



# **EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE IN IMPLEMENTING THE GREAT GREEN WALL INITIATIVE IN NIGERIA, WITH A SPECIFIC FOCUS ON TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, INTEGRITY, PARTICIPATION, AND ANTI-CORRUPTION MEASURES**



SUPPORTED BY:



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The report is produced under the Governance Mapping and Assessment of the Great Green Wall initiative in Nigeria project. TI seeks to contribute to the success of the GGWI through reinforcing aspects of transparency, accountability, integrity, participation and anti-corruption. The overall purpose of this project is to assess the strength and weaknesses of the GGWI in Nigeria in terms of transparency, accountability, integrity, participation and anti-corruption. The assessments findings are intended to improve knowledge of climate finance governance and practices of the GGWI in Nigeria

and potentially beyond. CISLAC as the national chapter of Transparency International in Nigeria is currently implementing this project in Nigeria with focus on facilitating the governance mapping and assessment of the GGWI in Nigeria.

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Yours faithfully,

**Auwal Ibrahim Musa (Rafsanjani)**

Executive Director, Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre

# Introduction

The GGW Initiative in Nigeria aims to mitigate environmental degradation, improve livelihoods, and promote sustainable development in the Sahel region. Effective governance is crucial for the success of this ambitious project. This report evaluates the governance performance of the GGW Initiative, identifying strengths, weaknesses, and areas for improvement.

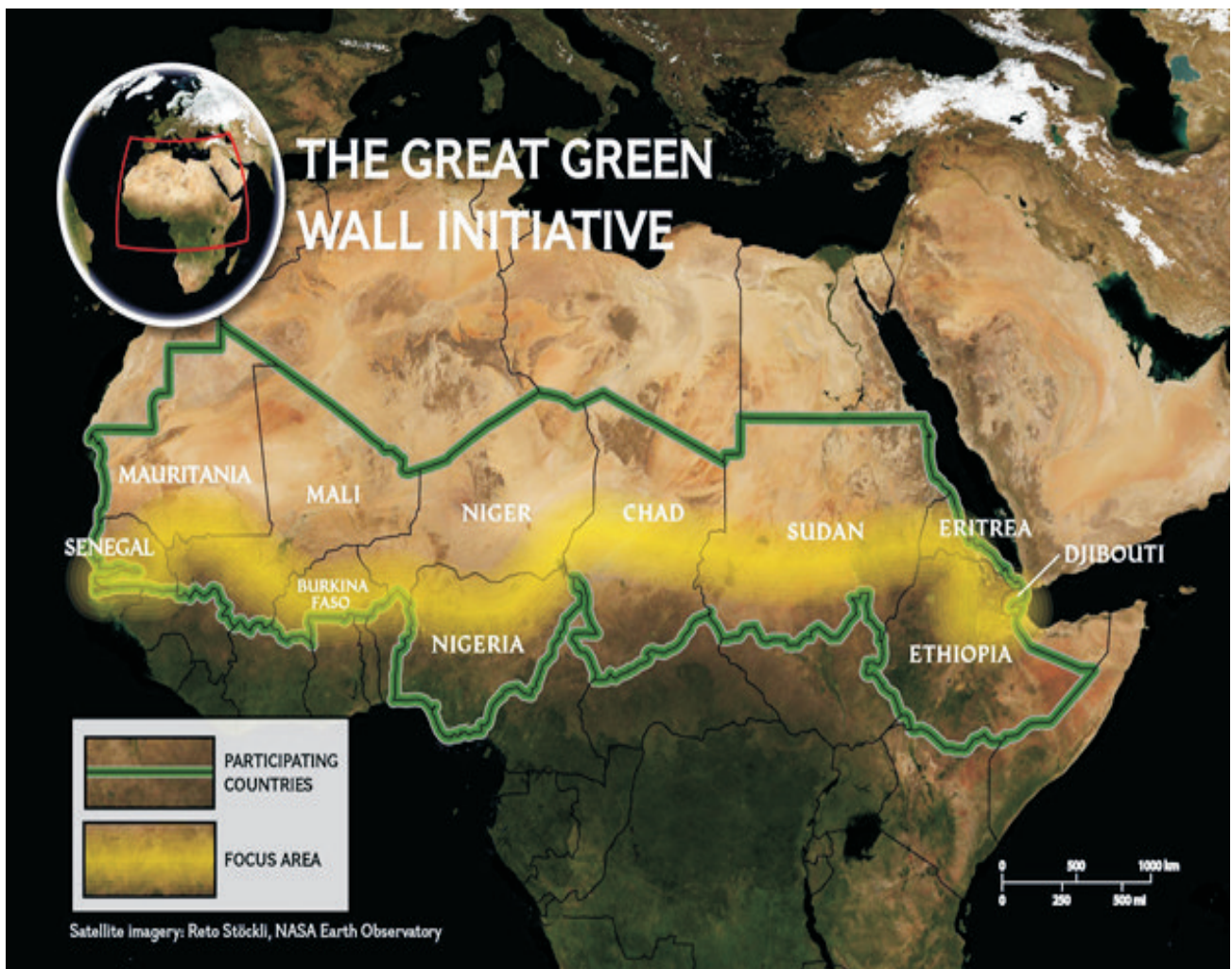
## Historical Background of the Great Green Wall

The notion of erecting a wall for defence traces back to ancient China, where emperors constructed the Great Wall to fend off Mongolian invaders (Monastersky, 2016). Mao Tse-tung later repurposed this wall, transforming it into a green barrier against dust storms from the Gobi Desert (Monastersky, 1994). Since 1950, China has planted over 300 million trees along the northern arid regions to mitigate dust storms (Monastersky, 1994). This initiative gained recognition as a proactive afforestation effort that altered the climate in 20th-century China (Monastersky, 2016).

Similar initiatives have emerged globally to address environmental challenges, notably in Europe with the establishment of the "European Green Belt" in 2004 (Strauss and Lang, 2009). Designed as a transboundary ecological network, this initiative spans Europe's biogeographic regions to conserve biodiversity and foster sustainable development (Strauss and Lang, 2009). The European Green Belt is structured into three regional sections, overseen by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to promote nature preservation and social cohesion (Strauss and Lang, 2009).

According to the IPCC's assessment (IPCC, 2007), Africa has a significant vulnerability to climate change. To address desertification and drought in the Sahara and Sahel regions, the African Union adopted the Great Green Wall initiative in 2007 (Pan African Great Green Wall, 2018). This initiative aims to combat land degradation, enhance food security, and improve livelihoods by planting a belt of trees spanning approximately 8000 km across Africa (African Union, 2007).





**Figure 1: Countries involved in the GGW Initiative**

Implementation of the Great Green Wall in Nigeria commenced with the establishment of the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (NAGGW) in 2015 (National Agency for the Great Green Wall, n.d.). The Ministry of Environment in Nigeria piloted the GGW intervention earlier in 2012 (National Agency for the Great Green Wall, n.d.). The GGW Strategic Action Plan (GGWSAP) was developed in collaboration with the African Union Commission, funded by the European Union and UNCCD, and executed by the UNFAO (FAO, 2012).

## **Overview of the National Agency for the Great Green Wall Nigeria**

The National Agency for the Great Green Wall Nigeria (NAGGW) commenced its operations and implementation of the GGW initiative in 2015, following the approval of a

ten-billion-naira take-off grant by former President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan. Initially funded through this grant, the agency continued its intervention programs until 2017, when they became part of the federal government's budget appropriation.

NAGGW is structured into five departments, each tasked with achieving the objectives of the Pan-African GGW initiative through various operational units. These departments include Afforestation and Land Management, Finance & Administration, Planning, Policy, Coordination, Resource Mobilization and Partnership Building, and Rural development and extension services. Governance of NAGGW is overseen by a governing council providing policy direction, state implementation committees coordinating programs in frontline states, and local government committees handling activities at the grassroots level.

The NAGGW Act of May 2015 established the Agency, mandating it to implement the provisions of the Great Green Wall Program in Nigeria in alignment with the Great Green Wall for the Sahara and the Sahel Initiative (GGWSSI). The Act outlines NAGGW's responsibilities, including formulating implementation strategies, coordinating activities with other organizations addressing desertification, and implementing the GGW Program in eleven frontline states. Furthermore, NAGGW is tasked with capacity building at all governmental levels to ensure effective program implementation.

The Act also directs NAGGW to actively cooperate with the African Union Commission (AUC) and the Pan-African Agency of the Great Green Wall to comply with regional sustainable development standards in affected areas, which led to their participation in the GGW youth Caravan across the Sahel to study and evaluate progress made within the sahel in 2023. By addressing land degradation and desertification in the Sahara and Sahel regions, the Act aims to enhance food security, support climate change adaptation, reduce rural poverty, minimize social conflicts, create alternative jobs, and boost the rural economy.

This research focuses on NAGGW Nigeria in line with the research objectives focused on assessing the governance performance of the Great Green Wall Initiative (GGWI) implementation in Nigeria, with particular emphasis on transparency, accountability, integrity, participation, and anti-corruption efforts.

## **Programme Components**

- I. Establishment of 1,550km long and 15 km wide Contiguous Greenbelt to cut across seven frontline states of Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Jigawa, Yobe and Borno.
- II. Establishment of woodlots and mosaic shelterbelts in Adamawa, Bauchi, Gombe and Kano states.
- III. Farmers Managed Natural Regeneration to restore and improve agricultural, forested and pasture lands by encouraging the systemic re-growth of existing trees or self sown seeds.
- IV. Promotion of alternative livelihood activities to reduce dependency on the scarce natural resources, enhance rural economy and generate employment.
- V. Promotion of alternative sources of energy to reduce deforestation.
- VI. Promoting dryland agriculture to strengthen food security and rural economy.
- VII. Establishment of fodder farms to reduce overgrazing, enhance livestock production and increase rural income
- VIII. Sand dune fixation to protect agricultural lands and infrastructures.
- IX. Oasis rehabilitation to enhance livelihood activities.
- X. Water resources management to ameliorate the impact of drought and enhance irrigation practices.
- XI. Sensitization and awareness campaign to mobilize the people towards the implementation of the programme.

## **Implementation Strategies**

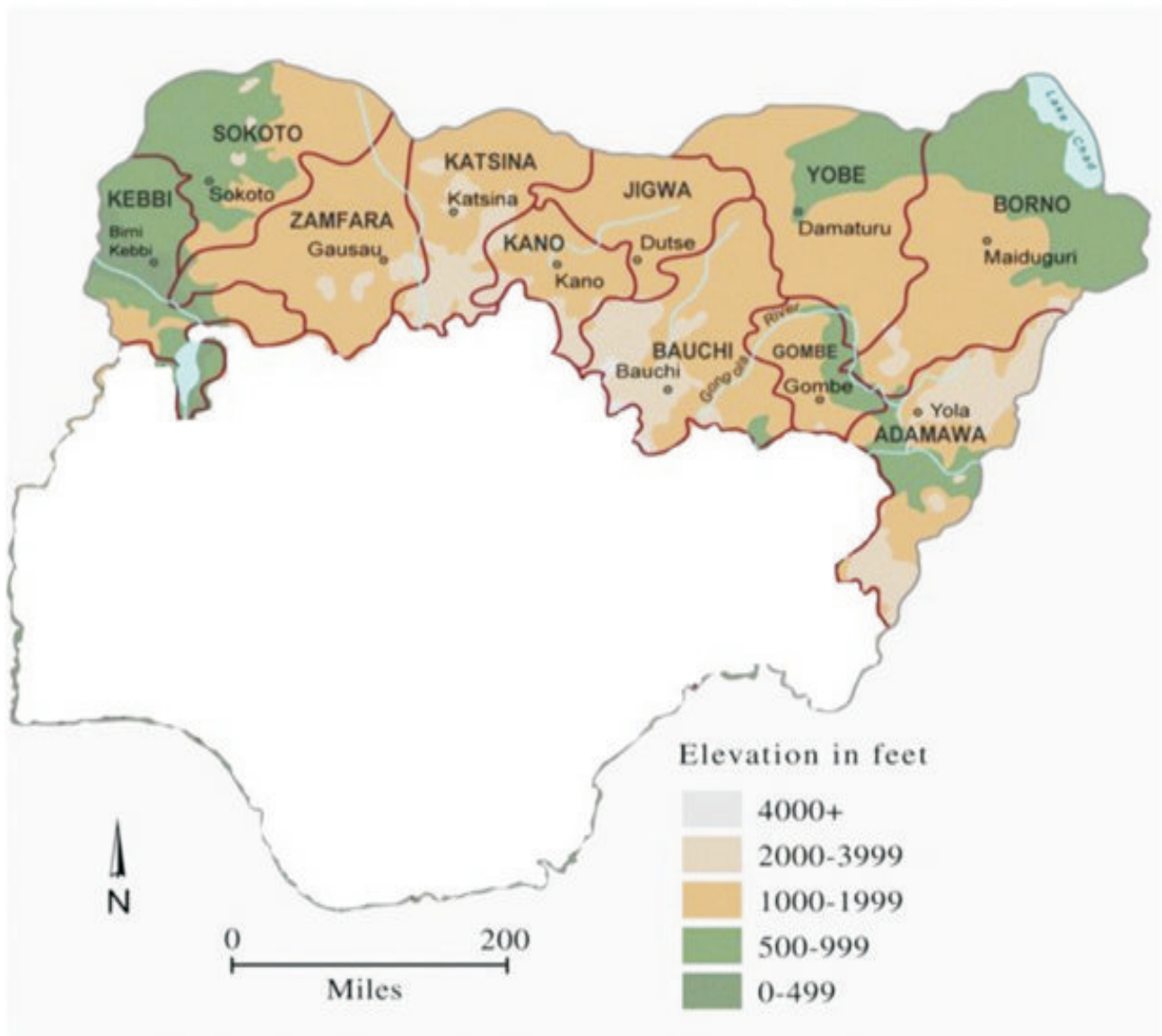
The following are essential key strategies for effective implementation of the GGW Initiative in Nigeria;

- National strategic Action Plan
- Communication Strategy and Initiative Visibility
- Capacity Building
- Participation of Local Communities
- Partnership and Collaboration with Development Partners
- Private Sector Participation
- Monitoring and Evaluation

## **Impact Report from the NAGGW**

According to the agency, In line with their commitment to open and transparent communication, they provide regular updates on their activities to ensure stakeholders, partners, and supporters have access to accurate information. The agency's recent data showcases significant achievements: 45.25 million tree seedlings produced, 4,455 solar home systems distributed, 3,631 jobs created, 1,460 kilometers of shelterbelts established, 3,102 solar street lights installed, 6,300 clean stoves distributed, 14,118 hectares of plantations established, and 430 solar and motorized powered boreholes implemented.

The National Agency for Great Green Wall (NAGGW) spent N81bn on planting 21 million trees which were reported to have been planted across 11 states: Kebbi, Sokoto, Zamfara, Katsina, Kano, Jigawa, Bauchi, Gombe, Adamawa, Yobe, and Borno, and N697.71m on office renovations, funded by Ecological Funds and federal allocations. Conflicting reports from the CBN, oAGF, this poses some questions about the NAGGW's financial management. Despite receiving substantial funds, there is a lack of tangible outcomes, highlighting a deviation from the agency's core mandate. This highlights the importance of transparency and accountability in ensuring effective utilization of resources for environmental initiatives.



**Figure 2: Nigeria desertification prone frontline States**

## Methodology

The assessment aims to evaluate the governance framework of the Great Green Wall (GGW) initiative, focusing on transparency, accountability, integrity, participation, and anti-corruption measures. The methodology is developed based on Transparency International's (TI) previous anti-corruption assessment of climate funds, incorporating best practices and lessons learned from similar initiatives. Focusing on mapping of key actors and decision makers and their responsibilities, levels of spending and results achieved so far, degree of involvement of civil society, mapping of corruption risks, the strengths and weaknesses of the Great Green Wall Initiative governance frameworks.



## Conclusion

The research highlights the need for improved governance structures, stakeholder engagement, capacity building, and transparency in the implementation of the GGW initiative in Nigeria. The findings underscore the importance of addressing these challenges to ensure the successful implementation of the GGW and the achievement of its objectives.

## Policy Recommendations

- From the results generated from the survey, interviews, and desk reviews, the following recommendations are put forward for the National Agency for the Great Green Wall (NAGGW) and other critical stakeholders such as the FME, NCCC, NBMAS, NPS, etc. in Nigeria, they should;
- Ensure effective stakeholder engagement by defining decision-making processes and levels of authority, and promoting adequate representation of all stakeholders in the GGW decision-making process.
- Give CSOs (non-governmental organizations advocating for various issues ) an official, structured way to provide input and participate in the project's decision-making. This could involve having their representatives on committees or at board meetings or creating advisory groups or consultation processes, to ensure their active engagement in decision-making processes and policy development.
- Strengthen enforcement mechanisms for ensuring compliance with GGW regulations, and foster public participation through community engagement and awareness campaigns.
- Implement a robust conflict of interest policy and establish a well-publicized whistleblower protection program and a user-friendly complaints mechanism with the support of the EFCC and ICPC.

- Develop data collection methods and tools to ensure accurate and timely information, while also making GGW activity data readily accessible to stakeholders and the public.
- Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework by identifying and addressing gaps or inconsistencies in the data collected to ensure a more comprehensive picture of GGW initiatives and their outcomes.
- Conduct comprehensive needs assessments to identify specific skill gaps and tailor capacity-building programs accordingly, ensuring that training opportunities are accessible, relevant, and tailored to stakeholders' needs.
- Ensure transparent communication channels to encourage stakeholder feedback, suggestions, and active participation in GGW initiatives, especially for marginalized groups.
- Customize engagement strategies for diverse stakeholders, conducting regular consultations, feedback sessions, and evaluations to integrate varied perspectives into GGW initiatives, enhancing outcomes and stakeholder ownership.
- Create a comprehensive website where the public can easily find information about how the project is funded. This includes details on where the money comes from, how it's allocated, and what it's being spent on.
- Make all important project documents (policies, financial records, progress reports) available on the NAGGW website. Additionally, provide a yearly report with an in-depth breakdown of how the project is progressing and its spending.
- Create clear criteria and procedures for engagement and define this at local and national levels. National agencies should develop a participation framework to ensure local communities' involvement in planning and implementation.