Regional Agroecology Funds in West and Eastern Africa
African Agroecology Funds: Decentralized and Trust-Based Philanthropy

The Regional Agroecology Funds in West and Eastern Africa are financing mechanisms and facilitate learning exchanges to support agroecology networks and organizations which form the core of Africa’s agroecology movements.

The purposes of the Funds are to:

• Offer donors a simple way to fund grassroots organizations, networks, and emerging enterprises that are critical to scaling agroecology up and out across Africa.

• Ensure that organizations representing Indigenous Peoples, women, and youth receive sufficient support to advance agroecology and uphold their rights.

• Support grantee organizations in monitoring their progress against their sought outcomes.

• Contribute to regional learning, and to knowledge generation and exchange, to deepen grassroots evidence for agroecology, and to adjust and improve strategies for scaling up agroecology.
Why Regional Funds?

Establishing regional agroecology funds in West and Eastern Africa is central to the Agroecology Fund’s strategy to strengthen agroecology movements and deepen their territorial impacts.

The strategy is relevant to any donor whose theory of change embraces the power of community-based change processes.

The scaling up and out of agroecology is premised on the active leadership of diverse grassroots actors, actors that donor organizations often face challenges in supporting. Regional funds give bilateral and multilateral agencies, as well as private philanthropists, an opportunity to jointly fund inclusive and rights-based initiatives rooted in agroecology principles that support impacts as diverse as food security, food sovereignty, biodiversity conservation, and climate resilience. Regional funds are also operating in the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico (Fondo Agroecológico para la Península de Yucatán FAPY) and in India (the Bharat Agroecology Fund - BAF).

The unique value proposition of the regional funds is their participatory approach to grantmaking and knowledge co-creation, based on the Agroecology Fund’s approach globally. The grantmaking process is led by locally-embedded advisors, with separate boards in West and Eastern Africa. The two regional funds will also act as facilitators of learning communities through which grantees can share strategies, as well as document and present the impacts of their work on the ground, thus contributing to a global body of evidence for agroecology (building on the Agroecology Fund’s Grassroots Evidence for Agroecology Initiative). Learning communities are core to our approach to participatory and trust-based monitoring and evaluation.
West and Eastern Africa Contexts: Opportunities and Threats

Across Africa, agroecology has become a vast movement, growing on the evidence that the Green Revolution for Africa, with its heavily funded promotion of monocultures, commercial seeds and synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, has failed to help Africa's families and its smallholder farmers flourish. As soil degradation deepens, poverty, malnutrition and outmigration accelerate.

African creativity is abundant. Proven agroforestry techniques such as farmer managed natural regeneration (FMNR) have been essential to recover soils and biodiversity in the Sahel. Youth and women-led agroecological enterprises anchor a growing network of small businesses built around strengthened local markets.

Donors can support grassroots processes already underway to solve Africa’s pressing food system challenges. For example, farmer field schools and powerful women’s networks across the regions, some affiliated with research institutes, are experimenting with reviving Indigenous plant varieties and other regenerative practices to make the region’s agriculture more productive and climate resilient. In work supported by the Agroecology Fund’s Grassroots Evidence for Agroecology Initiative, farmer networks are documenting their evidence and deploying creative communications strategies to influence strategic audiences. Peer-to-peer sharing of local knowledge is a foundation of an agroecological renaissance.

And yet, perverse incentives and policies that undermine Africa's soils, diets and food sovereignty persist through subsidies, trade regimes and opaque public budgets. Grassroots advocacy has been successful in pushing forward national agroecology and climate plans, resisting land grabs and encouraging municipal leadership to open up accessible agroecology markets. Africa's agroecology movements collaborate with diverse food systems actors and are critical changemakers. They need our support!!
Regional Funds Anchored in African Institutions and Advisors

To manage the West and Eastern Africa Regional Agroecology Funds, the Agroecology Fund has initiated a partnership with TrustAfrica. TrustAfrica brings to the table an excellent administrative capacity to oversee the grant process, as well as valuable insights and linkages with local grassroots organizations, networks, and movements. Funding recommendations will be made by expert, on-the-ground advisors from the region who are embedded in local agroecology movements. Representation by women, Indigenous People and youth will be core to the Fund’s governance. Resources will be extended not only to established non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and legalized civil society organizations, but also to informal cooperatives, collective associations, and social enterprises. Such grassroots bodies are in most cases underfunded, yet they are essential to scale agroecology up and out.

With an eye towards collaboration across sectors, the Funds will be guided by a landscape analysis of: a) funding streams and programs for agroecology offered by diverse donor agencies; and, b) civil society organizations and public programs working towards agroecological solutions to pressing nutrition, climate and human rights challenges. Advisors and donors to the Regional Agroecology Funds in West and Eastern Africa will craft grantmaking priorities and establish the structure and governance of the fund to prominently elevate the active leadership of grassroots organizations and networks.
# The Agroecology Fund’s Track Record in Africa

Between 2012 and 2023, the Agroecology Fund supported grassroots organizations’ work in agroecology across Africa, awarding a total of $6,589,613 through 137 grants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th># Grants</th>
<th>% Total Grants</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>% Total $</th>
<th># Countries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eastern Africa</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>$1,863,543</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Africa</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
<td>$2,360,400</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern and West Africa</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>$575,030</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other African Regions</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>$1,790,640</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sub-total Africa</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
<td>$6,589,613</td>
<td>31.9%</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants to other regions</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>67.2%</td>
<td>$14,076,864</td>
<td>68.1%</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total (Global Grants)</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>$20,666,477</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Agroecology Fund is a multi-donor fund supporting agroecological practices and policies. We work at the intersection of food sovereignty, biodiversity conservation, and climate justice to support food producers, researchers, and movement builders working across the globe to strengthen agroecology-based food systems.

We adopt a unique participatory grantmaking process informed by expert advisors embedded in civil society networks and long-term partners. Between 2012 and 2023, we awarded over $20 million to collaboratives led by grassroots partner organizations, many of which include Indigenous-led organizations. This includes grants managed in our Global Grant Program and grants awarded through our regional funds.
Join the Movement

Promoting agroecology as a solution to global and regional food insecurity, poverty, biodiversity loss, soil and water degradation, and other problems linked to climate change requires a powerful network of allies.

Many donors miss out on the opportunity to support the rich innovations and creativity of front-line agroecology organizations and networks scaling up agroecology across West and Eastern Africa. Generous donors have seed funded both the West and Eastern Africa Regional Agroecology Funds. We seek to further capitalize the funds so that we can support the remarkable array of agroecology work underway across Africa. Restricted funds are welcome to either Fund.

If you are interested in becoming involved in the Regional Agroecology Funds in West and Eastern Africa, please email us:

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