



3.20 Shifting the way stakeholders engage with evidence to enhance food system decision making

2.1 What, in brief, is the solution?

The Stakeholder Approach to Risk Informed and Evidence Based Decision Making (SHARED), provides a structured stakeholder engagement process that fosters interaction between people and multi-thematic evidence. The process cultivates an understanding of systems, greater inter-sectoral and multi-stakeholder collaboration and decisions and direct actions that overcome siloed and adhoc approaches and integrate economic, social and ecological dimensions. Enhancing stakeholder engagement, through behavioural science and targetted engagement approaches, can 'nudge' towards effective collaboration, design and implementation grounded in evidence.

2.2 What was/were the source(s) from which this solution emerged?

This solution has emerged from collaboration between the World Agroforestry SHARED Hub and systems scientists collaborating in a demand driven process over the past 8 years. The SHARED approach and tailored set of tools and methods have been implemented in multiple contexts with national and sub-national governments, UN Agencies (UNDP, UNICEF, UNFAO), International NGOs and civil society actors focused on resilient outcomes through collaboration and integrated development planning [1].

2.3 What problem is it trying to address within food systems?

Food systems approaches demonstrate that the objectives of food, nutrition, agriculture and natural resources are intrinsically interrelated and linked to the diverse stakeholders and institutions that support and benefit from the system. While few would argue that these inter-relationships exist in principle, the deeper systems understanding of, for example, how soil health, functioning water cycles, and biological diversity underpin sustainable value chains, nutrition quality, market access and diversified livelihoods remains inadequate. This has resulted in continued siloed approaches and ineffective collaboration that undermines solutions that support food systems.

Additionally, while multiple forms of data and information exist that can link broadly under the umbrella of a food system, too rarely are they brought together in an accessible formats and within engagement processes where they can be interrogated, interpreted and applied to decision making contexts across scales. SHARED processes therefore get at the root of information, process, engagement and relationship gaps within a food system context, importantly establishing participatory buy-in for robust evidence, monitoring and how to apply actionable evidence.

2.4 Why is addressing that problem important for achieving the goal of your ACAI?

With approximately 2 billion hectares of degraded land globally and commitments to restore hundreds of millions of hectares of degraded land through the Bonn Challenge, the need and ambition for restoration can not be underestimated. If evidence from multiple sources can be brought together in accessible forms and to a range of stakeholders with a systems perspective, better decisions can be made in terms of targeting and matching restoration practices to different places, implementation, monitoring and reflection for adaptive learning. Stakeholder inclusion, structured engagement and actionable evidence are critical components of successful restoration.

2.5 How can this solution address that problem?

This solution will help bring together stakeholders at multiple scales to reflect on the evidence arising from multiple sources to look at a system and make better decisions on how restoration takes place. By implementing a structured behaviour change approach across a spectrum of restoration stakeholders this solution aims to create sustained and scalable capacity and rationale for implementation.



Example of Sub-national Resilience Planning in Kenya

Three devolved county governments in Kenya (Laikipia, Turkana and Makueni) invited the SHARED Hub to support integrated development planning with an emphasis on resilience, food systems, and landscape restoration that align with national priorities (Kenya 2030), continental priorities (Africa 2063) and global Sustainable Development Goals. Relevant ministries, NGOs, civil society actors, UN agencies and community members, were engaged in structured and inclusive strategic planning processes that a) introduced evidence-based decision making and the role of evidence in setting priorities to address root causes of development challenges; b) created an evidence culture, bridging sectoral evidence sources (land health, production and trade, nutrition, education, health, water, etc.) and implications; c) used human centre approaches to interact with socio-ecological evidence and co-design and build a multi-theme evidence base (decision dashboards); d) enhanced skills for interpreting different data and its management; e) used community prioritization processes as a key source of evidence.

These in-depth evidence engagement processes opened the door to change governance policy and planning processes and how investments are prioritised and committed. Turkana County used the SHARED methodology and a tailored set of structured approaches to run their design process for the five-year Integrated Development Plan [2,3]. In Laikipia County, through the SHARED engagement process, evidence was used to understand and track food systems elements (food production, nutrition, local and regional trade, and land health) for planning purposes across multiple ministries resulting in a novel interactive decision support system to visualise and interograte food flows in the County [4]. In Makueni County, through the SHARED co-design process, dedicated county data and statistical officers, were adaptively trained to lead the process of evidence collection and guiding interpretation needs to co-produce a Makueni decision dashboard and resource hub for the County as a dedicated user designed restoration planning and implementation tool [5].

In each case, ensuring sustainability is a key criteria of the SHARED approach, with stakeholders in a contextual setting identifies early on, to be trained and lead on engagement processes and interpretation and value of evidence. This ensures scaling, via peer learning and nudge incentives, to a wide range of decision making processes and could be actioned and lead by the county governments after initial capacity building and training processes.

Scaling national and regional restoration and livelihoods

Funded by the European Union, Regreening Africa is an ambitious five-year project that seeks to reverse land degradation, enhance food security and positively influence 500,000 households, across one million hectares in eight countries by incorporating trees into agricultural and pastoral landscapes. The project uses the SHARED approach for joint reflection and learning missions (JRLMs) to create an innovative and inclusive monitoring, reflection and learning approach for Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), World Agroforestry scientists, government and other partners engaged in oversight at the national level to interact with real time evidence for action planning on scaling restoration efforts [6].

Stakeholders engage with communities for experiential insights followed by interaction with multi-thematic and visually accessible “evidence walls” (household data, land health data, value chain data, nursery and tree nursery and tree planting data) to adapt annual scaling strategies and implementation plans (actionability and impact). More recently, local stakeholders have been interacting with and inputting data to a Regreening App used on mobile phones. Stakeholders engaging with evidence links science, implementation and governance. The use of JRLMs are being scaled to multiple other projects, can be adapted to different situations and can be implemented by other partners (sustainability) once capacity is built.

2.6 Why does this solution align to the definition and criteria for a ‘game changing solution’ developed by the Summit?

Answered under 2.5



2.7 What is the existing evidence supporting the argument that this solution will work, or at least that it will achieve the initial outcomes described above?

See references at end of document - linked to section 2.5

2.8 What is the current and/or likely political support for this idea?

Different national and sub-national ministries (e.g. Agriculture, Environment) have been engaged in this approach in Kenya, Rwanda Ethiopia, Niger, Senegal, Ghana, Mali, Sri Lanka, India and with International NGOs in these countries (World Vision, Care, Catholic Relief Services, Oxfam, Sahel Eco). In order to apply the SHARED approach, an initial needs assessment, analysis of stakeholder landscape and interactions and targetted relationship building allow for ensuring the most practical and sustainable political entry point. As a methodology that works across sectors, this means support often can be leveraged via political entities engaged in cross-sectoral planning or integration functions.

Support for this approach has been recorded from Turkana County in Kenya [7, 2] and the SHARED approach was used to develop the Agroforestry Strategy in Kenya in 2020. SHARED is now being applied to develop exemplar landscapes in Oromia, Ethiopia and Andra Pradesh, India.

2.9 Are there certain contexts for which this solution is particularly well suited, or, conversely, contexts for which it is not well-suited at all?

The approach is practical at all scales and is particularly well suited in government and inter-governmental planning processes that are open to building inclusive, collaborative and evidence based processes for decision making.

2.10 Who are the key stakeholders to be further involved in the process of developing and refining the solution idea?

Further development, refinement and methodical innovation of the SHARED process will take place with a range of partners including national and sub-national governments, CBOs, NGOs, research partners and platforms such as the ICRAF led Restoration TPP.

References:

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3. Vågen, T.-G., Winowiecki, L. A., Neely, C., Chesterman, S., and Bourne, M.: Spatial assessments of soil organic carbon for stakeholder decision-making – a case study from Kenya, SOIL, 4, 259-266, <https://doi.org/10.5194/soil-4-259-2018>, 2018.
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