowered women farmers, from flood-proof communities to revived wildlife sanctuaries, these voices from the field show the power of targeted, community-centred development.

Each story is a testament to resilience, ingenuity, and the human ability to rebuild in the face of climate challenges. Together, they paint a clear picture of progress toward food security, ecological sustainability, gender equity, and lasting livelihoods — as we prepare for the Mid-Term Review stakeholders' workshop.

shallow, crescent-shaped pits that catch and hold rainwater. These created small reservoirs on her farm. When the drought hit, her crops survived with little damage.

*"I thought the drought had destroyed everything," Fatima recalled. "But all my crops were still thriving. The Halfmoons saved me."*

Then there is Rebecca James — a widowed mother who fled Boko Haram violence and arrived with nothing. Through ACReSAL, she received free use of land for ten years, quality seeds, practical training, and ongoing support. When the drought came, her regenerative farm stayed strong. She harvested six bags of crops — enough to feed her children and sell the extra for income.

Through ACReSAL's Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) scheme, she also earned extra money for planting and caring for trees on her land.

*"I now have land, seeds, and the knowledge to make my farm fertile," Rebecca said with pride. "I am not just surviving — I am thriving."*



Two months after the regenerative agriculture intervention

## Building a Foundation for Generations

ACReSAL's work in Adamawa goes far beyond individual success stories. It is changing how an entire state grows food in a warming world.

Over 21,000 farmer households have learned climate-smart techniques such as multi-cropping, composting, and agroforestry. Important infrastructure — including tractors, boreholes, and over 376 hectares of new regenerative farmland — is helping these gains last.

The national importance of this work was clear when the Honourable Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Security, Sen. Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi visited the fields and even dug a Halfmoon himself. This showed strong government support for these methods.



Hon. Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Security, Sen. Aliyu Sabi Abdullahi, with ACReSAL team at a half-moon regenerative agriculture farm in Girei, Adamawa State

The benefits go beyond the farms. Over 80,000 indirect beneficiaries have seen improvements in their lives, and 30,034 new jobs have been created in the agricultural sector.

In Adamawa, the story of two different realities is becoming one story of resilience — where knowledge replaces debt, abundance replaces scarcity, and hope is now firmly rooted in the soil.



Vegetation Restored through ACReSAL's Regenerative Agriculture Model in Girei, Adamawa State

# Seeds of Empowerment

## — How 100 Women in Niger State Grew a Revolution



Women farmers in Niger State.

### From Scarcity to Abundance

For more than fifteen years, women farmers in twenty-five communities across Niger State worked hard on their small plots with little to show for it. They lacked proper tools, quality seeds, and training. Their harvests were too small to feed their families properly or generate any income. They were strong women trapped in a difficult cycle.

### A Targeted Hand Up

In the second half of 2023, ACReSAL identified 100 of these economically vulnerable women and gave them a well-designed package of agricultural inputs. This support was exactly what they needed to unlock their potential.

The results were fast and remarkable. On their half-hectare plots, average yields jumped from 260 kilograms to 1,300 kilograms per hectare — a 500 percent increase. Scarcity quickly turned into abundance.

For the first time, these women had surplus produce. They could sell it, earn income, and make choices they never had before.

### When Farmers Become Entrepreneurs

Six hundred family members began eating better. Hospital bills could now be paid. Women who previously had no extra money started helping sick neighbours in their communities.

The change did not stop at the farm. With new confidence and capital, the women showed strong entrepreneurial spirit. Together, they acquired 50 additional hectares of farmland, started livestock fattening businesses, invested in rice and cassava processing mills, and opened new provision stores.

What started as a simple farming intervention sparked a wave of women-led agribusiness across rural Niger State.




Distribution of farming inputs to women farmers in Niger State

## A Model Ready to Scale

The success of these 100 women is only the beginning. Inspired by their results, ACReSAL and Niger State have planned to expand this model to women across all 20 Local Government Areas in the state.

By investing in women farmers, ACReSAL is doing more than increasing harvests. It is building a new generation of community leaders, entrepreneurs, and agents of change who will carry progress forward for many years to come.

# From Encroachment to Excellence

## — ACReSAL Breathes New Life into Jos Wildlife Park



The dilapidated Administrative Office of Jos Wildlife Park in Plateau State.

### From Neglect to a Thriving Sanctuary

Not long ago, Jos Wildlife Park — one of Plateau State's most important ecological treasures — was in serious decline. Habitat loss had damaged its interior. Poor infrastructure made visitor facilities embarrassing. Without proper security, the park's boundaries were open to encroachment, and its wild spaces were slowly being lost. What should have been a crown jewel of northern Nigeria's natural heritage had become a symbol of neglect.

### Voices from the Edge

Hajiya Fati Othman, who lives opposite the park gates, watched the decline with sadness. Many areas inside the park could no longer support life because the habitat was too damaged and wildlife numbers had dropped sharply.

Nearby farmers, like Emmanuel Dogo, lacked the knowledge to farm sustainably next to a fragile ecosystem. Both the park and its neighbouring communities were struggling.



The Reconstructed Jos Wildlife Park in Plateau State

### The Intervention: Security, Infrastructure, and Sustainability

ACReSAL took comprehensive action. A strong 17.1-kilometre perimeter fence was built to permanently protect the park from land encroachment. Wildlife rangers received motorcycles, walkie-talkies, and uniforms to improve patrols and restore security.

The animal museum, restaurant, café, chalets, and public toilets were all refurbished to high standards. Twenty solar street lights and solar-

powered boreholes were installed to provide sustainable lighting and water for the future.

Beyond the ark walls, farming communities received training in climate-smart agriculture. This helped turn neighbours into active stewards of the ecosystem..

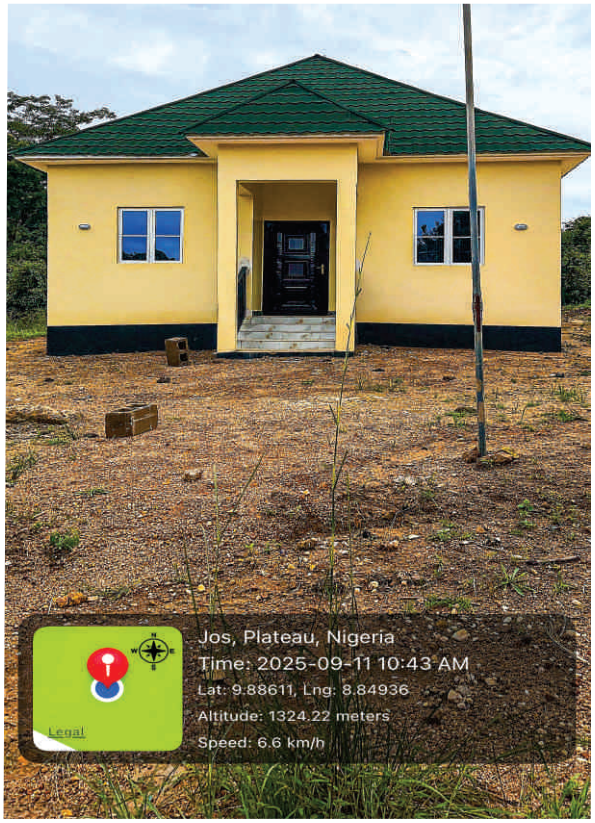
## A Record-Breaking Rebirth

The results have been remarkable. Annual visitor numbers jumped from 379,783 in 2023 to about one million — a huge increase that seemed impossible just two years earlier. Revenue more than doubled, rising from ₦13 million to over ₦26 million per year.

Local vendors saw a sharp rise in business, and 739 new jobs were created across the park's ecosystem of services.

General Manager Chuwang Pwajok expressed pride in the changes. He noted that the park has been restored as a secure home for wildlife and a true driver of sustainable development for the people of Plateau State.

Today, Jos Wildlife Park is not just open again — it is thriving. It stands as a proud example of how conservation and community prosperity can grow together.






# From Corridor of Death to Centre of Learning
## — ACReSAL Reclaims Olubo-Ojo, Kogi State



Massive Gully Site at Olubo-Ojo Community Road, Ankpa, Kogi State– Before ACReSAL Intervention

### Olubo-Ojo Gully Control Project, Ankpa, Kogi State

For more than twenty years, the people of Olubo-Ojo community in Ankpa, Kogi State, lived beside a growing monster — a massive gully over six kilometres long and nine metres deep. It was slowly swallowing their town. This was not just an environmental problem. It was a humanitarian crisis at the centre of their community.

### A Crisis That Touched Every Dimension of Life

The gully had already claimed one life. Dozens of families were displaced. One hundred and fifty homes were in its path. Four schools were at risk of collapse. The vital Ankpa Waterworks was threatened. Two major hotels had to close, and the Ankpa Market — the economic heart of the area — stood dangerously close to the edge.

Dr. B. Y. Dangana, the Community Head, described the fear and isolation:

*"There was a time I could not even reach my own home. I lost a borehole worth over ₦500,000 and watched our community crumble."*



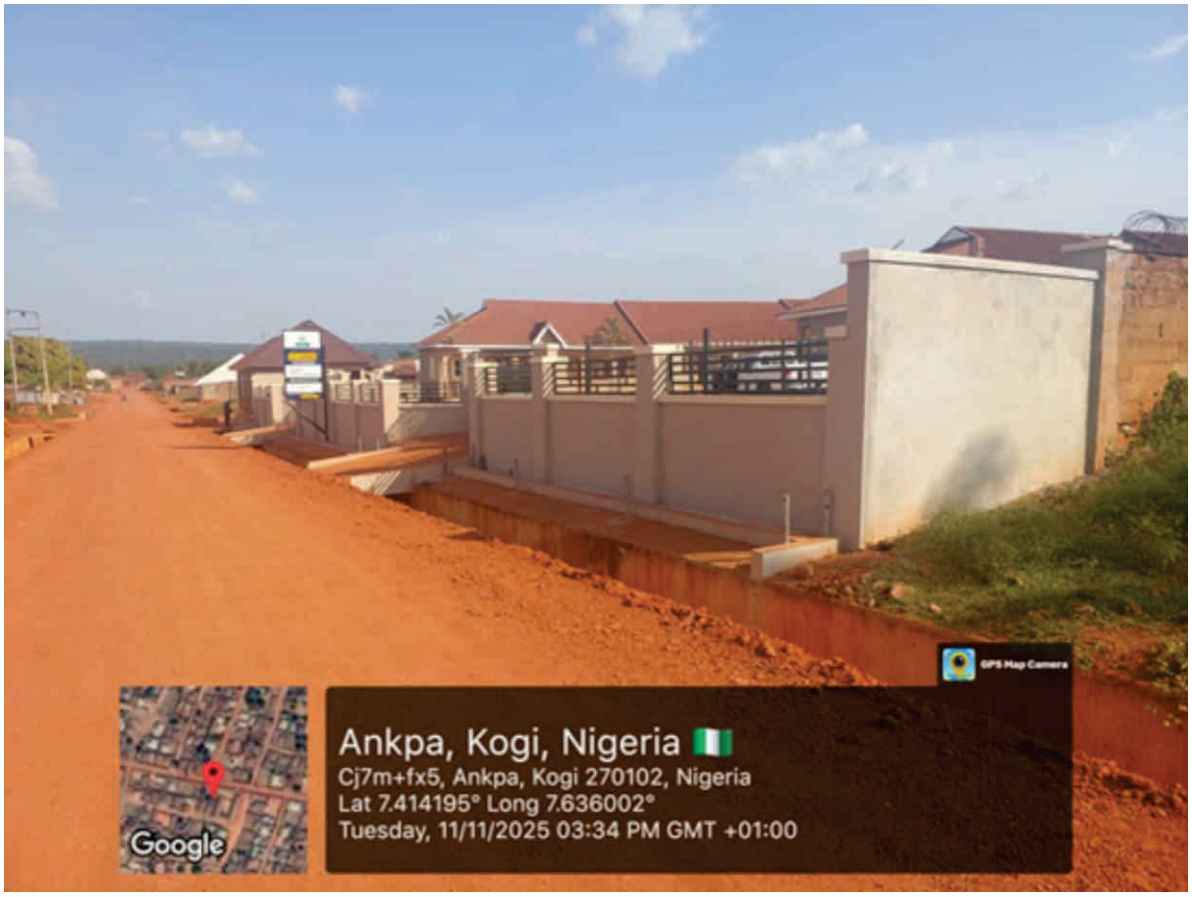
Ongoing reclamation of Olubo-Ojo Community, Ankpa, Kogi State

For twenty years, the destruction continued — until ACReSAL stepped in.

### A Comprehensive Reclamation

The Kogi State ACReSAL Project responded with a solution matching the scale of the problem. Advanced drainage systems, land reclamation, and gully stabilisation works are now 76% complete, with full completion expected by June 2026.

So far, 5,895 hectares of degraded land have been restored. The project directly benefits 160,624 residents (80,874 men and 79,750 women), showing ACReSAL's commitment to fair benefits for everyone in the community.




The Reclaimed Olubo-Ojo Community Road

The project also focused on restoring trust. The Kogi State Government has fully compensated 322 Project-Affected Persons, ensuring those affected by the erosion or construction works could rebuild their lives with dignity.

## The Symbol That Says Everything

The most powerful sign of change is a building. On the site where an abandoned, collapsed hotel once stood — a painful reminder of what the gully had destroyed — the Wisdom Islamic School now stands. Where there was ruin, learning and hope have begun.

Zainab Hamisu, a long-time resident, said:

*"The project didn't just control erosion — it turned an eyesore into a centre of learning and promise."*

## The Return of Normalcy — and Its Future

Confidence is returning to Olubo-Ojo. Property values are rising again. Homes once abandoned are now in demand. Roads that were impassable are open once more. The rainy season — once a time of fear — has lost its terror.

*"Today, I can drive home safely," says Dr. Dangana. "For the first time in many years, the fear of the rainy season is gone. We have real hope."*

The Olubo-Ojo gully control project has become a national model. It proves that twenty years of destruction can be reversed through strategic investment, technical excellence, and a strong commitment to the people who suffered through it.

# The Centre That Changed Everything

## Cassava Processors Find Dignity and Prosperity in Sheda




Cassava farmers in Sheda, Kwali, Abuja before the intervention

### Women Cassava Processors in Sheda Transform Their Lives

The community of Sheda in Kwali Federal Capital Territory has long been known for cassava processing. But for the women who spent their days peeling, grating, and pressing cassava, the work was slowly breaking them instead of supporting them.

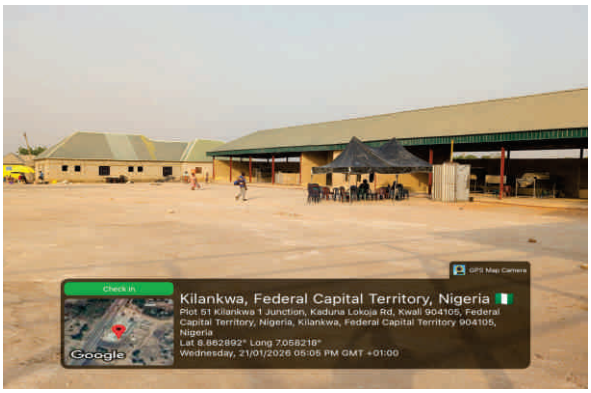
Priscilla Abraham, one of the women, clearly remembers life before ACReSAL arrived in 2024.

*"Before ACReSAL's intervention, there was no peace in many homes," she said. "Feeding our families and paying school fees were serious problems. We earned very little — sometimes only ₦10,000 in two days."*

### The Struggle Behind the Staple

The problems went beyond low income. Without a borehole, women had to fetch water from distant streams — a tiring daily journey that often pulled children out of school. Their workspaces were muddy and frequently flooded, causing health issues and stopping production for days.

What started in 2018 as a small group of three women trying to improve their lives had grown in spirit, but remained stuck due to poor infrastructure.




Newly built cassava processing plant centre in Sheda, Abuja

### A Comprehensive Turning Point

In 2024, ACReSAL stepped in with practical and generous support. A Community Revolving Fund (CRF) provided capital to help the women expand their businesses. A solar-powered borehole ended the daily struggle of fetching water. The processing centre was completely upgraded with shaded areas, cemented floors, proper drainage, fencing, and cassava peeling machines. The once informal and difficult

workspace became safe, clean, and efficient.

### The Numbers Tell a Remarkable Story

The results have been outstanding. Priscilla Abraham's daily earnings rose from almost nothing to ₦80,000. Medina Nzebuike, the group's treasurer, saw her weekly income jump from ₦10,000–₦15,000 to ₦150,000 — enough to buy a bag of rice and hire her own workers.

The price of their cassava increased from ₦150 to ₦200 per rubber because of better quality and improved packaging. City buyers now come to Sheda every day. The centre has more than doubled in size, growing from fewer than 50 women to over 100, with about 200 daily workers now benefiting.

Grace Enoch, the centre's secretary, described the change simply:

> "*Now, with the borehole, things have changed. Our businesses run better and our children can study.*"



Cross-section of the cassava production area in Sheda, Kwali, Abuja

### Peace, Pride, and a Thriving Future

The deepest change is harder to measure in numbers. "Women now feed their families with dignity and enjoy peace at home — no longer depending entirely on their husbands," says Priscilla.

In Sheda, the cassava processing centre is no longer just a place of work. It has become a place of real transformation. It proves that when communities receive the right tools and support, they can build their own prosperous and peaceful future.



# Healing the Heart of the Sahel

## — ACReSAL Revives Nigeria's Dying Nguru Wetlands




Deployment of Swamp Buggy for Desilting and Typha Grass Removal, ·After 11 Years of Drought– Nguru Wetlands

### Nguru Wetlands in Yobe State Come Back to Life

The Nguru Wetlands in Yobe State were once known as the Heart of the Sahel. As Nigeria's first Ramsar site, it is one of West Africa's most important freshwater ecosystems. For generations, it supported farmers, fishermen, and herders. But for eleven long years, the wetlands struggled, choked by an invasive plant they could not fight alone.

### The Slow Strangulation

Starting in the 1970s, Typha grass — an aggressive invasive plant — began spreading across the Nguru Wetlands. Year after year, it took over fishing zones, blocked canals, smothered farmland, and destroyed grazing areas. The flooding it caused was destructive and polluted the water.

Communities that had lived in harmony with the wetlands for centuries watched their livelihoods disappear. Fishing became impossible. Farming failed. Herders had no place to graze their animals. The stagnant water created by the Typha became a breeding ground for diseases such as malaria, cholera, and dysentery. In desperation, people built illegal dams to get water, which only made the problem worse.

### The Mechanical Miracle

ACReSAL tackled this difficult problem with a practical solution: a specialised “swamp buggy.” This machine was sent into the heart of the wetlands to clear the vast areas of Typha grass. Working waterway by waterway and canal by



Fishery Activities Restored in Nguru Wetlands After 11 Years of Drought

canal, it removed decades of invasion, reopened channels, and allowed fresh water to flow freely again.

## A Landscape and a People Reborn

The results have been remarkable. A total of 17,519 hectares of productive land have been recovered from the invasive grass. An estimated 80,853 people have had their livelihoods restored — including 59,871 farmers, 15,624 herders, and 5,358 fishermen. These people have returned to the traditional trades that define their lives.

Over 500 new jobs have been created in boat piloting, fish processing, rice vending, and boat repairs. The wetlands have become a source of local economic activity once more.

Reopened waterways have also restored important transport links. Remote riverine communities are no longer isolated, and local commerce is reviving.

Most tellingly, nature itself has shown its approval. An incredible 378 bird species have been recorded in the revived wetlands — a clear sign that the ecosystem has come back to life.

The Heart of the Sahel is beating strongly once again.



Nguru Wetlands after ACReSAL's intervention

# Water for Peace
## — How 965 Solar Boreholes Are Transforming Communities Across Northern Nigeria




Solar-powered Borehole in Kogi State

### Solar-Powered Boreholes Transform Lives Across Northern Nigeria

In many communities across northern Nigeria, the search for water once shaped daily life. Women and children walked up to three hours each way to fetch water from often contaminated sources. They returned exhausted, with their whole day wasted. Education suffered. Health suffered. Competition for water also caused frequent conflicts between farming and herding communities.

### The Weight of Scarcity

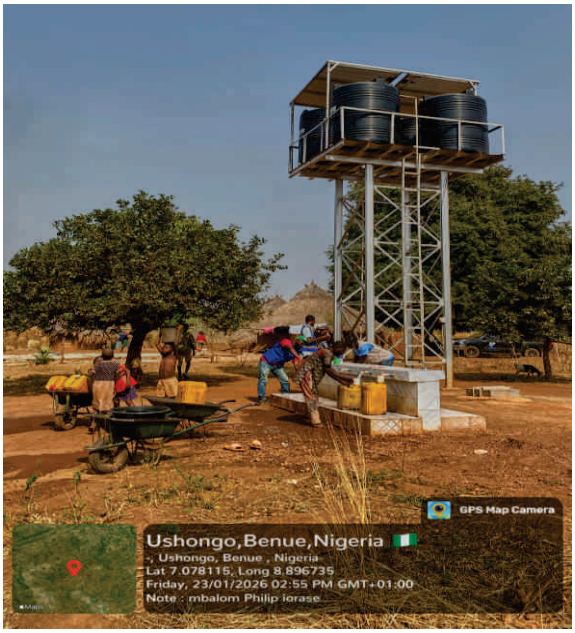
Water scarcity was more than an inconvenience — it blocked progress in health, peace, education, and economic development. Families spent heavily on water from private vendors, draining budgets they could not afford to lose. Waterborne diseases such as malaria and typhoid were common in communities without clean, reliable water.

### 965 Solutions, One at a Time

ACReSAL tackled this problem with a large-scale infrastructure project. The project drilled and installed **965 solar-powered boreholes** across the participating states. These boreholes provide clean, reliable water directly in communities. Solar power was chosen deliberately so the boreholes can keep working even during power outages and fuel shortages.

### Ripples Across Every Dimension of Life

The benefits have reached every part of community life. Conflicts between farmers and herders — often caused by competition for




scarce water — have reduced significantly. Shared boreholes have become places that bring people together instead of causing tension.

Economic activity has grown. With water now easily available, communities have started tree planting, nursery businesses, and small-scale enterprises — creating new income opportunities, especially for women. Families no longer spend money on private water vendors, so they can use the savings for education, healthcare, and better nutrition.



Solar-powered Borehole in Nasarawa State

Children are back in school instead of fetching water. Women no longer walk long, dangerous distances alone in the early morning. School enrolment has increased. Families are healthier, and communities are safer.

965 communities have regained their time, their health, and their dignity. ACReSAL has not just provided water across northern Nigeria — it has planted the seeds of lasting peace and shared prosperity.

# Capital for Change

## — The Community Revolving Fund That is Seeding Prosperity Across Nigeria




Presentation of Community Revolving Funds (CRF) Cheque to Community Members in Kano

### The Community Revolving Fund (CRF) Changes Lives

For farmers, processors, and marketers — especially women — in rural Nigeria, the dream of building a sustainable agribusiness was often blocked by one major obstacle: lack of capital. Without access to finance, even the most determined entrepreneurs could not grow. Many communities with great potential remained stuck in subsistence farming, not because of lack of ambition or skill, but because they had no starting capital.

### A Fund Built on Trust and Transformation

ACReSAL's solution is the **Community Revolving Fund (CRF)**. Unlike simple charity, the CRF treats people as investors in their own future. It provides:

- Interest-free loans to start or expand agricultural businesses
- Training in climate-smart agriculture for long-term resilience
- Essential farm inputs to help new businesses succeed from the first season

This is not just cash. It is a complete package of support designed to help people at every stage of the agricultural value chain — from small-scale crop farmers to cassava processors and grain marketers — get what they really need to succeed.



Presentation of Community Revolving Funds (CRF) Cheque to Community Members in Kogi

## Monumental Scale, Human Impact

The scale of the CRF is impressive. So far, it has disbursed **USD 9,275,000** across 371 communities in 17 states. This has directly transformed the lives of **26,292 people** — 15,084 men and 11,208 women.

Every naira has been used purposefully to strengthen the agricultural value chain: crop production, processing, marketing, and storage.

The results are clear. People who once lived on subsistence farming have become entrepreneurs. Farms that barely produced enough to eat now generate surplus and income. Farmers trained through the CRF are using climate-smart techniques that protect the environment and keep the land productive for the future.

## An Engine Built to Last

What makes the CRF especially powerful is its revolving design. As loans are repaid, the money is lent out again to new beneficiaries. This multiplies the impact year after year.



Presentation of Community Revolving Funds (CRF) Cheque to Community Members in Taraba

By empowering local food producers to manage their own agricultural assets, ACReSAL is not creating dependency — it is building skills and self-reliance. The fund is increasing youth employment and creating a sustainable economic engine that will continue long after the project ends.

Across 17 states in northern Nigeria, the Community Revolving Fund is quietly proving a powerful truth: when you invest in people, they invest in their communities — and the returns grow for generations.




Presentation of Community Revolving Funds (CRF) Cheque to Community Members in Gombe

# Rising from the Flood
## — ACReSAL Restores Maiduguri's Beloved Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo



Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo in Maiduguri, Borno State before ACReSAL's intervention

### From Flood Disaster to New Life in Maiduguri

In September 2024, Maiduguri faced a major disaster when the Alau Dam collapsed. Floodwaters swept through the city, destroying homes and livelihoods. One of the hardest-hit places was the beloved 42-acre Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo — a place that had brought wonder, education, and pride to the city for fifty years.

### The Aftermath

Floodwaters rose more than eight feet inside the zoo. Staff used canoes to move between submerged enclosures and rescue stranded animals. Some animals were saved, but others were lost or went missing as cages and enclosures were destroyed.

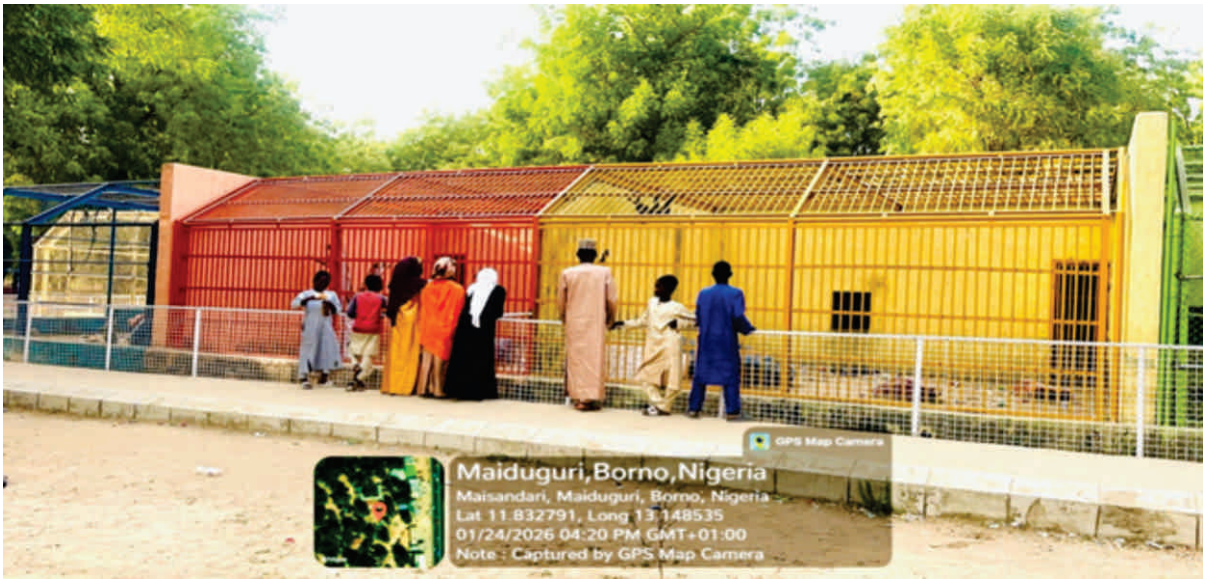
For three months, the once-bustling zoo fell silent. Park Manager Mrs. Fatimah Pius Birima remembers the despair of those early weeks.

*"After the flood, we never thought the zoo would be working again so soon because the damage was so severe," she recalled.*

### ACReSAL Steps In

Recognising the zoo's importance to the community, culture, environment, and economy, ACReSAL launched a full restoration effort. The work went far beyond simple repairs.

Fallen perimeter fences were rebuilt. Animal cages were renovated for the safety of both animals and visitors. New walkways were constructed with interlocking stones to make the park easier to move around. Iron and concrete seating was installed. The entire park received a fresh coat of paint that brought back colour and life. Important enclosures




Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo after ACReSAL's Intervention.

for elephants and crocodiles — two of the zoo's most popular animals — were fully restored and maintained.

## A Revival That Has Become a Model

The transformation has been remarkable. Weekend visitor numbers have more than doubled — from about 200 before the flood to over 500 now. Local vendors, like Halima Shani, have seen their daily sales triple — from ₦5,000 to ₦15,000 on busy days. Photographers, like Saleh Adamu, who lost income when the zoo closed, are now back at work and can earn up to ₦9,000 on weekends.

People in Maiduguri now call the zoo "a mini heaven." This name reflects not only the beauty of the restored park but also the relief and pride it has brought to a city that has faced many hardships.

Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo is no longer a symbol of disaster. It has become a powerful example of compassionate and decisive restoration.

It shows that when we invest in community spaces where people gather, heal, and dream, we invest in the spirit of the community itself.



The reconstructed entrance of Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo

# Seeds of Harmony

## — How ACReSAL Turned a Landscape of Conflict into a Destination of Hope




Before ACReSAL Intervention: Degraded rangeland with sparse vegetation, exposing pastoral livelihoods and landscapes to the harsh effects of climate change.

### Restoring Grazing Land in Dalijan, Kebbi State

On the outskirts of Dalijan community in Kebbi State, the land had become a source of sorrow instead of sustenance. A large 16,000-hectare grazing reserve existed nearby, but decades of degradation and invasive species had left it barren. It could no longer support the livestock that herding families depended on. The effects were felt throughout the entire community.

### A Landscape Fractured by Scarcity

With no good local pasture, herders had to migrate long distances with their animals. They often passed through farmlands, causing serious — and sometimes deadly — conflicts with farmers. These resource disputes had even cost human lives in some cases. Families lived in fear and insecurity. Classrooms were often empty because children had to follow their parents in search of grazing land. Instead of uniting people, the environment had turned them against one another.

### Engineering Stability from the Ground Up

In April 2024, ACReSAL launched a major 100-hectare rangeland restoration project in Dalijan. This was more than just an agricultural project — it was a tool for peace and climate adaptation.

The project installed three solar-powered boreholes and three strategic animal drinking points to provide reliable water. Climate-adapted grasses — Kyasuwa, Gamba, and Stylosanthes — were planted to restore soil health and create nutritious, sustainable pasture. Local people were involved in every stage of the work, giving them a sense of ownership and pride.

During the peak construction phase, 30 community members were employed, each earning about ₦135,000 per month. Five women food vendors, three solar borehole technicians, and two security

guards also gained jobs. In total, the project created 40 jobs in a community that had only known economic hardship from migration and conflict.




After ACReSAL Intervention: Established Brachiaria grass section, thriving providing nutritious forage for herds and supporting resilient pastoral livelihoods.

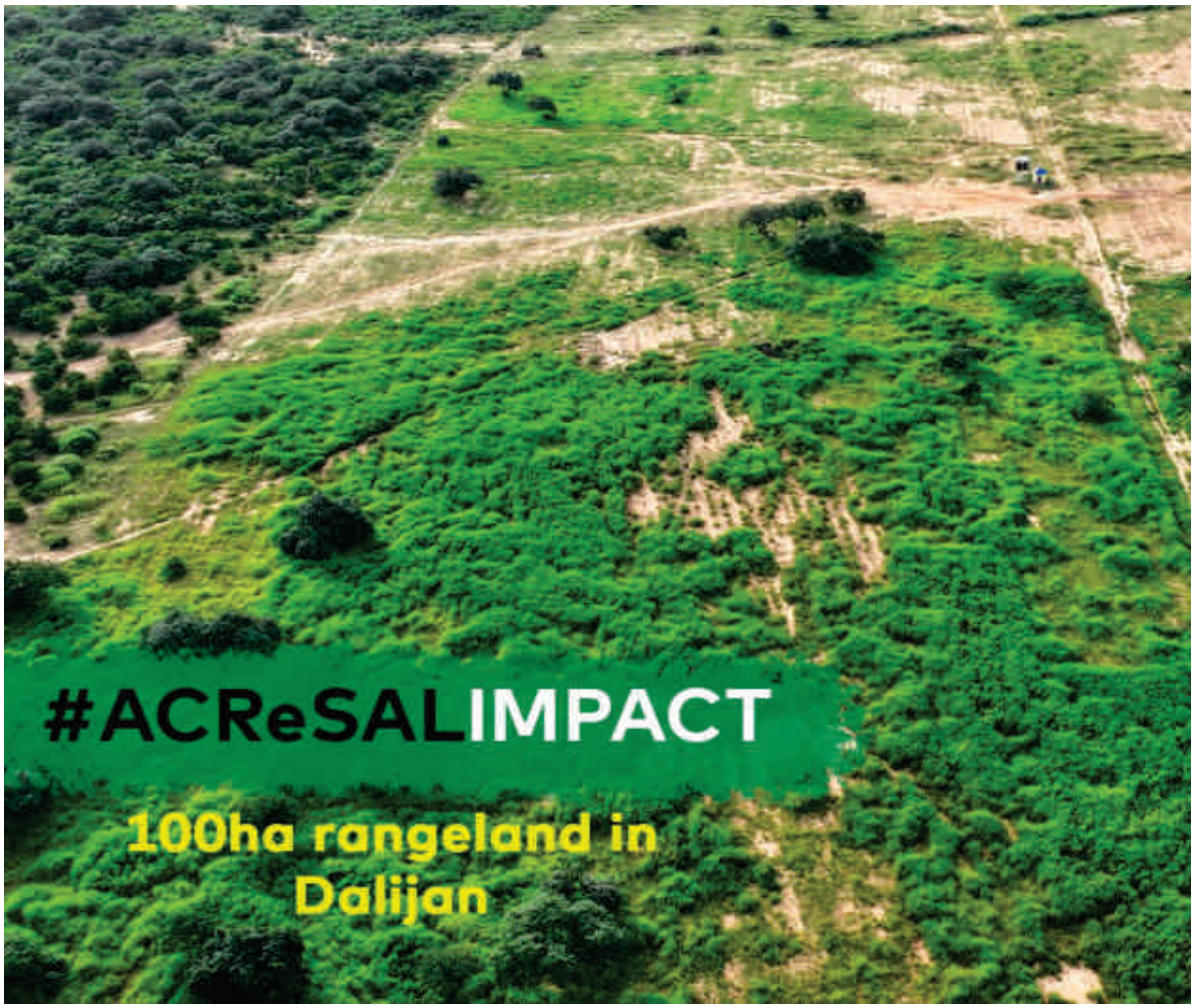
## From Conflict to Community

The project has directly benefited over 2,108 people, with another 7,500 impacted indirectly. With good local pasture now available, herders no longer need to migrate long distances. The main causes of conflict — animals damaging crops and competition for resources — have been greatly reduced. A new atmosphere of harmony is growing between farming and herding families, who once viewed each other with suspicion.

Most importantly, the classrooms at Mashekarin Fulani are filling up again. Children are back in school, and their futures are no longer sacrificed to seasonal migration.

Dalijan has become exactly what ACReSAL hopes to achieve across Nigeria's degraded landscapes: a place of hope and a model that can be copied in 22 other grazing reserves across Kebbi State.

The land has been healed — and the people are following.




After ACReSAL Intervention: Rangeland with established vegetation, serving as a pilot site for seed generation to support resilient pastoral livelihoods and climate-smart landscapes.

# When the Rivers Stopped Killing
## — ACReSAL Brings Safety and Hope to Katsina & Jibia



Jibia, Katsina State — Before the flood control project

### Drainage Works Transform Katsina and Jibia

For Malam Suleiman Isah, a respected elder in Katsina's Unguwar Ambassador Ward, the rainy season was never a time of renewal. It was a time of fear. Every year, he and his community braced for floodwaters that brought death and destruction.

*"We used to see at least fifteen dead bodies and many dead animals carried by the floodwaters every year," he recalled, his voice heavy with years of grief.*

### Annual Terror, Annual Loss

In the towns of Katsina and Jibia, the rainy season turned streets into raging rivers because of missing or blocked drains. The human cost was heartbreaking. In one season alone, a pregnant woman and a child died in Sabuwar Unguwa. Farmers like Aliyu Ibrahim Lara lost millions of naira worth of crops as fields were washed away. Entire communities suffered billions of naira in damage to homes and property. Every year, the same cycle of destruction repeated.

### A Decisive Phase 2 Intervention

In November 2023, the Katsina State Government, in partnership with ACReSAL and the World Bank, launched an ambitious Phase 2 intervention. The plan was clear: construct over nine kilometres of stormwater drainage

channels in Katsina and carry out important riverbank protection works in Jibia.

Over sixteen months of engineering, construction, and community engagement followed. The goal was to protect not just infrastructure, but the lives and livelihoods of over 2.3 million people.

## A Season of Silence — In the Best Possible Way

When the 2024 rainy season came, something remarkable happened: there was no disaster. Not a single death was recorded in the targeted areas. No houses were destroyed. Farmers reported no crop losses. The terror that had defined rainy seasons for generations was finally replaced by safety.

Aisha Adamu, a vegetable farmer in Kofar Durbi, used to lose her livelihood to floods every year until she almost gave up hope. Today, she farms her land without the constant fear that once came with every dark cloud.

*"People in my ward can now live without the constant fear of floods." said Malam Suleiman Isah.*



Jibia, Katsina State – After the flood control project

## The Promise Ahead

The story of Katsina and Jibia shows what is possible when determined communities, capable government, and well-directed investment work together. Nine kilometres of drainage channels have not just redirected water — they have redirected lives.

They have brought safety, productivity, and a future where the rains are no longer feared, but welcomed once again as the gift they were always meant to be.

# From Gully of Despair to Path of Progress

## ACReSAL Reclaims Gombe's Communities



Before and after pictures of the Gully Head at the Federal College of Education (Technical) in Gombe State

### Gully Erosion Control in Gombe Brings New Hope

For residents of eleven communities around the Federal College of Education (Technical) in Gombe, the rainy season once brought terror instead of relief. A dangerous network of over 200 gullies — part of a 21-kilometre active erosion system — had been swallowing land and threatening lives for nearly thirty years.

*"The gully ripped away part of my house during the rain, transportation is very difficult. If you want to take a pregnant woman to a health facility, it is a very hard process." recalled Adamu Danji, a community leader from Juaro Abare.*

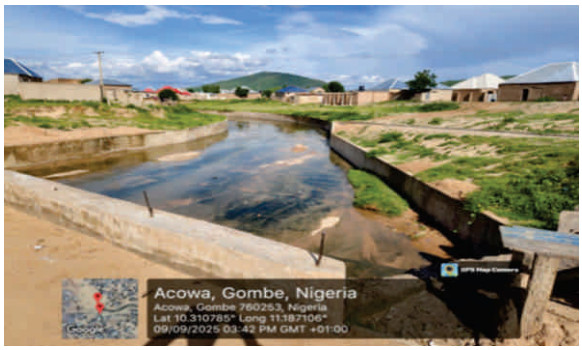
### A Crisis Measured in Lives and Losses

The destruction was shocking. Since 1996, the gullies had claimed at least 297 lives — including five people who drowned while trying to cross a makeshift bridge in 2022. More than 200 houses were destroyed. Over 2,000 hectares of farmland were lost, and 1,700 livestock perished. The deep erosion channels became hiding places for criminals who robbed and attacked residents. Stagnant water bred mosquitoes and spread disease. Communities were divided, businesses suffered, and families felt isolated.

### A Comprehensive Intervention

In January 2023, the Gombe State Government, with support from ACReSAL and the World Bank, launched a strong response. After wide community consultation, physical work began in November 2023.

The project combined strong engineering with nature-based solutions: reinforced concrete channels safely directed floodwaters, gabion structures protected riverbanks, and dangerous gullies were backfilled to reclaim land and restore stability. Water storage tanks were installed to capture rainwater. Tree planting campaigns turned barren areas into green corridors that stabilise the soil and bring life back to the landscape.




## A Multiplier Effect: Safety, Prosperity, and Peace

The results have been far-reaching. A total of 8,640 people whose homes were at risk are now protected. Property worth an estimated ₦45 billion (USD $27 million) has been saved.

The project created 7,661 skilled and unskilled jobs for men and women from the eleven communities. Many learned new skills in construction and land restoration, while others worked in tree planting, water management, and community mobilisation. For many families, this was their first steady income in years.

Economic life has improved across the area. Alhaji Usman Galadima explained how ACReSAL's financial management training helped residents use their earnings wisely.




Gully finger after the intervention

*They put the remainder of the money to profitable uses — started new businesses, bought machines, and started a new life," he said.*

Shop owner Ibrahim Abdullahi Gurama saw his sales double after he relocated with compensation.

*"This gully erosion control project is a game changer for businesses around here," he said. "Even plots of land and homes have increased in value."*

Roads are now passable again. Crime has dropped sharply. Youth leader Abubakar Abba noted that the restoration "forced miscreants out of the area, ushering in a regime of peace and quiet." Residents also report fewer mosquitoes and a clear drop in malaria cases because stagnant water and open defecation have been removed.

The 21-kilometre corridor that once brought fear is now a pathway to a safer, healthier, and more prosperous future. ACReSAL's intervention in Gombe is one of the largest environmental restoration and infrastructure projects under the entire initiative. It stands as clear proof that when communities and institutions work together, landscapes can heal and futures can be reclaimed.

# A New Dawn for a National Treasure
## — ACReSAL Revitalises Yankari Game Reserve




### A New Dawn for Bauchi State's Natural Treasure

For nearly seven decades, Yankari Game Reserve in Bauchi State has been one of Nigeria's most treasured natural landmarks. Spanning 254,000 hectares of woodland and grassland, it is famous for its warm springs and large herds of elephants, buffalo, and waterbuck. Yet by 2023, this jewel of Nigeria's natural heritage had lost its shine. Years of underinvestment had left rangers poorly equipped, tourist facilities crumbling, visitor numbers falling, and the ecosystem under growing pressure.

### A Legacy in Peril

The decline of Yankari affected more than just the environment. It hurt the many people who depended on it — rangers and their families, food vendors, souvenir sellers, guides, drivers, and hoteliers. The question was whether the reserve could be saved before it was too late.

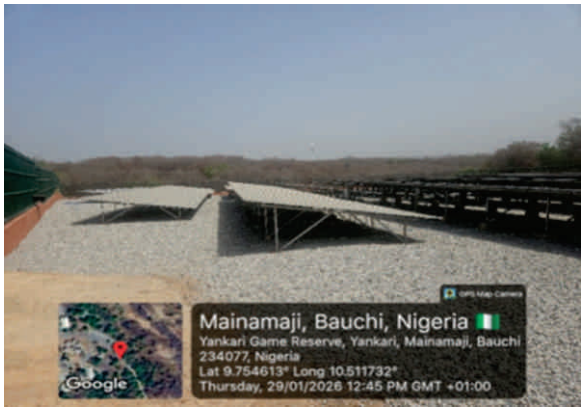
### A Comprehensive Turnaround

In April 2023, ACReSAL launched a major intervention in Bauchi State, supported by a new Ten-Year Yankari Management Plan. The transformation focused on three key areas:

- **Empowering Rangers:** All 150 rangers received proper uniforms, equipment, professional training, performance allowances, and health insurance. A new digital platform called the Earth Ranger Smart Integration Application was introduced for real-time wildlife monitoring and security.
- **Revitalising Tourism:** New game-viewing trucks were added, greatly improving the visitor experience. The

iconic Wikki Warm Spring and visitor restrooms were renovated to international standards.

- **Building Research Partnerships:** ACReSAL provided modern research equipment that attracted top global partners — the University of Northumbria, National Geographic, and the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) — to study biodiversity and human-wildlife conflict at Yankari.




## A Resurgence Measured in Numbers and Lives

The results have been impressive. Monthly visitor numbers jumped from fewer than 500 to over 2,800. Between October 2023 and June 2024, the reserve generated ₦48 million in revenue.

The project created 61 direct and indirect jobs, benefiting an estimated 10,000 people in the wider community. Poaching has dropped sharply thanks to better-equipped rangers and digital monitoring. Elephant Guides and Early Warning teams have been set up in 61 surrounding communities, turning former tension into cooperation and shared stewardship.

## A Catalyst for Wider Investment

ACReSAL's work has inspired even more support. The Wildlife Conservation Society distributed efficient cookstoves and built water schemes in five communities. They also vaccinated 30,000 cattle against foot-and-mouth disease. The Bauchi State Government has committed to a 500 KVA solar power scheme for the entire reserve and is currently renovating 52 chalets.

## A Foundation, Not a Finish Line

ACReSAL has done more than rescue Yankari Game Reserve. It has turned it into a self-sustaining centre of conservation, tourism, and economic growth. Through technology, community involvement, and private sector partnerships, the reserve is now a model of success.

What was once a legacy in peril is now a beacon of hope — proof that Nigeria's natural treasures, when properly managed and invested in, can drive a green and prosperous future for Bauchi State and the entire nation.



Before and after: Safari Vehicles




Renovated Wikki Warm Spring by ACReSAL

# The Cooperative That Rewrote the Rules

## — Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Transform Their Fortunes in Benue



Destoned rice stored in Benue State

### Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Cooperative, Benue State

In Wurukum community, Makurdi Local Government Area of Benue State, over 300 women were engaged in rice trading. They worked individually, carrying all the risks alone. Although they had a cooperative on paper, they lacked the knowledge, capital, and confidence to make it successful.

### The Missing Ingredient: Knowledge and Finance Together

Change began when the Benue ACReSAL project invited the Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Cooperative to join a practical capacity-building training programme. The training covered group management, business skills, and value chain thinking. Most importantly, it introduced them to the Community Revolving Fund (CRF) — ACReSAL's interest-free loan scheme for community businesses.

Led by Mrs. Viom Seember, a 50-year-old mother of four, the cooperative restructured its operations and submitted a strong business plan. They received ₦7 million in two tranches (₦4.2 million and ₦2.8 million). The money was used quickly and effectively.



Mrs. Ivom operating the rice destoning machine

## From Fragments to Force

With the loan, the women shifted from buying small quantities at high prices to bulk purchasing. They now buy 60 bags of rice (100 kg each) at once from major markets like Daudu in Guma LGA and Jato Aka in Kwande LGA. This reduced their costs and increased their profit margins.

They also invested in modern equipment: a rice destoning machine, a blower for cleaning, and a rechargeable sewing machine for professional packaging. Their rice is now properly cleaned, packaged, and sold at better prices in Wurukum Market.

## A Business That Builds Community

The benefits have spread beyond the 300 cooperative members. The group now employs four permanent staff for processing and packaging, with more workers during peak seasons. Loaders, off-loaders, and other supply chain workers have also seen their incomes rise.

Within two months, the cooperative made ₦2 million in profit. This later grew to ₦4 million. The loan has been fully repaid. They have also bought and stored 40 extra bags of rice as working capital. Profits are now shared among members, and many households have gained new income streams.




Mrs. Ivom beside the destoning machine

## In Their Own Words

*"Through ACReSAL, our cooperative accessed a 7 million loan, which has significantly changed our business. Before, we could only afford to buy two to three bags of rice per week. Today, as a group, we can purchase up to 20 bags at a time. This support has strengthened our business and improved our incomes. Many of us can now pay our children's school fees and support our households independently. We are truly grateful." — Mrs. Viom Seember, Cooperative Leader*

*"The coming of ACReSAL has brought great improvement to my life. Previously, I could only manage about five bags of rice, but now I am able to buy between 20 and 25 bags. With the increased income, I was able to complete my three-bedroom house. I have also supported others in my community. This intervention has not only improved my livelihood but has enabled me to positively impact others." — Cynthia Makar, Cooperative Member*

## A Model That Speaks for Itself

The Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Cooperative is no longer just a trading group. It is a shining example of what happens when women receive proper training, organisation, and access to finance. ACReSAL did not give them a business — it gave them the tools and support to build one themselves.

The result is a strong, growing, community-owned enterprise that creates jobs, increases household income, and shows the power of women working together in Benue State.

# Restoring a Legacy

## — ACReSAL Rebuilds the Lugu Dam and Rekindles Hope in Wurno, Sokoto



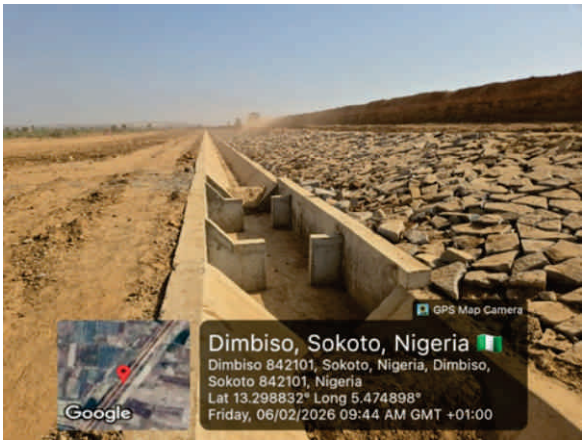
Lugu Dam in Wurno, Sokoto before ACReSAL's intervention

### Bringing Water and Hope Back to Wurno, Sokoto State

In 1957, Sir Ahmadu Bello, the first Premier of Northern Nigeria, commissioned the Lugu Dam. It was more than just an engineering project. It was a statement of faith in the people of Wurno, the fertility of the land, and the power of well-managed water to create prosperity. For over 50 years, the dam delivered on that promise — storing 47 million cubic metres of water, feeding the Wurno Irrigation Scheme, and supporting thousands of farming families through good seasons and bad.

### The Day the Dam Broke

In 2010, heavy flooding destroyed the dam's embankments and caused it to collapse. The water that had once sustained the community became a force of destruction. Homes were washed away. Farmland was submerged. The Wurno Irrigation Scheme and the many livelihoods connected to it were left idle for fifteen long years. For a community used to abundance, the empty dam became a painful daily reminder of what they had lost.




### The Reconstruction Begins

In May 2025, the Sokoto ACReSAL project awarded the reconstruction contract to CGCOC Group. This marked the start of an intensive two-year engineering programme to fully

restore the dam to modern standards that can withstand future floods.

The scope of work is comprehensive:

- Restore the full 47 million cubic metre water storage capacity
- Rebuild primary and auxiliary spillways for safe water flow
- Install new pause gates for better water control
- Reinforce the embankments with strong, modern engineering

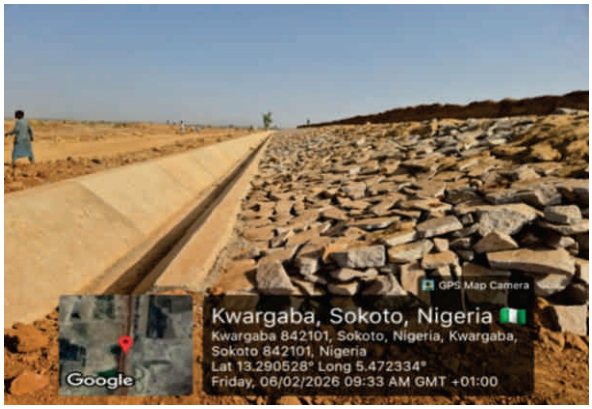
This is not just a repair. It is a forward-looking investment in climate resilience — rebuilding the dam to meet the challenges of a more unpredictable climate.

## What the Water Will Bring

Once completed, the restored Lugu Dam will bring wide-ranging benefits to Wurno and surrounding areas:

- Over 3,000 farmers in the Wurno Irrigation Scheme will have reliable water for their fields all year round — even during the long dry season.
- Communities will regain access to domestic water after fifteen years of shortage.
- Future flood risks will be reduced, protecting homes and infrastructure.

Beyond Wurno, the project sends a strong message: Nigeria's vital water infrastructure can be restored, and ACReSAL is committed to making it happen.




## A Symbol Reclaimed

By 2027, the Lugu Dam will no longer stand as a monument to the 2010 disaster. It will become a symbol of resilience — a testament to the communities that never gave up, the government's commitment, and ACReSAL's determination to turn hope into reality.

The legacy that Sir Ahmadu Bello began more than six decades ago is being restored, reinforced, and returned to the people of Wurno. Soon, the water will flow once again.



# Photo



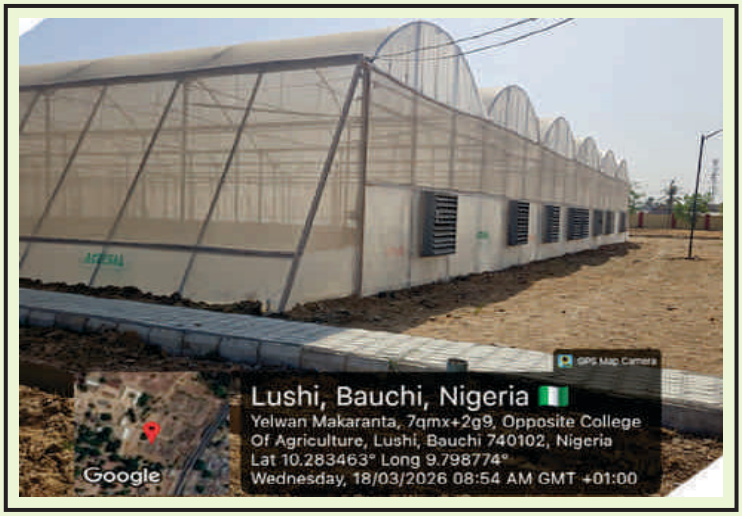

Desilting equipment for flood control in Benue State



Ongoing desilting of River Kaduna for flood control in Kaduna State





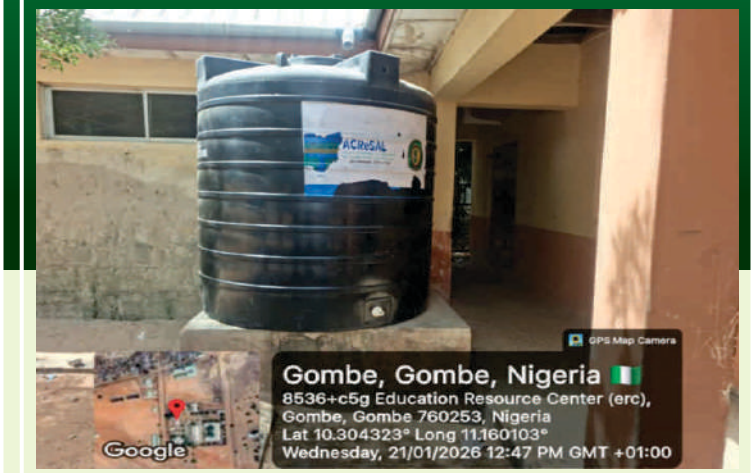




From Theory to Practice: Strengthening Food Security through Education.We are making significant progress in the construction of greenhouses across higher institutions to foster hands-on learning and sustainable agriculture. Top Left: Kaduna State, Top Right: Kogi State, Bottom Left & Right: Bauchi State

# Speaks




Sustainable water management in action. Simple, effective, and essential for flood control, households use and food security. (Nasarawa on the left; Gombe on the right).





Modern Agricultural tools as well as Climate Smart farm inputs have been procured and distributed to farming communities. By transitioning from manual labor to mechanization, we are: Increasing Yields, Saving Time and Building Resilience. Photo: (Nasarawa on the left; Taraba on the right).





Through sustained afforestation and integrated landscape management, over eight Hundred thousand hectares of degraded land are currently under restoration across 19 states and the FCT. This image from Bauchi State (Left) and Gombe state (right) captures the local implementation of this national mandate, highlighting the transition toward climate resilience and ecosystem recovery.

# Two Goats, One Future

## — How ACReSAL Is Transforming Women's Lives Through Livestock in Zamfara



Distribution of goats to women farmers in Zamfara State

### Livestock Empowerment for Women in Zamfara State

In rural Zamfara State, a goat is more than just an animal. It is savings on four legs. It is school fees, emergency money, and a safety net when crops fail or illness strikes. For generations, small livestock have been the backbone of women's economic security in communities where banks are far away and formal jobs are rare. ACReSAL understood this reality and took action.

### A Targeted Intervention, Carefully Designed

Through its community livelihood support programme, ACReSAL distributed **1,200 goats** — two per beneficiary (one male and one female) — to **600 women** organised in cooperative groups across Gusau, Bungudu, and parts of Kaura Namoda.

The support was comprehensive:

- Each woman received groundnut hay, wheat bran, and essential veterinary drugs
- They also received practical training in livestock management, breeding, and care

This combination of productive assets, technical knowledge, and group organisation was designed to create lasting change, not just temporary relief.

### From Asset to Ambition

For many of the 600 women, these two goats were their first real productive asset. The results came quickly.

Hadiza, one of the beneficiaries, said the goats strengthened her financial independence and gave her greater confidence to support her family.

Asabe, a member of a women's cooperative, received her two goats and watched them multiply through natural breeding. Within a year, she sold two goats during the festive season. She used the money to buy school materials for her children and to expand her small groundnut trading business.

*"Before the project, I did not own any livestock. Now I have animals that give me hope for the future," Asabe said.*

### A Model That Multiplies Itself

The true strength of this intervention is that it multiplies on its own. Goats breed quickly. Herds grow naturally. Every new kid born becomes another asset and another source of income.

The 1,200 goats distributed are not the end of the impact — they are just the beginning. As the women's herds expand and they reinvest their earnings, ACReSAL's support continues to grow in value.

In communities where climate challenges and limited opportunities for women have long gone hand in hand, two goats — given with proper training and placed in the hands of organised women — are proving powerful enough to change the future of entire families.

# Freedom from the Well

## — ACReSAL Brings Clean Water to Alapa After Forty Years of Struggle




### Solar-Powered Boreholes Transform Alapa Community, Kwara State

For more than forty years, the people of Alapa Community in Asa Local Government Area, Kwara State, started every day the same way — with a long journey for water. Before dawn, women and girls would wake up at 4 a.m. and walk four to five kilometres to neighbouring villages. What they brought back was often contaminated — from streams and wells shared with livestock. They tried to treat the water with alum, but diseases like Guinea worm, cholera, and typhoid were common.

### A Community Held Back by Water — or It's Absence

The lack of clean water affected every part of life in Alapa. It damaged health, slowed the economy, and limited opportunities. Food vendors

struggled. Cassava processors had to carry their goods to other villages. Building houses was difficult because water for construction was scarce. Many children missed school because they had to help fetch water instead of studying.

*"We wake up as early as 4am to look for water, walking 4km–5km to get it. Despite the distance, we couldn't even drink it safely. Our children didn't go to school regularly because we couldn't bathe them every day. We faced a lot of difficulties — but now we are so grateful for this ACReSAL intervention. It has given us freedom."*

*Ayinla Muslimat Abosede, Odegiwa Ward, Alapa Community*



Residents fetching water from one of the solar-powered boreholes installed.

### The Infrastructure of Transformation

The Kwara State Government, through ACReSAL, delivered a complete solution. The project installed **five solar-powered boreholes**, **ten community fetching points**, and a network of large steel tanks (150,000-litre, 25,000-litre, and 15,000-litre overhead tanks).

This infrastructure now provides clean, reliable water to over **4,500 people** (2,311 men and 2,290 women) right inside their community. Solar power was chosen so the boreholes can function even when there is no electricity or fuel.

### What Happens When Water Arrives

The change has gone far beyond just having water. It has brought back time, dignity, and economic opportunities.

Fatimah Abdulmalik, a cassava processor, now finds her work much easier. She processes more cassava at home, at lower cost, and with better results.

The Community Chairman, Agboola Issa Mohammed, says the whole community has been transformed: sickness among women and children has dropped sharply, children now attend school regularly, food vendors operate smoothly, and more houses are being built. People can finally plan for the future.

### The Ripple That Keeps Spreading

ACReSAL has given Alapa more than just boreholes. It has created the conditions for the community to grow. Children can go to school. Women can run businesses. Families can build better lives.

After forty years of daily struggle and contaminated water, the long walk is finally over. In Alapa, clean water now flows — and with it, new hope for the future.

# From Survival to Stewardship

## — ACReSAL Transforms Falgore's Forest Communities in Kano



Farm input ready for distribution to the farmers group at the three communities of Falgore town, Gada-biyu and Yantabarmi

### Sustainable Livelihoods Save Falgore Game Reserve, Kano State

The Falgore Game Reserve in Kano State is more than a wildlife sanctuary. It is the source of River Kano, which feeds the Tiga Dam — the state's largest irrigation facility. The reserve also helps regulate rainfall that supports agriculture across many downstream communities.

For the people living on its edges, however, the forest was mainly a place of survival.

### When Survival Costs the Forest

In communities like Gada-Biyu, Yantabarmi, and Falgore, poverty and lack of jobs pushed many residents to depend on the forest. They cut down trees for firewood to sell — an illegal and destructive practice, but often their only source of income.

Zainab Umar, a widow from Gada-Biyu, was trapped in this cycle.

*"I used to earn just ₦500 to ₦800 daily from selling firewood," she recalled. "It was dangerous, but I had no choice."*

Women and girls walked three to seven kilometres into the reserve daily, facing physical danger and legal risk, while unknowingly harming the same ecosystem their communities depended on.

This deforestation also threatened the wider region. It disrupted rainfall patterns, reduced water flow into River Kano, and put the Tiga Dam and downstream farming at risk.

### The Intervention: Protecting by Empowering

Between February and March 2024, the Kano State ACReSAL Project launched a major intervention with ₦119,875,000. The approach was simple but powerful: instead of punishing people for using the forest, give them better

alternatives.

A total of **2,480 beneficiaries** (farmers, youth, and women) from the three communities received training and support. Training covered crop production, climate-smart farming, livestock management, business skills, and marketing. Each participant was given improved seeds, fertilisers, water pumps, and small ruminants (goats or sheep).

### A Transformation Measured in Harvests and Hectares

The results came quickly. Farmers who previously harvested less than 100 kg of crops now get 150 to 200 kg per season, thanks to better seeds and farming methods. Many now farm all year round.

For Zainab Umar, life has changed completely:

> *"My goats have multiplied, and our farm yielded two bags of maize worth ₦120,000. We also roast and sell corn daily, earning about ₦1,500. Life is better now."*

Hamza, a former illegal logger and father of five, now has a better path:

> *"With this support, I have found a better way to live. I now farm during both dry and rainy seasons."*

### Numbers That Tell a Deeper Story

- 2,480 direct beneficiaries (about 20% of the three communities' population)
- 12,400 indirect beneficiaries
- 44% of direct beneficiaries are women (1,090 women)

Most importantly, deforestation and forest-related crimes have dropped by **30%**, according to forest guards from the Kano Zoological and Wildlife Management Agency (KAZOWMA).

### From Exploitation to Ownership

ACReSAL's work in Falgore shows that the best way to protect the forest is to empower the people who live closest to it. By giving them sustainable livelihoods and training, the project turned former exploiters into protectors.

The forest is no longer a place of last resort. It is becoming a shared treasure — protected by the same communities that once depended on its destruction. This shift from survival to stewardship is the real success of the project.

# Precision Over Guesswork

## — ACReSAL Upgrades Water Treatment Across Ten Plants in Kaduna State




The manual method of applying chemicals for the water treatment

### Automated Chemical Dosing Improves Safety in Kaduna State

Safe water is not just about supply — it is about precision. Treating raw water requires adding the right amounts of chlorine and other chemicals at exactly the right time. Manual systems, which depend on human judgement and measurement, cannot always guarantee this consistency. In Kaduna State, ageing treatment plants and growing populations had created a serious public health risk.

### The Problem with Manual Dosing

Before the ACReSAL intervention, operators at water treatment plants manually measured and added chemicals. The amount used varied depending on the operator's experience, the time of day, workload, and availability of measuring tools.

This led to three major problems:

- Inconsistent water quality that left people unsure about the safety of their tap water
- Wasted chemicals, higher costs, and greater risk to the environment
- Inability to quickly respond to changes in water quality caused by rainfall, seasons, or upstream activities

### From Manual to Intelligent Systems

Kaduna ACReSAL funded the automation of chemical dosing systems at ten water treatment plants. The new systems use sensors to continuously monitor water quality — including pH, turbidity, and chlorine levels — and automatically adjust chemical dosing in real time.

This change is fundamental. Instead of relying on human judgement, precision instruments now control the process consistently and reliably. The result is properly disinfected water

that meets national safety standards every day.




The automated chemical dosing machines in Kaduna State.

## Impact Across the Chain

Households connected to these plants now have greater confidence that their tap water is safe and consistently treated.

The benefits go further:

- Farmers and food processors receive more reliable water for irrigation and production
- Less chemical wastage reduces costs and protects the environment
- Water institutions save money on operations, making every naira invested go further

## Technology in Service of Resilience

This intervention shows how targeted technology can create wide benefits. The ten automated plants are now better prepared for the challenges of climate change — such as heavier rainfall, longer dry seasons, and changing water conditions.

In Kaduna State, the automation of chemical dosing is more than a technical upgrade. It is a key investment in public health, economic strength, and climate resilience — all essential for the state's future water security and development.

# More Than Just Concrete

## — How ACReSAL Restored Lives, Livelihoods and Land in Nasarawa




Gully erosion site in Doma, before intervention

### Gully Erosion Control Brings New Life to Nasarawa State

For the residents of Lafia, Doma, and Toto in Nasarawa State, the rainy season used to bring fear instead of hope. Gully erosion was slowly destroying their communities — cutting through roads, threatening homes, and moving closer to families every year.

*"Each rainy season feels like a death season," says Musa Yakubu, a farmer along the Lafia–Doma road. "The gully keeps moving closer. We no longer sleep peacefully when it rains."*

### When the Earth Gives Way

The danger was more than just damage to property. Hajiya Salamatu from Doma still remembers the heartbreaking loss of two school children who fell when the ground collapsed beneath them while crossing a path.

*"Since then, parents live in constant fear," she said.*

In these communities, gully erosion was not just an environmental problem — it was a daily source of terror.




Gully erosion site in Doma, after intervention

### A Decisive and Dignified Response

Through the ACReSAL project, Nasarawa State took strong action that combined erosion control with respect for people's dignity. A carefully prepared Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), reviewed and approved by the World Bank, ensured that every person affected by the erosion and the repair works was properly supported, not just relocated.

In the Lafia–Doma and Toto corridors, 195 Project-Affected Persons received a total of ₦744,218,340 in compensation. This was not just payment — it was a chance to rebuild lives that erosion had nearly destroyed.

### Compensation That Transformed Lives

Mr. Danladi's story shows the real meaning of this support:

*"I thought my life was over when the gully took part of my house. But the compensation gave me the opportunity to rebuild. Today, my family has a roof again."*

The project went beyond giving money. It also provided financial management training so beneficiaries could use the funds wisely and sustainably.

Hajiya Zainab from Toto explained it clearly:

*"They didn't just give us money — they taught us how to use it. Now I can support my children's education."*

### Jobs, Skills and a Community Rebuilt

While construction work was going on, the project created immediate jobs for local people. Men and women were employed as labourers and support workers. Many gained new skills in construction, drainage, and environmental management for the first time.

Sadiq Ibrahim, a young man from the area, said:

*"Before the project, there was nothing to do. But working on the site helped me earn money and take care of my family. It gave us hope again."*

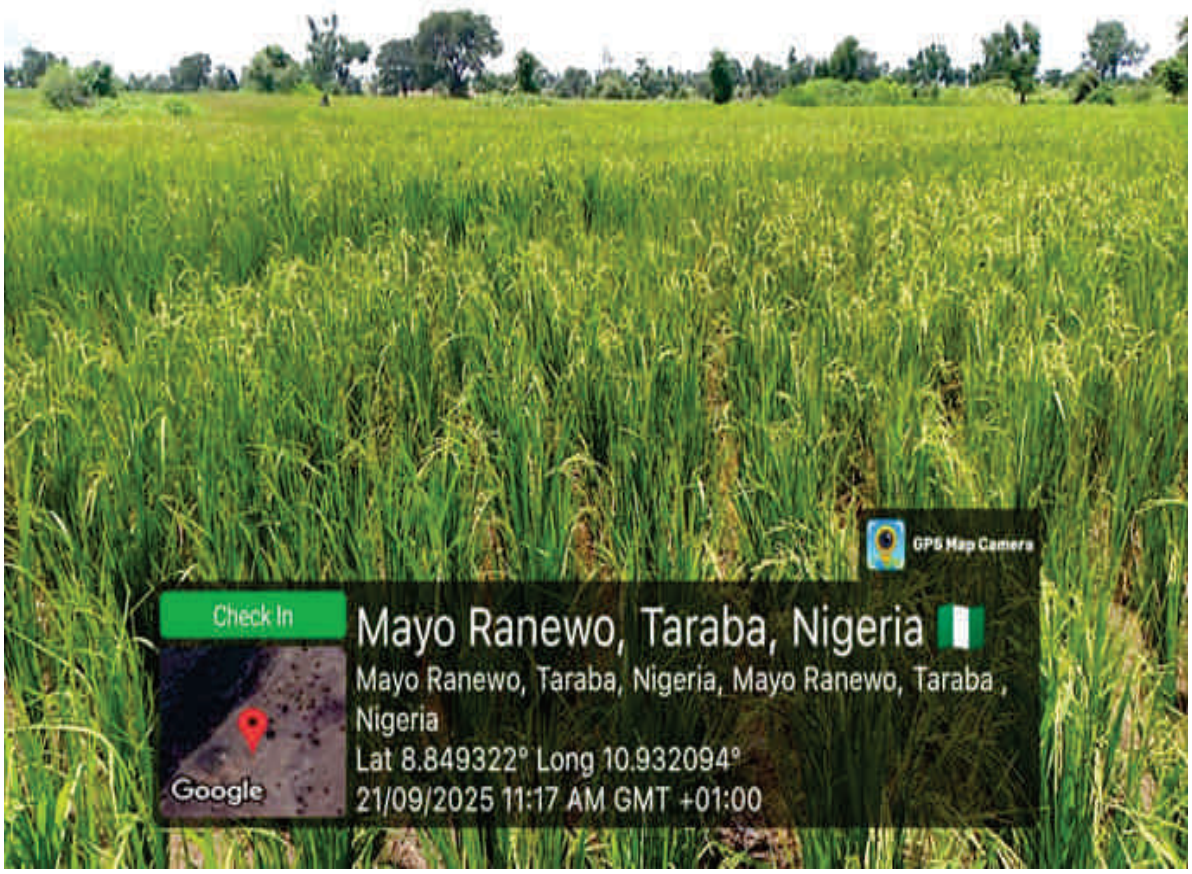
### A Corridor of Fear, Transformed

Today, life is different in Lafia, Doma, and Toto. Families who once lived beside dangerous gullies now have strong protection. Roads destroyed by erosion are being repaired and reconnected. Small businesses are returning. Through engineering works and bioengineering, large areas of damaged land are being restored and brought back to life.

What ACReSAL has achieved in Nasarawa is more than erosion control. It is proof that when environmental restoration is combined with genuine care for people, the result is not just a repaired landscape — it is a stronger, rebuilt community.

# From Debt to Harvest

## — ACReSAL Breaks the Input Wall for Taraba's Farmers




### Climate-Smart Inputs Transform Farming in Taraba State

In Taraba State, agriculture is not just part of the economy — it is the economy. The soil is rich and the land is vast, but for decades, smallholder farmers faced one major barrier: the high cost of farm inputs.

### The Input Wall

Before 2025, planting one season often required nearly ₦ 200,000 for inputs — an amount most smallholder farmers could not afford without heavy borrowing.

Blessing Dan'asabe and many others struggled every season. Ignatius Waizakare explained the difficult choice with herbicides:

*"Purchasing herbicides alone could cost ₦25,000. Without them, weeds destroyed the harvest. With them, there was no profit left."*

It was a lose-lose situation. Many farmers had also lost trust after previous organisations made promises, collected names, and never returned. Cynicism had become common.

### A New Season Begins

In 2025, under the leadership of Governor Dr. Agbu Kefas and in partnership with the Federal Ministry of Environment, ACReSAL launched a major distribution of climate-smart agricultural inputs across 32 communities in eight Local Government Areas.

800 farmers (466 men and 334 women) received herbicides, sprayers, and tools completely free (100% subsidy). There were no hidden charges for fuel or administration.

Ignatius Waizakare captured the moment:

*"I have never received herbicides as a gift since the creation of Taraba State. But this year, ACReSAL gave them to us for free. They didn't ask for money for anything."*




## No One Left at the Gate

The project made a special effort to reach everyone. Ezekiel Gatari, a farmer living with a disability, said:

*"You are not like other organisations. You came, you fulfilled your promise, and you supported even us, the physically challenged."*

## A Harvest That Compounds

With the heavy input costs removed, farmers are now planting with new confidence. They are reinvesting saved money into family nutrition, school fees, and household needs.

Thousands of trees were also planted alongside the input support. As Yakubu Mohammad noted, these trees are a "green pension" for the next generation — improving soil health and ensuring future productivity.

In Taraba State, farming is being redefined. It is no longer a desperate struggle against debt, weather, and broken promises. It is becoming a dignified profession, a reliable livelihood, and a strong foundation for a more food-secure future.

# From Despair to Resilience

## — ACReSAL Reclaims Lands and Lives in Kargo and Danmasara, Jigawa State



Gully erosion site in Kargo, Jigawa State, before intervention

### Gully Erosion Control Brings New Life to Kargo and Danmasara, Jigawa State

For many years, the residents of Kargo and Danmasara in Jigawa State lived with a quiet but constant dread. Massive gullies were slowly eating away their land — widening with every rainy season, destroying farmlands, collapsing roads, and threatening homes and lives. The land that should have sustained them had become a source of fear.

### Kargo Community: When the Land Became the Enemy

In Kargo, the deep and unstable gullies acted like barriers that isolated the community. They cut off roads, endangered livestock, and put children at constant risk. The psychological burden was heavy.

Malam Abubakar, a local farmer, watched the gullies consume land he had cultivated for years. The damage was not only to property — it destroyed the community's sense of safety and their ability to plan for the future.

Today, stabilisation works have turned the dangerous terrain into solid, productive land. Malam Munkaila Sani, another resident, says the project has done more than repair infrastructure. It has restored the community's confidence and resilience — the belief that the land can once again be trusted.

### Danmasara Community: Farming Through Fear

In Danmasara, the gullies created deep anxiety, especially for families with little margin for loss. Amina Bello, a mother of five, lived in fear every rainy season:

*"Every rainy season, I feared for my home and for my children. We lived on the edge of what we could bear."*

Fatima Ibrahim watched her farmland shrink season after season as the gully advanced. Her yields fell, and she feared she would soon have nothing left.

The construction of drainage channels and access roads has changed everything. The land is now stable. Floodwater is safely directed away from homes and farms. Reliable roads now connect the community to hospitals, markets, and schools even during heavy rains.



Gully erosion site in Kargo, Jigawa State, after intervention

## The Dimensions of a Lasting Transformation

ACReSAL's intervention in Kargo and Danmasara goes far beyond fixing gullies. It has delivered interlocking changes that create real, lasting improvement:

- Gullies have been stabilised and stopped from expanding
- Lost farmland has been reclaimed for cultivation
- New drainage systems safely channel rainwater
- Roads are now strong and passable all year round

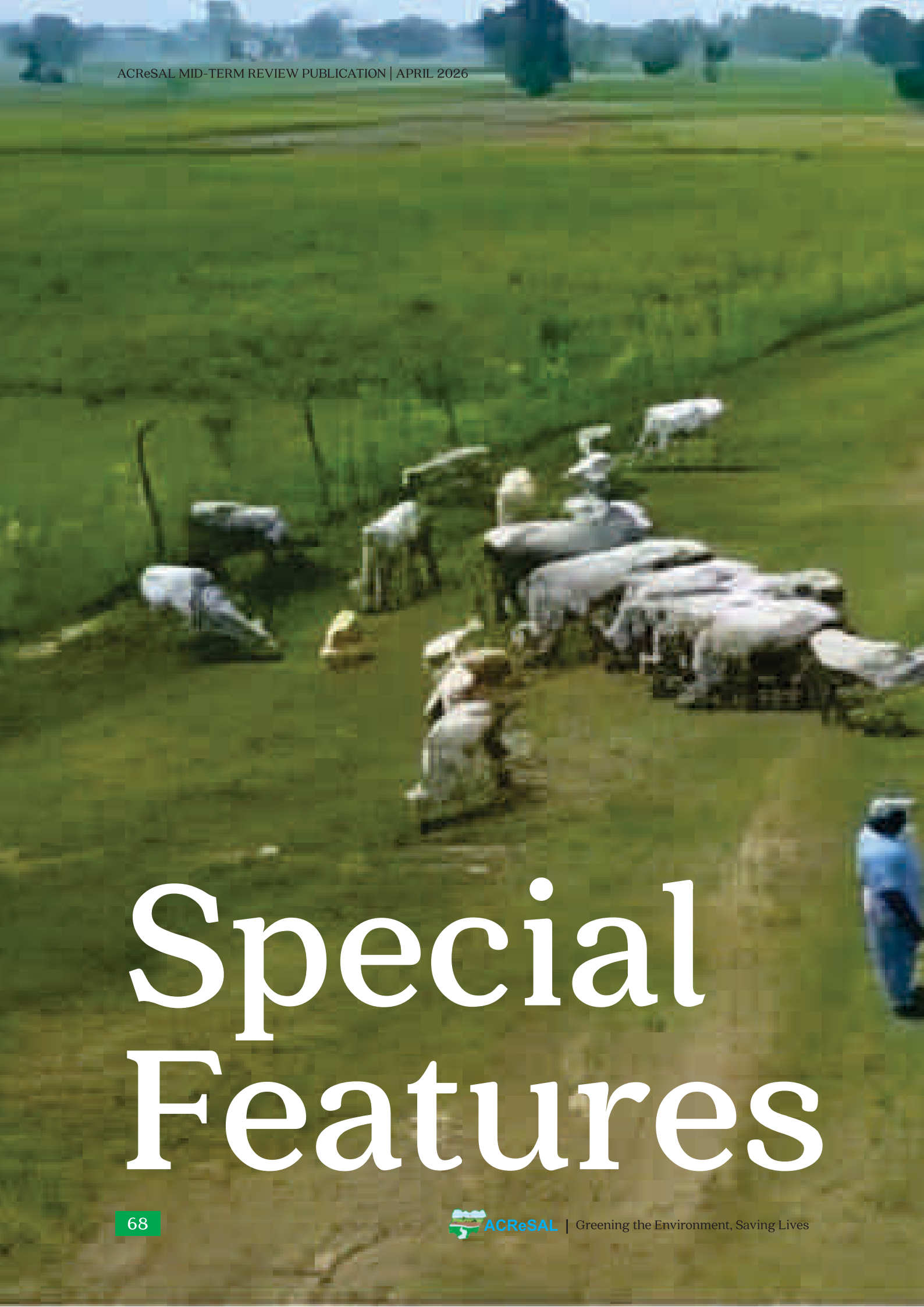
But the deepest change is invisible. Families no longer live in fear. Amina Bello faces the rains with peace. Fatima Ibrahim farms without anxiety. Children play safely. Families are planning ahead, investing in their homes, farms, and children's education because the ground beneath them is now stable.

## A Blueprint for Jigawa — and Beyond

The success in Kargo and Danmasara is not an isolated story. Across Jigawa State, ACReSAL is reclaiming 400 hectares of degraded land and returning it to productive use.

These two communities show what is possible when targeted, well-planned, and community-focused investment is made in both land and people. They prove that resilience is not something a community simply has or doesn't have — it can be built.

The people of Kargo and Danmasara have moved from a landscape of loss to one of stability, hope, and renewed confidence in the future.



# Special Features



# Special Feature

## Building Resilience: Strategic Catchment Management Plan, Blueprint for Sustainable Natural Resources Management in Nigeria




Validation of the first phase of strategic catchment management plans by ACReSAL's stakeholders

Across the vast semi-arid landscapes of northern Nigeria — from the Rima basin in the northwest to the Gongola valleys in the northeast — a quiet but powerful transformation is taking place. It is not driven by a single dramatic project, but by something more lasting: **a plan**.

A rigorous, inclusive, and data-driven plan that, for the first time, provides a clear and unified roadmap for environmental restoration and sustainable prosperity for millions of Nigerians.

### A Landscape at a Crossroads

For decades, northern Nigeria's landscapes have suffered from deforestation, water pollution, climate variability, unregulated mining, poor infrastructure, and insecurity. These pressures reinforce one another, creating a cycle of degradation that threatens food security, water availability, and the livelihoods of millions.

In the past, responses to these challenges were fragmented — addressing one problem in one place while the bigger picture remained unchanged. What was needed was a comprehensive, coordinated approach: a single framework that sees the entire landscape, understands its problems, and directs resources where they will have the greatest long-term impact.

### The Strategic Response: Twenty Plans, One Unified Vision

Under Component A of the ACReSAL project, this roadmap has been created. The project has developed **twenty Strategic Catchment Management Plans (SCMPs)** — one for each of the nineteen participating states plus the Federal Capital Territory.

These are not ordinary documents. They are practical, living frameworks that serve as the foundation and guiding system for all ACReSAL interventions across northern Nigeria.

Each SCMP provides detailed information on the human, natural, and ecological resources of its catchment area. This helps ACReSAL identify priority "intervention catchments" where targeted investments in restoration and sustainable management will deliver the best results for local communities.

The twenty catchments include: Gaji-Lamurde, Rima, Gulbin-Ka, Malenda, Oshin-Oyi, Sarkin-Powa, Kaduna-Mariga, Lokoja-Niger, Shemankar-Katsina-Ala, Wase-Taraba, Hawul-Kilange, Zungur-Gongola, Yedseram, Ngada, Misau-Komadugu-Gana, Sokoto-Zamfara, Hadejia-Jama'are, Aloma-Konshisha, Gurara-Gbako, and Benue-Mada.

## Built With Communities, Not Just For Them

What makes these plans special is how they were developed. ACReSAL used a truly inclusive approach that brought together government agencies, community-based organisations, NGOs, religious leaders, traditional rulers, and the private sector.

The plans reflect real on-ground realities — local challenges, existing community structures, ongoing programmes, and important social issues such as gender gaps and gender-based violence. They were co-created with the people who live and work in these landscapes, ensuring the solutions are practical and sustainable.

## From Fragmented Action to Strategic Precision

These Strategic Catchment Management Plans have introduced a new level of coordination. They identify common problems across the region while recognising local strengths. Resources are now directed to where they are needed most — for reforestation, water management, soil restoration, and livelihood support.

Importantly, the plans balance environmental protection with economic development and social equity. Communities that care for the land are positioned to benefit directly from its restoration.

## The Central Nervous System of ACReSAL

The twenty SCMPs now act as the central nervous system of the entire ACReSAL project. Every activity — from tree planting and borehole drilling to gully control — is guided by these plans to ensure it contributes to a bigger, coherent vision.

This is sustainable development done right: not a collection of separate projects, but a clear, long-term roadmap guiding northern Nigeria toward a more resilient, prosperous, and equitable future — one watershed at a time.




Unveiling of the strategic catchment management plans by ACReSAL's stakeholders

# Special Feature

## Leaving No One Behind: ACReSAL's Commitment to Gender Equality and Social Inclusion



Distribution of Energy Efficient Cooking Stoves in Kogi State.

### Putting People at the Centre of Restoration

ACReSAL has always understood a fundamental truth: you cannot restore a landscape without restoring the people who live on it — all of them. Land regeneration that leaves out women, youth, and marginalised groups is not true resilience. It is incomplete and can even reinforce the inequalities that make communities vulnerable in the first place.

That is why gender equality and social inclusion (GESI) have never been add-ons to ACReSAL's work. They have been built into the project from the very beginning.

### Starting with Evidence: The Gender Gap Analysis

ACReSAL's gender mainstreaming is based on solid evidence. At the start of the project, a comprehensive Gender Gap Analysis was carried out across all 19 implementing states and the FCT.

The analysis identified four major challenges:

- Unequal access to land and water resources
- Economic exclusion of marginalised groups from climate opportunities
- Limited participation of women and

youth in decision-making
- High prevalence of gender-based violence (GBV)

These findings shaped every ACReSAL intervention — from land restoration and water projects to livelihoods and governance — to ensure these gaps are actively closed.

## Land, Seeds, and a Decade of Opportunity

In Adamawa State, ACReSAL has directly tackled one of the biggest barriers facing women farmers: access to land.

9,659 women have been granted free farmland for ten years. Along with the land, they receive drought-resistant seeds, tools, and transportation support to help them succeed.

Across all states, the Strategic Catchment Management Plans (SCMPs) embed Gender Equality and Social Inclusion into every stage of planning and implementation. These plans act as social contracts — guaranteeing women, youth, and marginalised groups fair access to water, a voice in decisions, and a fair share of the benefits from restored ecosystems.

## From Exclusion to Enterprise: Women in the Marketplace

Economic exclusion is being broken down through practical support. Women and marginalised groups receive training in business management, value chain development, and sustainable production.

Women now make up 40% of all beneficiaries of the Community Revolving Fund (CRF) loan scheme. This gives them access to credit and a real voice in the marketplace. Many female agro-business owners are now scaling up their operations, achieving financial independence, and making decisions that shape their families' futures.

## A Seat at the Table: Women in Governance and Decision-Making

ACReSAL ensures women are not just beneficiaries — they are active decision-makers. Women's representation has significantly increased in key structures such as Project Implementation Committees, Early Warning Early Response (EWER) committees, and Community Interest Groups (CIGs).

In Jigawa State, Hajia Firdausi Adamu was elected Chairperson of a Community Revolving Fund Management Committee — clear proof that when given the opportunity, women can lead effectively.

## Building Safer Spaces: GBV Prevention on Every Worksite

ACReSAL takes the risk of gender-based violence seriously. Every contractor must sign a GBV Code of Conduct as a condition of work. The project also runs community sensitisation campaigns to raise awareness, encourage reporting of GBV, and promote gender equity.

## Honest About the Challenges

Progress has been significant, but challenges remain. At state level, gender and social inclusion activities sometimes receive lower priority and insufficient budgets. GBV is still underreported due to stigma and silence. These realities highlight that building equity requires not only technical work but also long-term cultural change.

## Equity as the Foundation, Not the Footnote

ACReSAL is proving that environmental restoration and social justice must go hand in hand. You cannot heal the land while leaving people behind. From land allocation to leadership roles, from loans to safer worksites, inclusion is not an afterthought — it is the foundation of the project.

*"Development without equity and social justice is just expansion. If we are to get it right, we must do it right — by embracing social justice."*

*Helen John, Gender and GBV Advisor, ACReSAL*

# ACReSAL and the United Nations

## Sustainable Development Goals




## 1. Introduction and Strategic Alignment

The Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) Project was launched by the Federal Government of Nigeria in partnership with the World Bank. It is a major initiative covering 19 northern states and the Federal Capital Territory (FCT).

The project has three core objectives:

- Restore degraded landscapes
- Strengthen climate resilience
- Improve the livelihoods of millions of Nigerians living in climate-vulnerable areas

From the beginning, ACReSAL was designed to be more than just a national environmental programme. It was created as a direct contribution to global sustainability goals.

Its multi-sectoral approach — which brings together environment, agriculture, water resources, and governance — aligns strongly with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This alignment is deliberate and central to the project.

Every aspect of ACReSAL — its strategic objectives, implementation methods, and expected results — is firmly rooted in the principles of sustainable development, social equity, and long-term resilience.

### Key SDGs Aligned at Conception

ACReSAL's design directly engages six primary SDGs:




- SDG 2 — Zero Hunger: Addressed through sustainable agriculture, agroforestry, and food security initiatives that improve crop yields and ensure year-round food availability for

communities.

- **SDG 6** — Clean Water and Sanitation: Delivered via 965 solar-powered boreholes, watershed management, and the restoration of degraded water catchments across participating states.
- **SDG 13** — Climate Action: Pursued through landscape restoration at scale, climate-resilient farming practices, and Nigeria's Green Bond financing mechanism.
- **SDG 15** — Life on Land: Advanced by rehabilitating degraded ecosystems, protecting biodiversity, restoring wetlands, and expanding forest cover across the semi-arid region.
- **SDG 5** — Gender Equality: Embedded through a target of 49.41% female beneficiaries, women's land access programmes, and the mainstreaming of Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) across all components.
- **SDG 1** — No Poverty: Tackled through livelihood support, interest-free community revolving funds, and enterprise development that moves smallholder farmers and processors from subsistence to sustainability.

## 2. Implementation Phase — SDG Integration in Practice

ACReSAL's implementation has been marked by tangible, measurable progress across three core components, each reinforcing distinct SDG targets through coordinated, on-the-ground action

### Component A: Dryland Management

818, 546 ha of degraded land under restoration– representing 81.9% of the project's target — through afforestation, soil conservation, rangeland rehabilitation, and flood mitigation infrastructure.

Rehabilitation of urban ecological assets, including the full restoration of Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo in Maiduguri following the catastrophic 2024 Alau Dam flood, reviving a vital community, conservation, and economic destination.

Indirect support through improved watershed health: by restoring catchments and reducing sedimentation, ACReSAL contributes to the health of downstream aquatic ecosystems and water bodies connected to the region's rivers and lakes.

### Component B: Community Climate Resilience

Disbursement of USD 9.27 million through Community Revolving Funds to 371 communities, directly supporting 26,292 individuals across the full agricultural value chain — from crop production to processing, marketing, and storage.

Close to half of all Community Revolving Fund beneficiaries are women, operationalising gender equity in economic development. In Adamawa alone, 9,659 women have been granted free farmland for ten years, dismantling historic barriers to agricultural participation.

Installation of 965 solar-powered boreholes and solar street lights across participating states, delivering clean, sustainable energy for water supply, community safety, and small-scale economic activity.

Distribution of 275 tractors and establishment of greenhouses, fish farms, and poultry units — creating productive economic infrastructure, decent employment opportunities, and viable pathways out of subsistence for rural households.

| Component C: Institutional Strengthening |
|---|
| Development of digital platforms for precision agriculture and environmental health monitoring, enabling data-driven decision-making and innovation in sustainable land management at national scale. |
| Implementation of the Soil Health Card Scheme and collaboration with SoilValues to promote responsible and sustainable soil management practices across farming communities. |
| Strategic Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) under the 50x2030 initiative to close critical agricultural data gaps, strengthening the evidence base for sustainable development planning across Nigeria. |

## 3. Policy and Governance — Enabling the Environment for SDG Delivery

ACReSAL's impact goes far beyond physical restoration of the land.

Its policy and governance work is building strong institutions that will help sustain the project's achievements long after external funding ends. These efforts are embedding ACReSAL's gains into national and state-level systems, ensuring that progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) continues for years to come.








- **SDG 16 — Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions:** States across the project area are adopting Integrated Landscape Management Policies to embed sustainable land governance into law. Legislative bills are actively underway in Benue and Nasarawa States, laying durable institutional groundwork for the long-term ownership of ACReSAL's environmental gains.
- **SDG 17 — Partnerships for the Goals:** Strategic partnerships have been forged with Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs), traditional and community leaders, and international donors — including the Netherlands Government for the SoilValues programme — broadening ACReSAL's resource base and deepening its local legitimacy.
- **SDG 13 — Climate Action:** Nigeria's 3rd Green Bond, valued at ₦50 billion, has been successfully issued, with preparations underway for a 4th issuance — establishing a durable climate finance mechanism that connects ACReSAL's environmental outcomes to sovereign capital markets and Nigeria's international climate commitments.

Together, these policy interventions ensure that ACReSAL is not simply delivering projects — it is building systems capable of sustaining progress toward the SDGs independently of any single funding source or project cycle.

## 4. Sustainability Indicators and Impact Metrics

ACReSAL's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) is not merely aspirational — it is clearly proven. The project uses a robust results monitoring framework and a wide range of measurable outcomes that clearly demonstrate both the **scale** and the **depth** of its impact.

### Key Targets and Progress

- **Landscape Restoration**: Target of 1 **million hectares** of degraded land to be restored by 2030. This represents 25% of Nigeria's national goal of 4 million hectares, placing ACReSAL at the centre of the country's commitments to **SDG 13** (Climate Action) and **SDG 15** (Life on Land).
- **Beneficiary**: 4.4 million direct

**beneficiaries**, with gender parity and strong community ownership built into the project's design.

- **Institutional Capacity**: Strengthened Ministries, Departments and Agencies with better data systems, faster response times, and improved service delivery for long-term natural resource management.
- **Environmental Resilience**: **Twenty Strategic Catchment Management Plans (SCMPs)** developed across all watersheds in 19 states and the FCT, supported by biodiversity conservation in national parks and protected areas.

These results do not just show progress — they confirm that ACReSAL is a practical, replicable model for climate-resilient and SDG-aligned development at national scale.

## 5. Conclusion — ACReSAL as a Global Benchmark

ACReSAL demonstrates what is possible when a national project is deliberately designed around global sustainability principles. Its alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was built into the project from the very beginning and has guided every component, investment, and partnership







By embedding SDG principles into its structure, ACReSAL delivers three important outcomes that define truly sustainable development:

- Long-term viability of its interventions
- A model that can be replicated in other regions and countries facing similar challenges
- Greater credibility with international partners, donors, and global climate institutions

As Nigeria advances on its sustainable development journey, ACReSAL stands as a flagship initiative. It proves that strong alignment with the SDGs is not just aspirational — it is achievable, measurable, and already delivering real results.

## Looking Ahead

*These stories and special features demonstrate ACReSAL's tangible contributions to Nigeria's fight against desertification, land degradation, and social exclusion. From cracked Sahelian soils to thriving regenerative farms, from deadly annual floods to zero casualties, from dying wetlands to biodiversity-rich sanctuaries, from excluded women to empowered community leaders, from fragmented actions to unified strategic plans — the evidence of transformation is clear, measurable, and deeply human. Each of these stories is not an endpoint, but a beginning: the seed of a more resilient, more equitable, and more hopeful northern Nigeria. The promise of even greater impact lies ahead..*

# ALIGNMENT WITH NATIONAL GOALS








## Aligning ACReSAL Objectives with Nigeria's National Development Goals

The Agro-Climatic Resilience in Semi-Arid Landscapes (ACReSAL) Project serves as a powerful vehicle for translating Nigeria's high-level national goals into real, visible results on the ground.

By tackling land degradation and climate vulnerability, ACReSAL directly supports the National Development Plan (NDP) 2021–2025 in several key areas:

1. **Food Security and Agricultural Productivity**

A major national priority is ending hunger. ACReSAL contributes by:

- **Mechanization:** Distributing tractors, power tillers, and other equipment to shift farmers from subsistence to commercial agriculture.
- **Land Restoration:** Putting over 818,546 ha of degraded land under restoration.
- **Resilience Assets:** Providing irrigation systems and climate-smart tools so farmers in semi-arid areas can grow food even during erratic rainfall.

2. **Economic Diversification and Job Creation**

The NDP targets the creation of 21 million jobs and reduced dependence on oil. ACReSAL supports this through:

- **Livelihood Enhancement:** Reaching 4.4 million direct beneficiaries and creating jobs in land restoration, tree planting, and agribusiness.
- **Inclusivity:** With 45% women beneficiaries, the project promotes gender-inclusive economic growth.
- **Community Empowerment:** Stimulating local economies in northern Nigeria by building infrastructure for trade and agricultural processing.

3. **Climate Action and Green**

### Infrastructure

Nigeria's Agenda 2050 emphasises a net-zero future and climate resilience. ACReSAL advances this by:

- **Watershed Management**: Completing and validating 20 Strategic Catchment Management Plans (SCMPs) to guide sustainable water use.
- **Flood Control**: Implementing projects such as the Kogin Tipper site in Maiduguri and the rehabilitation of Lugu and Langtang Dams to protect communities and national infrastructure from climate disasters.

### 4. Governance and Institutional Strengthening

A key goal of the current administration is improving government efficiency. ACReSAL contributes by:

- **Efficiency and Transparency:** Being recognised by the World Bank as a top-performing project.
- **Institutionalisation:** Transitioning ACReSAL into a permanent national agency framework to ensure climate resilience becomes a lasting part of Nigeria's governance structure.



# Testimoni



# ials

# In Their Own Words

*The voices of those whose lives ACReSAL has transformed*

Data and statistics tell one story. The voices of the people behind them tell another — one that is richer, more honest, and more enduring.

The testimonies below come from beneficiaries of the ACReSAL project across northern Nigeria: women who built thriving enterprises, men who changed their lives, and communities that discovered new hope through targeted investment and dignified support.

Their words need no embellishment.

## Community Beneficiaries



### Mrs. Viom Seember

*| 50, Mother of Four | Chairperson, Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Cooperative | Wurukum, Makurdi, Benue State*

Mrs. Viom Seember has led the Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Cooperative through one of the most consequential periods in its history. Under her chairpersonship, the cooperative leveraged ACReSAL's Community Revolving Fund to transform from a loose association of independent traders into a coordinated, profitable, and growing enterprise. This is her account of that transformation.

*"Through ACReSAL, our cooperative accessed a ₦7 million loan facility that has fundamentally changed the way we do business. Before this intervention, each of us could only afford to purchase two or three bags of rice per week — trading individually, absorbing individual risks, and earning individual margins that barely kept our households afloat. Today, as a unified cooperative, we are able to purchase up to twenty bags at a time. The difference is not just in the volume — it is in the confidence, the efficiency, and the respect we now command in the market. The loan also enabled us to invest in essential processing equipment: a rice destoning machine, a blower for cleaning, and a rechargeable sewing machine for professional bagging. Our product is better. Our buyers are more loyal. And our incomes have improved in ways that have changed daily life for our families — many of us can now pay our children's school fees and manage our households with a dignity and independence we did not have before. We are truly grateful for what ACReSAL has made possible. This is not just a loan. It is a future."*



### Cynthia Makar

*| Member, Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Cooperative | Wurukum, Makurdi, Benue State*

Cynthia Makar joined the Newbridge Women Rice Sellers Cooperative as a small-scale trader whose ambitions consistently outpaced her capital. The ACReSAL intervention changed that equation — and the change has extended well beyond her own household. Cynthia's account is one of the most striking illustrations of what happens when economic empowerment is given room to compound.

*"The coming of ACReSAL has brought great improvement to my life — and I say that not lightly. Before this intervention, I could manage perhaps five bags of rice at a time. Today, I buy between twenty and twenty-five bags. The difference in income has been transformative. One of the things I am most proud of is what I have been able to do with that income beyond my own household. I was able to complete my three-bedroom house, which had stood unfinished for years — a source of quiet embarrassment and daily reminder of what I could not yet afford. It is finished now. That alone would have been enough. But what has meant the most to me is the ability to help others. At one point, I was able to assist a neighbour whose business had collapsed to get back on her feet. She is doing well now. ACReSAL did not just improve my livelihood — it gave me the capacity to improve someone else's. That is the kind of change that does not stop with one person."*



## Adamu Isah | *Community Advocate | Nguru, Yobe State*

Adamu Isah is not an ACReSAL staff member — yet he has become one of its most passionate advocates. His testimony speaks to the depth of suffering that preceded the project's arrival in Nguru, and to the scale of transformation that followed.

*"I have been actively promoting the ACReSAL project even though I am not on its staff — because what this project has done for our people demands to be heard. The struggles we faced were unbearable; recalling them still brings tears to my eyes. Our people were forced to travel to Chad, Cameroon, and Libya in search of food and livelihood. In Nguru, over 20,000 fishermen and two-thirds of the population depend on farming and fishing — yet we lacked access to water across more than 25 kilometres of land. To farm at all, we had to travel to a neighbouring local government, incurring transportation and labour costs that kept us in poverty. ACReSAL has been a game-changer. The dredging of the Nguru wetlands has empowered our fishermen to provide for their families and sponsor their children's education. They now earn between ₦20,000 and ₦30,000 daily. As for my own farm — I spent over ₦10 million last year and previously harvested only 85 bags of rice, having struggled to produce even 10 bags over eleven years due to the cost of pumping water with petrol. Since the intervention, I have already harvested 128 bags from just one of my farms, with eight more yet to come. The difference is not incremental — it is transformational."*



## Malama Jummai Yabagi | *Smallholder Farmer | Niger State*

Malama Jummai Yabagi's story captures the quiet, cascading miracle of what a single intervention can do when it reaches a family at the right moment. Her harvest doubled five times over. What followed was a story of school fees paid, grandchildren nourished, and a woman who found in abundance the means to help her husband.

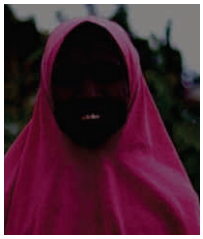
*"At harvest time, I went from producing just two bags of crops per year to an astonishing ten bags. My husband could not believe it. He asked, 'Jummai, are you sure this is from your farm?' I gave thanks to God and told him: 'This is all from my farm. It is God's blessing — and ACReSAL's doing.' My second son and his younger brother had been out of school because we could not pay their fees. I told my husband to sell two bags and settle what was owed. Our children returned to school. I sold two more bags and provided for our grandchildren — twins — buying them clothes, ensuring they received proper medical care, and feeding the family well. If you had seen those*

*children before, you would not have recognised them: malnourished, struggling to walk. Now look at them — running and playing happily. I attribute this transformation to ACReSAL and to God's grace."*



### Justina Ibrahim | *Chairperson, Women Cassava Processors Group*

*"The ACReSAL intervention has been a genuine game-changer for our group. Before this support, we operated under extremely difficult conditions — no reliable water, no sanitation facilities, no safe working environment. All of that has changed. We now have a clean, safe processing facility with reliable water access. Our production volumes have increased significantly, our product quality has improved, and our incomes have grown in ways that are making a real difference to our families. We are not just processors anymore — we are a business."*



### Aisha Adamu | *Farmer and Single Mother | Kofar Durbi, Katsina State*

Aisha Adamu raises her children alone. For years, the flooding that devastated Katsina's streets each rainy season also devastated her farm — and with it, her family's ability to eat, to plan, and to hope. ACReSAL's drainage infrastructure changed the terms of her survival.

*"Farming is not easy when you are raising children alone. The floods made it harder than it should ever have been — roads destroyed, crops ruined, everything I had worked for washed away season after season. Since ACReSAL's intervention, the roads are passable. The flooding is controlled. I can farm without the dread I used to carry every time the rains came. I am deeply grateful for this support, and I hope it continues — because every improvement to our land and roads is an improvement to my children's future."*



### Usman Mohammed

*| Resettled Resident and Small Business Owner | Kurminbeto, Gombe State*

Usman Mohammed once lived in constant fear — his family's home in Wuarekesa perched beside a valley that became a floodplain every rainy season. Resettlement support from ACReSAL, facilitated through the Gombe State Government, gave him a foundation he had never had: safety.

*"We lived in fear every rainy season. The valley beside our home flooded without warning, and every year we wondered if this would be the one that took everything. With the support of ACReSAL and Gombe State's leadership, we were resettled in Kurminbeto. I used the funds received to purchase a safer home and invest in a small business — maize, beans, trading in provisions. My wife began selling masa and foodstuffs. We are not just surviving now. We are building. We share what we have with our neighbours because we know what it means to have nothing. ACReSAL gave us more than a house. It gave us a life we can be proud of."*

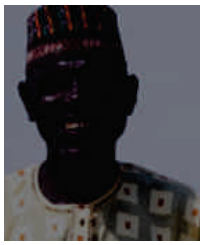


## Mallama Hafsat Mohammed

*| Teacher, Modern Nursery and Primary School | Wuarekesa, Gombe State*

As a teacher, Mallama Hafsat Mohammed saw flooding not only as a threat to homes and infrastructure, but to the education of the children she taught — kept from school by impassable roads and flooded classrooms. ACReSAL's infrastructure works changed what was possible for her community and her pupils.

*"Every heavy rain was a disruption — for my community, for the market, and most painfully, for the children I teach. Roads became impassable. Homes were damaged. Families had their lives interrupted season after season. ACReSAL's intervention brought us proper drainage, maintained roads, and the support to secure our homes against the rains. I received ₦1.36 million in resettlement support, which enabled me to safeguard my home and plan for further improvements. The children come to school more regularly now. The roads are open. Our community can move forward — and for a teacher, nothing matters more than that."*



## Mohammed Sani Umar *| Farmer | Gamahue Community, Jigawa State*

Mohammed Sani Umar is a dedicated farmer whose harvests, despite his commitment, never reflected the effort he put in — until ACReSAL's cooperative financing gave him the inputs that made the difference between subsistence and sufficiency.

*"Before ACReSAL, I could only harvest between 7 and 10 bags of rice each season, no matter how hard I worked. The problem was not my effort — it was the absence of quality inputs. Through my community's cooperative, ACReSAL provided me with ₦280,000, which I used to purchase quality seeds, fertiliser, and herbicides. I now expect to harvest up to 20 bags. That is not just a bigger harvest — it is the means to buy school uniforms and supplies for my children, and the bicycles they need to reach school on time. When your farm works, everything else becomes possible."*



## Hauwa *| Rice Processor and CRF Beneficiary | Northern Nigeria*

Hauwa's story illustrates the multiplier power of the Community Revolving Fund: a woman who doubled her production capacity, supported her children's education and healthcare — and then extended that generosity outward, helping other women in her community and planning a school to tackle illiteracy.

*"My business was stuck because of limited capital. I could only produce two bags of rice at a time — not enough to grow, not enough to reinvest. With the Community Revolving Fund, I can now produce four to five bags per cycle. I have been able to support my children's education and take them to hospital when they are unwell. But what gives me the most pride is that I have been able to help other women too — sharing what I have learned and what I have gained. We are now planning to establish a school for married women, to give them the knowledge and confidence that too many of us were denied. ACReSAL did not just change my business. It changed what I believe is possible."*



## Mrs. Fatimah Pius Birima

*| Park Manager, Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo | Maiduguri, Borno State*

*"Since the establishment of Sanda Kyarimi Park Zoo in 1970, the Government has been our primary support. ACReSAL is the first external organisation to step in with meaningful assistance — and the impact has been transformational. The painting, the rebuilt fences, the infrastructure restoration: all of it has changed what visitors see when they arrive. Before the intervention, we recorded around 50 visitors on working days and over 200 at weekends. Today, we record 100 on working days and over 500 at weekends — with numbers rising sharply during festive periods. The economic impact has extended to every vendor with a shop in the park. We now run radio jingles and advertising campaigns to attract more visitors, because the park is beautiful again and deserves to be seen. We are grateful to ACReSAL for believing in what this place could become."*

# Voices of Traditional Leadership

## His Royal Highness, Alhaji Abba Tukur

*| Traditional Ruler, Kasuwan Yelwa Auguwan Galadiman Muri Community | Taraba State*



*"Before the borehole was established, this community struggled every day to access clean water. Today, approximately 70% of our water needs have been met — and the relief this has brought is immeasurable. The water is clean and hygienic. Waterborne diseases such as cholera and typhoid, which were once a regular presence among our people, have not returned. The community has established a strong maintenance committee to safeguard the facility, because we understand that this borehole is a treasure. We would protect it with our lives. I will be honest: we need one more. Give us another borehole, and I believe we will be fully served. But for what has already been done — we are grateful first to God, and then to ACReSAL, who came to our aid. Whoever brings water brings life. And that is why, whenever anyone says 'ACReSAL,' we open our doors. Someone who brings life to you has brought everything. We look forward to many more such blessings."*

## His Royal Highness, Etsu Kwali Luka Ayodee Nizassan III

*| Traditional Ruler, Kwali Area Council | FCT, Abuja*



*"As a result of ACReSAL's interventions, Kwali has moved off several poverty indicators. That alone tells you the scale of what has happened here. It is one thing to have a government project. It is another thing entirely to have an honest, dedicated team implementing it. I am ready to provide all the support this project needs — because when ACReSAL succeeds, it makes a long-term impact in our communities. The cassava processing facility in Sheda now supplies fufu to Lagos, Kano, and Sokoto. ACReSAL expanded the market, and in that facility alone, the net weekly income is approaching ₦500,000. Tractors and mechanised agricultural tools have reduced labour costs and increased production across Kwali. The Community Revolving Fund has been transformational. Dry season farming using the Kwali Dam is now creating year-round food security. ACReSAL's peace-building and conflict resolution programmes have measurably reduced the number of disputes in my kingdom. This project is a pathway to rural development — and I am proud to have it here."*

## Partners and Government Leadership



### Malam Balarabe Abbas Lawal

*| Honourable Minister of Environment of Nigeria*
*| Chairman, Federal Steering Committee, ACReSAL Project*

As Chairman of the Federal Steering Committee and the minister with primary oversight responsibility for ACReSAL, Malam Balarabe Abbas Lawal has championed the project's cross-sectoral governance model as a blueprint for integrated environmental management in Nigeria. His testimony highlights the institutional architecture that gives ACReSAL its strategic coherence and its durability.

*"One of the most important decisions made in the design of ACReSAL was the decision to govern it collaboratively. The challenges of land degradation, water scarcity, and climate vulnerability do not respect the boundaries between ministries — and neither does this project. We have established a robust collaborative framework spanning the Federal Ministries of Environment, Agriculture, and Water Resources, bringing together the full spectrum of institutional authority and technical expertise that integrated landscape management demands. This cross-ministerial architecture is not administrative convenience. It is strategic necessity. It ensures that ACReSAL's interventions are coherent across sectors, that its policy gains are anchored across multiple institutional homes, and that its achievements cannot be reversed by a change in any single ministry's priorities. The framework we have built is, in itself, one of ACReSAL's most enduring contributions to Nigeria's environmental governance — and it is a model I am proud to commend to every state and every partner engaged in this work."*



### Engr. Prof. Joseph Terlumun Utsev

*Honourable Minister of Water Resources and Sanitation*

The ACReSAL Project is Nigeria's bold response to the environmental challenges of our time. Our goal is clear: to strengthen climate resilience, restore degraded landscapes, and empower our communities to manage their natural resources sustainably. These are not abstract problems—they threaten the food on our tables and the stability of our nation.



## Senator Dr. Sabi Aliyu Abdullahi

*| Honourable Minister of State for Agriculture and Food Security*
*| Co-Chairman, Federal Steering Committee, ACReSAL Project*

As Co-Chairman of the Federal Steering Committee, Senator Dr. Sabi Aliyu Abdullahi has been a driving force behind ACReSAL's integration with Nigeria's national agricultural agenda. His testimony speaks to the project's fundamental role in repositioning the smallholder farmer as the centrepiece of Nigeria's food security strategy.

*"Agriculture is not merely a sector in Nigeria's economy — it is the foundation upon which the livelihoods of millions of our citizens are built. ACReSAL understands this truth, and its land restoration initiatives reflect it. By rehabilitating degraded landscapes and restoring the ecological conditions that productive farming requires, ACReSAL is doing what no subsidy or emergency intervention alone can do: it is rebuilding the productive capacity of the land itself. The farmers we are empowering through this project — equipped with climate-smart techniques, improved seeds, mechanised tools, and access to finance — are not merely producing more. They are becoming more resilient, more self-sufficient, and more capable of contributing to Nigeria's food security in the seasons to come. ACReSAL is not a project at the margins of our agricultural agenda. It is at its very heart — and the Federal Ministry of Agriculture is committed to ensuring that its gains endure, expand, and inspire the next generation of investment in Nigeria's farming communities."*



## Mr. Matthew Verghis

*World Bank Country Director, Nigeria*

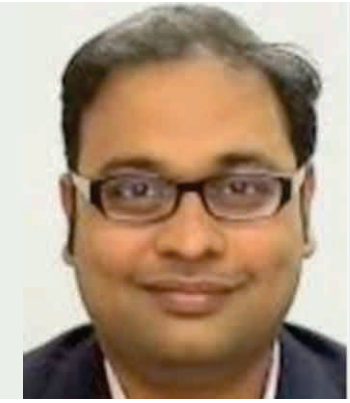
*ACReSAL is delivering some of the most significant interventions we've seen. Where strong ownership meets sustainable action, performance speaks for itself.*



## Mrs. Ellysar Baroudy

*| Environment Practice Manager, The World Bank*

*"I am genuinely impressed — by the passion, the energy, and the results I have witnessed. The before-and-after documentation of what this project has achieved is striking in the most powerful way. ACReSAL has become a standout example within the World Bank's entire portfolio. When we evaluate financing decisions at the World Bank, results are what we look for — evidence that investment is working, that it can continue, and that it deserves to be scaled. ACReSAL has shown exactly those results. It deserves every applause it receives."*



## Vinay Kumar Vutukuru

*| Program Leader, Sustainable Development*
*| The World Bank, Nigeria Country Office*

As Program Leader for Sustainable Development at the World Bank's Nigeria Country Office, Vinay Kumar Vutukuru oversees one of the most complex and consequential development portfolios on the African continent. His assessment of ACReSAL — measured, authoritative, and forward-looking — reflects both the project's standing within the institution and the critical challenge of sustaining what it has built.

*"ACReSAL stands among the most prominent and closely watched projects in the World Bank's Nigeria portfolio — a distinction it has earned through the quality of its design, the breadth of its reach, and the measurable impact it has delivered on the ground. The results documented at this Mid-Term Review are a testament to what rigorous, integrated, community-driven development can achieve when it is implemented with discipline and genuine commitment to outcomes. The task ahead, however, is as important as the progress already made. The gains ACReSAL has delivered — in land restoration, livelihood development, gender inclusion, and institutional capacity — must be protected and extended beyond the project's funding cycle. This requires the deliberate construction of institutional frameworks: governance structures, policy instruments, financing mechanisms, and community ownership models that will sustain these achievements and continue to generate returns for Nigeria long after the project itself has concluded. Sustainability is not the conclusion of this work. It is its next chapter."*



## Dr. Iganya Joy Agene

*| Task Team Leader, ACReSAL Project*
*| Senior Environmental Specialist, The World Bank*

As the Task Team Leader who has guided ACReSAL's design and delivery from within the World Bank, Dr. Joy Iganya Agene offers a perspective that is at once technical and deeply human — articulating the integrated philosophy that makes this project a model for climate-resilient development in Nigeria and beyond.

*"The ACReSAL Project is fundamentally about people — about agriculture, enabling policy, sustainability, peacebuilding, coordination, collaboration, water management, and land restoration. Through this integrated approach, ACReSAL is exceptionally well positioned to contribute to Nigeria's food security across the short, medium, and long term, in full alignment with the national development agenda. Beyond training in Climate-Smart Agriculture and the distribution of farm inputs, we are advancing mechanised agriculture to enhance speed and efficiency for our farmers. By ensuring that tractors and modern agricultural tools are accessible and operational on the ground, ACReSAL is empowering smallholder farmers to increase their productivity and play a vital, active role in strengthening Nigeria's food security. This is development that works — because it was designed from the beginning to put the farmer, and the community, at its centre."*



## Dr. Manievel Emmanuel Sene,

**CO-TTL - ACReSAL and Senior Agriculture Economist**
**Western and Central Africa Region, World Bank**

*"The ACReSAL project represents a landmark six-year investment by the World Bank in Nigeria's future, designed to turn the tide against land degradation. By integrating resilient physical infrastructure and flood control with sustainable agricultural practices, we aren't just protecting the land—we are revitalizing it. From strategic watersheds to the heart of our local communities, we are addressing the root causes of degradation to build a landscape that is both productive and enduring."*



## Engr. Chinedu Umolu

CO-TTL -ACReSAL and Senior Water Resources Management Specialist Western and Central Africa Region, World Bank

"At the heart of the ACReSAL vision lies Strategic Catchment Management—a foundational framework that transforms how we safeguard our water and land resources. It is more than a plan; it is a collaborative roadmap that empowers every stakeholder to identify critical challenges and take ownership of their roles. By synchronizing our efforts across these catchments, we are establishing a sustainable legacy of resource management that is both effective and inclusive."

# Voices of State Leadership — Executive Governors

The ACReSAL project operates through the political will and institutional commitment of Nigeria's state governors — the leaders who translate federal ambition into community-level reality. Their testimonies, drawn from across the nineteen participating states and the Federal Capital Territory, reflect a shared conviction: that the work of restoring land, empowering people, and building resilience against climate change is not optional. It is a governing responsibility. The voices gathered here are a record of that commitment.



## H.E. RT. Hon. Ahmadu Umaru Fintiri, CON

*| Executive Governor, Adamawa State*

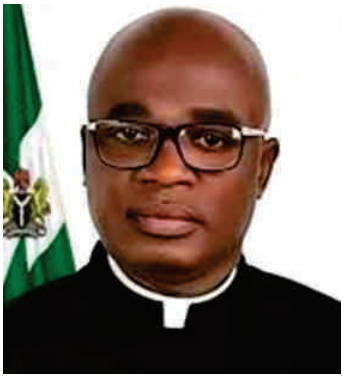
*"In Adamawa State, ACReSAL is not simply restoring the land. It is restoring the covenant between our communities and their environment — a covenant that years of drought, degradation, and neglect had strained to breaking point. When we plant a tree through this programme, we plant more than wood and leaf. We plant hope. We plant resilience. We plant a future in which every community in Adamawa can thrive in harmony with nature rather than in struggle against it. Through ACReSAL, we are not merely repairing what was broken. We are securing the prosperity of generations yet unborn — and that is the truest measure of a government's purpose."*



## H.E. Sen. Bala Abdulkadir Mohammed, CON

*| Executive Governor, Bauchi State*

*"ACReSAL is about life. It is about the environment in which our people live, breathe, and build their futures. It is about improving the livelihoods of communities that have too often been left behind by development programmes that never reach the last mile. This project reaches them — and that is why it matters so profoundly. I commend the World Bank for its longstanding commitment to identifying Nigeria's most pressing challenges and designing solutions that are ambitious, practical, and sustainable. The Bauchi State Government will do everything in its power to support the success of this project — not only for Bauchi, but for Nigeria as a whole. The stakes are too high, and the opportunity too great, for anything less than our full dedication."*



## H.E. Rev. Fr. Hyacinth Iormem Alia

*| Executive Governor, Benue State*

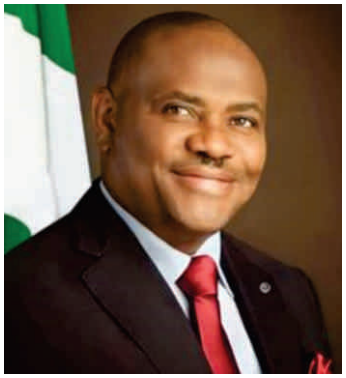
*"The ACReSAL project speaks directly to one of the most defining challenges of our time — and it does so with a clarity of purpose that commands both respect and commitment. At its core, this initiative is built on three pillars that are inseparable in practice: the restoration of landscapes that have been degraded by decades of misuse and climate pressure; the revitalisation of community livelihoods that depend on those landscapes for their very survival; and the strengthening of the institutional frameworks through which governments, at every level, must discharge their duty to the people they serve. Benue State — the Food Basket of the Nation — understands viscerally what is at stake when land fails, when rivers flood beyond their banks, and when the farmers who feed a nation are left without the support they need and deserve. ACReSAL is the kind of intervention that meets that moment. It is targeted, it is integrated, and it is built to last. The Benue State Government reaffirms, without reservation, its full commitment to supporting ACReSAL's mission — because a sustainable future for our people is not a distant aspiration. It is a governing obligation, and we will honour it."*



## H.E. Prof. Babagana Umara Zulum

*| Executive Governor, Borno State*

*"For too long, the communities along Kogin Tipper have borne the devastating cost of unchecked flooding and erosion — lives disrupted, livelihoods lost, and futures uncertain. The ACReSAL intervention in our state is not simply an infrastructure project; it is an act of restoration. It is the Federal Government and its partners saying to our people: your suffering has been seen, and it will end. I am deeply grateful to the ACReSAL team for their commitment and their speed. When this work is completed, Borno State will be a stronger, safer, and more resilient place — and that is a promise worth keeping."*



## H.E. Barrister Nyesom Ezenwo Wike, CON

*| Honourable Minister, Federal Capital Territory, Abuja*

*"The ACReSAL project perfectly embodies the spirit of President Tinubu's Renewed Hope Agenda — a vision of governance that delivers not only in words, but in measurable, tangible results felt in the lives of ordinary Nigerians. In the Federal Capital Territory, we are witnessing firsthand what it looks like when environmental restoration and community empowerment are pursued together and with genuine commitment. Our environment is being healed. Our communities are being strengthened. And our people — from the farmers of Sheda to the processors of our rural communities — are discovering new dignities and new possibilities. This is the kind of partnership that builds a nation. This is the model Nigeria needs."*



## H.E. Muhammadu Inuwa Yahaya

*| Governor of Gombe State & Chairman, Northern Governors' Forum*

*"The success of ACReSAL in Gombe is a product of focused leadership and genuine partnership. The passion and technical expertise of the ACReSAL team are unmistakable — and the results speak for themselves in ways that other governors need to hear directly. Gombe State will continue to lead by example in confronting desertification, land degradation, and the broader climate-related challenges facing our state and the Northern region. We commend the ACReSAL team for their hands-on approach and their commitment to real, measurable impact. This is what effective development looks like."*



## H.E. Malam Umar A. Namadi

*| Executive Governor, Jigawa State*

*"Through the ACReSAL programme, Jigawa State is reclaiming 400 hectares of degraded land — and with that land, we are reclaiming futures. Every hectare restored is a family fed, a livelihood secured, a community strengthened in its resilience against the climate shocks that threaten all that we have built. This project is not an external intervention delivered upon our people. It is a partnership built with them — and that is why it is working. Jigawa State will continue to champion this model of development and to demonstrate that, with the right investment and the right commitment, transformation is not a distant hope. It is an achievable, measurable reality."*



## H.E. Sen. Uba Sani

*| Executive Governor, Kaduna State*

*"In Kaduna State, we have not merely embraced the ACReSAL mandate — we have acted on it with the urgency and ambition that the climate crisis demands. With the support of ACReSAL, the Kaduna State Government has unveiled a landmark ten-year Climate Change Policy that sets the strategic course for our state's environmental future — a commitment not to a single project, but to a generation of sustained action. We have trained five hundred women, youth, and school-feeding vendors in the production of biomass briquettes as a clean, sustainable alternative to wood fuel — protecting our forests, reducing emissions, and creating green livelihoods all at once. We have identified 22,435 hectares of degraded land for systematic restoration, bringing precision and purpose to our rehabilitation efforts. We have provided a state-of-the-art weather monitoring station to strengthen our early warning and agricultural planning capabilities. And we have procured an amphibious excavator — a swamp buggy — purpose-built to desilt river beds and clear drainage channels, directly mitigating the flood risks that have disrupted communities and cost livelihoods across Kaduna State for too long. Each of these interventions is a chapter in the same story: a Kaduna State that is serious about resilience, serious about its people, and serious about the future it intends to build."*



## H.E. Alhaji Abba Kabir Yusuf

*| Executive Governor, Kano State*

*"Kano State is proud of the remarkable strides that ACReSAL has made in tackling our environmental challenges and advancing sustainability across our communities. The Community Revolving Fund — a village-level mechanism designed to reach registered community interest groups and farmer cooperatives — is exactly the kind of targeted, ground-level instrument that development programmes must deploy if they are to make a lasting difference. We have seen, in Kano, what happens when communities are given access to resources, training, and trust: they rise to the occasion. They invest wisely, they repay, they reinvest, and they grow. ACReSAL has made that cycle possible, and Kano State will continue to champion its expansion."*



## H.E. Malam Dikko Umaru Radda

*| Executive Governor, Katsina State*

*"In Katsina State, we have seen with our own eyes what ACReSAL's interventions are capable of delivering — and the evidence is humbling. Communities that once feared the coming of every rainy season now speak of safety, of restored farmland, of lives no longer interrupted by catastrophe. The ACReSAL model — targeted, inclusive, community-owned — is precisely what our people need: interventions that reach the rural dwellers, the most vulnerable, the most overlooked. My administration stands fully behind this project. The work of rebuilding livelihoods, restoring land, and strengthening the resilience of our communities is not optional. It is our governing duty."*



## H.E. Comrade Dr. Nasir Idris

*| Executive Governor, Kebbi State*

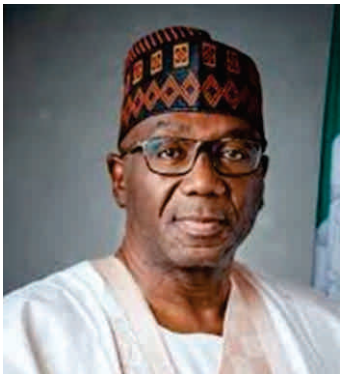
*"To every beneficiary of the ACReSAL Community Revolving Fund in Kebbi State, I say this: the support you have received is not charity — it is an investment in your capability, your community, and your future. Use it wisely. Repay it faithfully. And pass its benefits forward to those around you. Through this programme, you have the opportunity to rebuild your farming activities, to strengthen your household's resilience against the climate challenges that confront us all, and to demonstrate that a government truly of the people and for the people produces results that last. Kebbi State stands behind you — and we are committed to ensuring that this investment in your future is only the beginning."*



## H.E. Alhaji Ahmed Usman Ododo

*| Executive Governor, Kogi State*

*"The ACReSAL project has arrived in Kogi State at exactly the right moment — and it is delivering results that align powerfully with our administration's Agricultural Revolution. Across our communities, we are witnessing a remarkable convergence: youths who once had no stake in the land are now its most active and committed stewards; women who were long excluded from the agricultural economy are now leading it with confidence and skill; and farmers who struggled with degraded soils and unreliable rainfall are now producing with dignity and with purpose. ACReSAL has not merely supported our agenda — it has deepened it, broadened it, and given it the lasting institutional roots that will carry its gains beyond any single administration. Kogi State is proud to be part of this transformation, and we will ensure that every community in this state feels its full and lasting benefit."*



## H.E. Malam AbdulRahman AbdulRasaq, OON

*| Executive Governor, Kwara State*

*"What distinguishes the ACReSAL project from many interventions that have come before it is its understanding that climate change is not simply an environmental problem — it is a development problem, a water problem, an agricultural problem, and a human problem. The unique feature of this intervention is precisely that integration: it provides ample opportunity to address the diverse and interconnected climatic challenges undermining our environment, threatening our water supply, and ultimately constraining the agricultural productivity that our people depend upon. Kwara State is proud to be part of this initiative, and we are committed to working alongside ACReSAL to protect our land and secure our communities' futures."*



## H.E. Engr. Abdullahi Sule

*| Executive Governor, Nasarawa State*

*"Nasarawa State has always understood that sustainable agriculture is not merely an economic strategy — it is a foundation of peace, stability, and social cohesion. Through the ACReSAL programme, we are bringing that understanding to life: disbursing tractors and inputs to farmers who need them, restoring degraded lands through targeted gully erosion control projects, and building the institutional capacity to sustain these gains for the long term. I am proud of our State Team's unwavering dedication and of the results they have delivered. Nasarawa State will continue to lead by example in agricultural transformation — because our people deserve nothing less, and the investment being made in them demands nothing less."*



## H.E. Mohammed Umar Bago

*| Executive Governor, Niger State*

*"The ACReSAL project is far more than an environmental intervention — it is a clear and compelling demonstration of our administration's commitment to building a Green Economy in Niger State. For too long, communities across our state have borne the compounding cost of environmental degradation: farmlands diminished season by season, watercourses choked, landscapes stripped of the productivity on which our people depend. Our Green Economy initiative places climate action at the heart of governance — and ACReSAL is one of its most powerful and practical expressions. Through this partnership, we are actively reclaiming our land from the damage that neglect and climate pressure have wrought. We are restoring what was lost, protecting what remains, and building the ecological foundations upon which a truly prosperous Niger State must be built. This work is urgent, it is transformative, and Niger State will see it through."*



## H.E. Manasseh Mutfwang

*| Executive Governor, Plateau State*

*"We stand at a pivotal moment in the history of northern Nigeria — and indeed of our entire nation. The challenges of desertification, land degradation, and climate disruption do not respect state boundaries, and neither can our responses. ACReSAL represents the kind of coordinated, multi-stakeholder commitment that this moment demands. I call on every partner, every community leader, every government at every level: let us work hand in hand to ensure the success of this initiative and those like it. There is no more time for hesitation. The moment for accelerated transformation is now — and Plateau State will lead from the front."*



## H.E. Dr. Ahmed Aliyu

*| Executive Governor, Sokoto State*

*"Sokoto State has long been at the frontier of Nigeria's battle against desertification and environmental degradation. We understand, perhaps more viscerally than most, the consequences of inaction — the creeping advance of the desert, the drying of rivers, the thinning of harvests. The ACReSAL project speaks directly to these realities, and the Sokoto State Government is fully committed to standing behind it. We will render every support necessary to ensure this initiative realises its full potential — not only as a conservation programme, but as a transformative instrument for the economic empowerment and long-term prosperity of our people."4*



## H.E. Dr. Agbu Kefas

*| Executive Governor, Taraba State*

*"Taraba State has taken a step that I believe should serve as a model for every participating state: we have elevated the ACReSAL programme into a permanent, full institutional framework — the Taraba State Agro-Climatic and Water Shed Management Agency. This is not a cosmetic renaming. It is a declaration that the work of responding to climate change — of protecting food production, securing water availability, and safeguarding environmental stability — is not a project with an end date. It is a governing responsibility that endures. The effects of climate change are real, they are accelerating, and they demand institutional permanence. Taraba State is ready for that challenge."*



## H.E. Hon. Mai Mala Buni, CON

*| Executive Governor, Yobe State*

*"Development is most effective when it is inclusive, transparent, and driven by the real needs of real people — and the ACReSAL project, in Yobe State, exemplifies all three principles. I commend the project's meticulous approach to identifying and guiding beneficiary communities through the Community Revolving Fund scheme. This programme is not about disbursing funds and walking away. It is about building the systems, the confidence, and the capacity that enable communities to thrive, adapt, and sustain their own livelihoods long after any single intervention has concluded. That is what genuine empowerment looks like. That is what ACReSAL is delivering in Yobe — and our state will continue to be an active, committed partner in that work."*



## H.E. Dr. Dauda Lawal

*| Executive Governor, Zamfara State*

*"The ACReSAL project has brought renewed hope to the people of Zamfara State — and it has done so in the most meaningful way possible: by putting resources, training, and agency directly into the hands of our communities. The Community Revolving Fund is not merely a financial instrument. It is a statement of trust — trust in the ingenuity of our farmers, the resilience of our women, and the capacity of our communities to shape their own futures. As Governor, I am fully committed to ensuring that these investments translate into lasting development and shared prosperity for every corner of Zamfara State. We will not allow this momentum to stall."*

*Behind every data point in this publication is a person. Behind every person is a story. These are some of them.*

# Meet the ACReSAL State Coordinators

The Faces Behind the Impact:



**Dr. Ibrahim D. Chinda,**
Adamawa State Coordinator



**Dr. Ibrahim Kabir**
Bauchi State Coordinator



**Bldr. Victor Ama,**
Benue State Coordinator



**Mr. Ayuba Peter**
Borno State Coordinator



**Dr. Sanu Adamu Jauro**
Gombe State Coordinator



**Mrs. Caroline Opara**
FCT Coordinator



**AMB. Yahaya Muhammad Uba**
Jigawa State Coordinator



**Hadiza I. Halid Esq**
Kaduna State Coordinator



**Aminu Gidado Yusha'u**
Kano State Coordinator



**Nafi'u Mohammed Musa**
Katsina State Coordinator



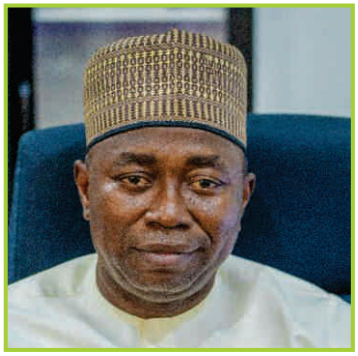
**Ahmad Isa-Tela**
Kebbi State Coordinator



**Barr. Ladi Ahmed Jatto OON**
Kogi State Coordinator



**Alh. Shamsideen Olatunbosun Aregbe**
Kwara State Coordinator



**Elias Gyobe Napoleon PhD.**
Nasarawa State Coordinator



**Mallam Raji Shehu Adam**
Niger State Coordinator



**Dr. Garba Gonkol**
Plateau State Coordinator



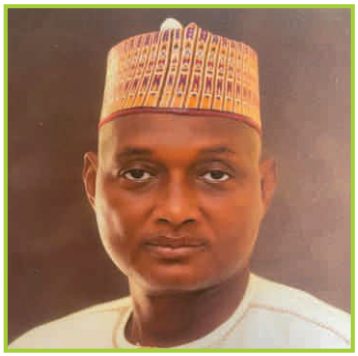
**Alh. Ibrahim Umaru**
Sokoto State Coordinator



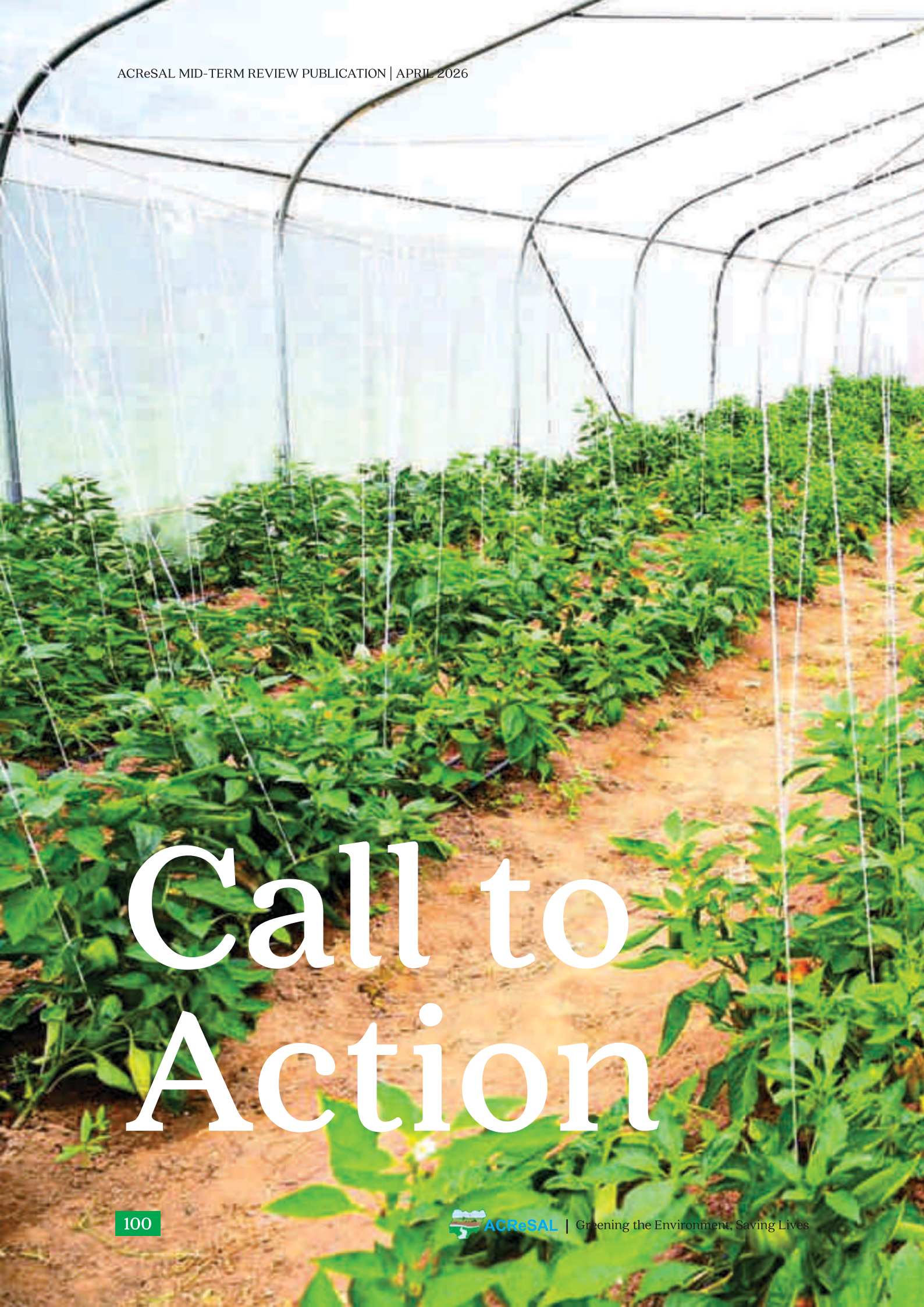
**Dr. Yakubu Giwa Clement**
Taraba State Coordinator




**Shehu Alhaji Mohammed**
Yobe State Coordinator



**Mal Nasirudeen Bello Gusau**
Zamfara State Coordinator



# Call to Action



# The Future is Not Dry.
# The Future is Resilient.

*One million hectares was a target.*
**818, 546 hectares is the current reality**

At ACReSAL, we have always believed that restoring the land is the first step toward restoring a nation's prosperity.

With **4.4 million lives** already touched across nineteen northern states and the Federal Capital Territory, we are proving something the world needs to see:

**Climate vulnerability is not a destiny.**

It is a challenge — and it is a challenge we can overcome together. With the right vision, the right investment, and a strong commitment to the people who live closest to its impact, we are turning vulnerability into resilience, and restoring both land and hope across northern Nigeria.

| 818,546 ha | 4.4 Million | 45% |
|---|---|---|
| under restoration | Lives directly reached | Women among all beneficiaries |

*"To every farmer, herder, ranger, and community member whose life has been touched by ACReSAL — this publication is yours."*

## Our work does not end at the milestone.

As ACReSAL advances toward 2028, the work of restoration is going deeper. It is moving beyond physical landscape recovery to building strong institutional, policy, and community frameworks that will sustain these gains for generations.

The trees planted today will protect the soil that will feed families in 2040. The women learning to lead community funds today will shape the next generation of rural enterprises. The drainage channels and gully controls being built today will protect communities from floods that have not yet come.

This is long-term work. It demands long-term commitment from all of us:

- The Federal Government of Nigeria
- State governments
- International partners
- The private sector
- And every community that has placed its hope in the possibility that the land can be healed and its people can prosper.

| Policy Makers | Development Partners | Community Leaders | Citizens of Nigeria |
|---|---|---|---|
| Embed ACReSAL's gains in law, budget, and institutional memory. | Scale and replicate what the evidence has proven works. | Protect what has been built and carry the knowledge forward. | Claim your place as a steward of the land we are reclaiming together. |

We are reclaiming our heritage. We are empowering our women. We are securing a green legacy for the generations who will inherit the land we are healing today.

That legacy is not a distant promise — it is already growing.

It lives in the roots of a million trees, in the bountiful harvests of farmers who no longer gamble with debt, in the clean water flowing in communities that waited forty years for it, and in the smiling faces of children who no longer fear the rainy season.



ACReSAL

...Greening the Environment, Saving Lives.

**Federal Project Management Unit**
Office Address: 16, Biodun Olorunfemi Street,
Cadastral Zone B03, Wuye, Abuja,
Nigeria.

Email: fpmu@acresal.gov.ng
info@acresal.gov.ng

www.acresal.gov.ng acresalnigeria ACReSALNigeria Acresal Abuja acresal nigeria acresalnigeria