



Community Organizing Toolkit on Ecosystem Restoration

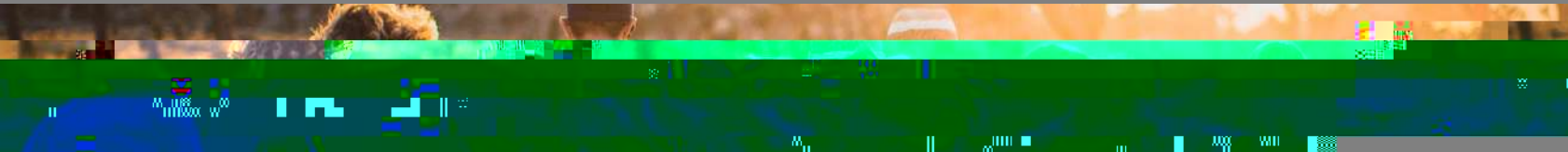
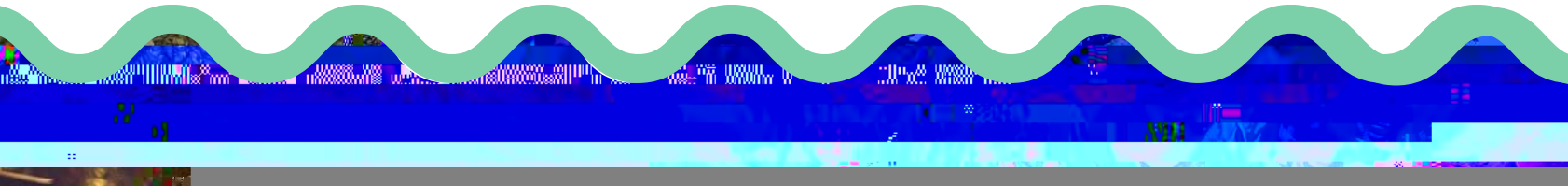


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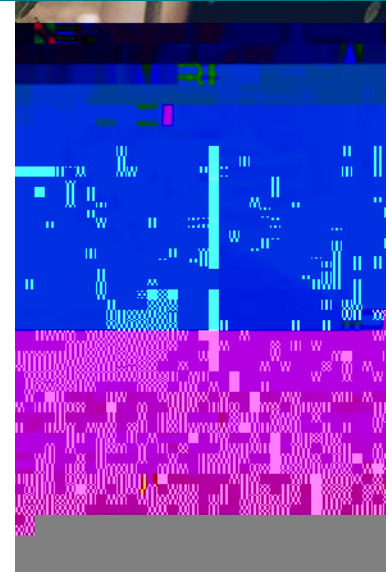
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INTRODUCTION





In light of the pressing need to fight climate change impacts and human-induced ecological degradation, the United Nations (UN) has announced the current decade to be the **"Decade on Ecosystem Restoration"**. The purpose of this global movement is to prevent, halt and reverse the degradation of ecosystems across the globe.

This toolkit will allow you to join others all around the globe looking to restore, repair, and regenerate our ecosystems. You're not in this alone!

Feel free to use the Decade's [website](#) and various tools throughout your journey to gain knowledge, inspiration and maybe even support others as well.

In 2015, the UN Member States approved the Sustainable



GUIDING PRINCIPLES ON ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION

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1 Global Contributions: Ecosystem restoration contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Goals of the Rio Conventions.

2 Broad Engagement: Ecosystem restoration promotes inclusive and participatory governance, social fairness and equity from the start and throughout the process and outcomes.

3 Many Types of Activities: Ecosystem restoration includes a continuum of restoration activities.



4 Benefits to Nature and People: Ecosystem restoration aims to achieve the highest level of recovery for biodiversity, ecosystem health and integrity, and human well-being.

5 Addresses Causes of Degradation: Ecosystem restoration addresses the direct and indirect causes of ecosystem degradation.

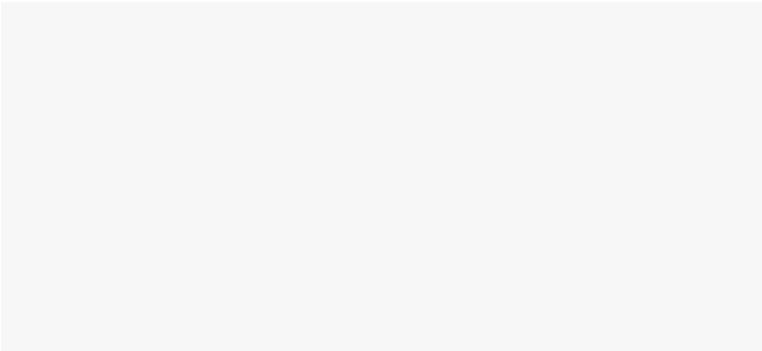
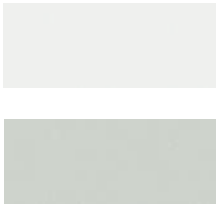
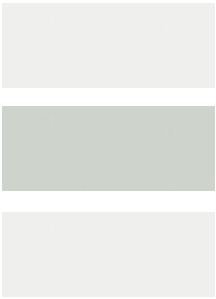
6 Knowledge Integration: Ecosystem restoration incorporates all types of knowledge and promotes its exchange and integration throughout the process.

7 Measurable Goals: Ecosystem restoration is based on well-defined, short-, medium-, and long-term ecological, cultural and socio-economic objectives and goals.

8 Local and Land/Seascape Contexts: Ecosystem restoration is tailored to the local ecological, cultural and socio-economic contexts, while considering the larger landscape or seascape.

9 Monitoring and Management: Ecosystem restoration includes monitoring, evaluation and adaptive management throughout and beyond the lifetime of the project or programme.

10 Policy Integration: Ecosystem restoration is enabled by policies and measures that promote its long-term progress, fostering replication and scaling-up.



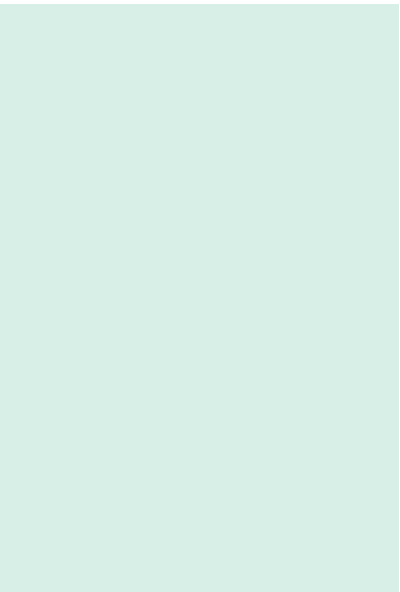


HOW CAN I MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

You know your community best. You can become an expert on the education, physical ability, financial picture, and environmental awareness of yourself and on,

HOW CAN





REFLECTING BEFORE YOU ACT

Before we dive into what grassroots action can look like and how you can start your ecosystem restoration project, take a moment to reflect on the following questions:

- What is my motivation?
- What are the social benefits of my action?
- Is it possible that my action negatively impacts others?
- How can my action enhance resilience?
- Can I help my community feel more connected?
- How can I be more in touch with nature?
- What can I do to organize in coordination with others?
- What will the restored ecosystem mean to the community?
- Are there bigger issues here that need to be tackled?

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Science

Ask around for information on the issue

Community

Discuss with friends, search for existing groups

Hold a meeting with passionate neighbors

Apply for a grant to fund restoration efforts

Host an educational meeting on the topic

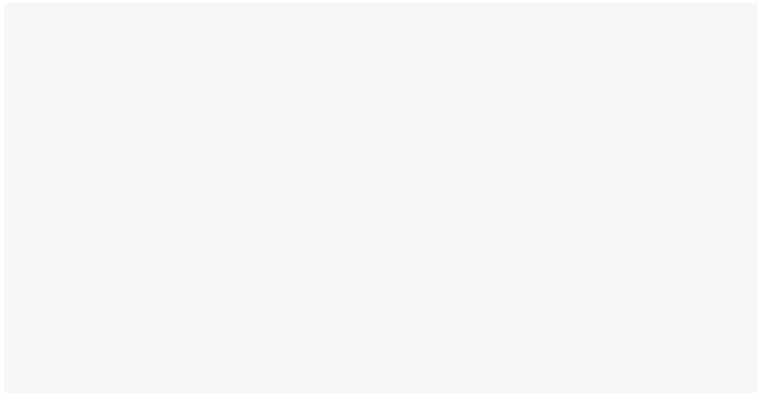
Foster cultural shift of stewardship

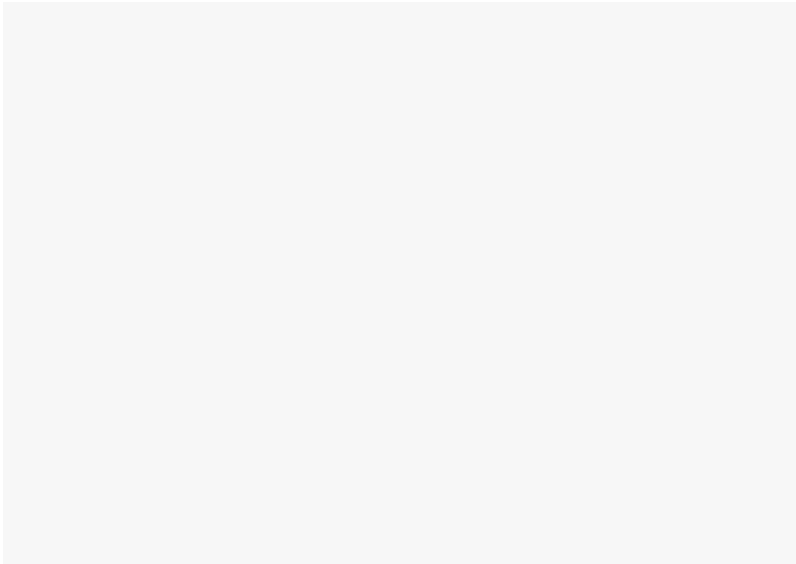


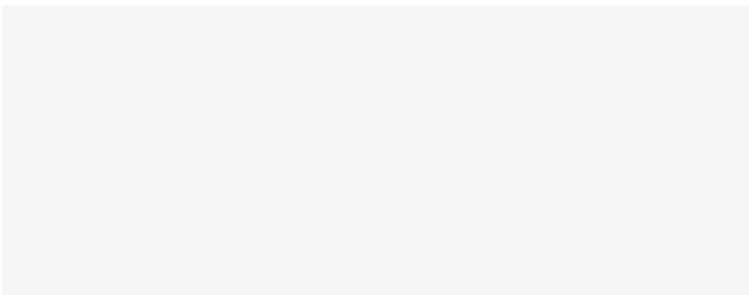
Get the facts

The first step in determining your grassroots action is identifying if your ecosystem is in fact degraded. In Section 1, we showed you what a degraded ecosystem may look like. It's likely that an ecosystem that looks harmed is, in fact, degraded, but this is not always the case. Ensuring you have science-based assumptions and diagnoses is important to devise an efficient plan.

Once you have made the conclusion that your local ecosystem is degraded, the next step is to find out why this is the case. Understanding the factors impacting your ecosystem before taking action is crucial. Otherwise, you run the risk of committing to a solution that is eit use



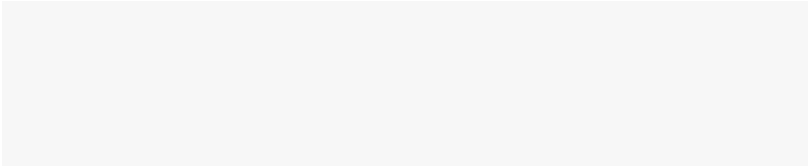




STEP 2: COMMUNITY

Find your people

Now that you have done your res



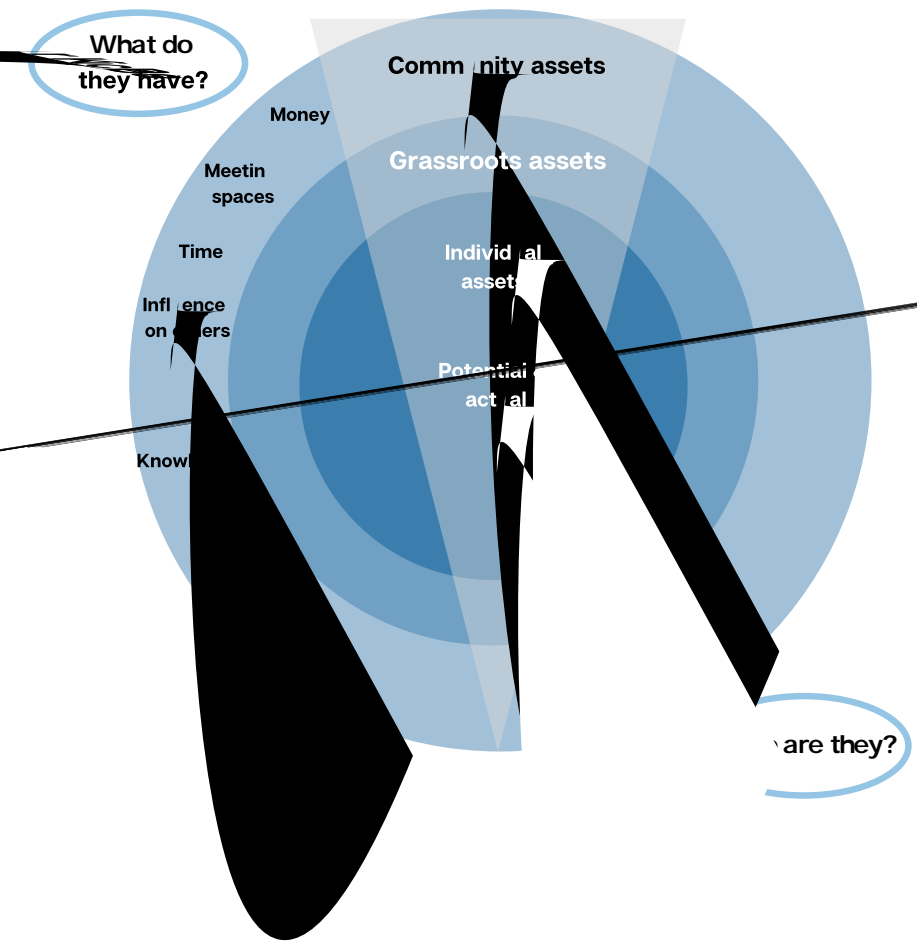
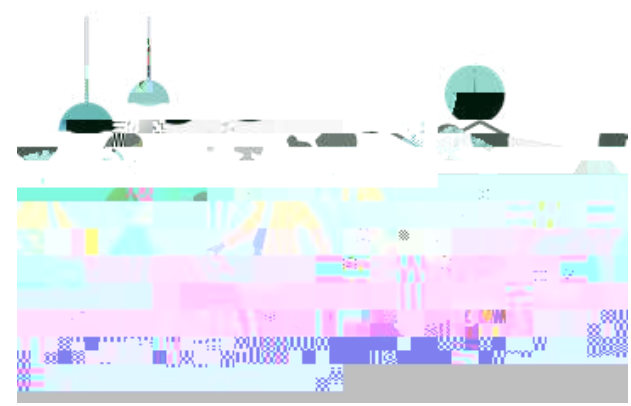
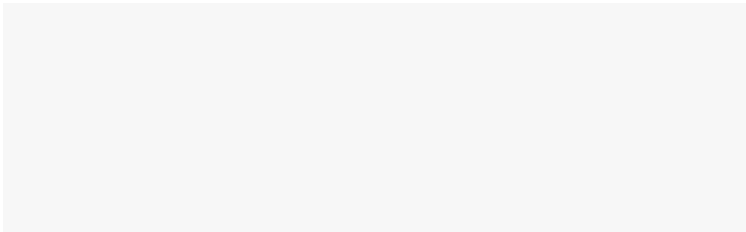
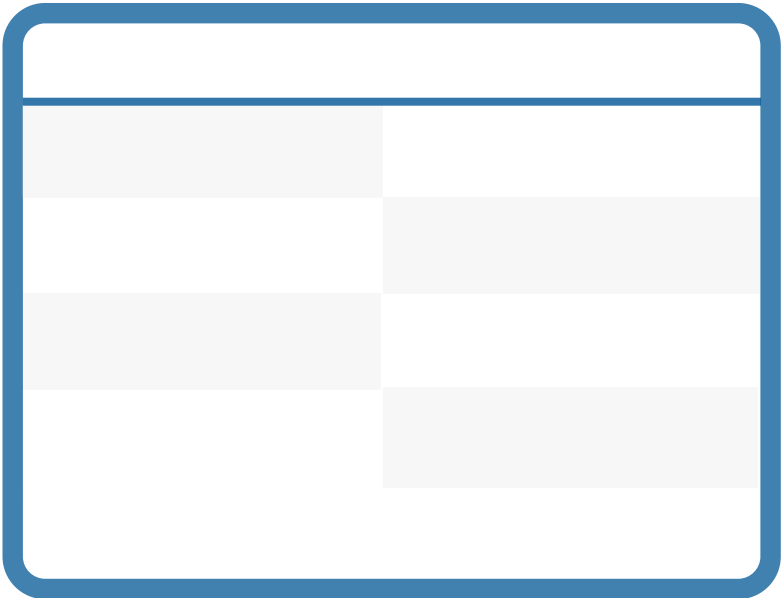
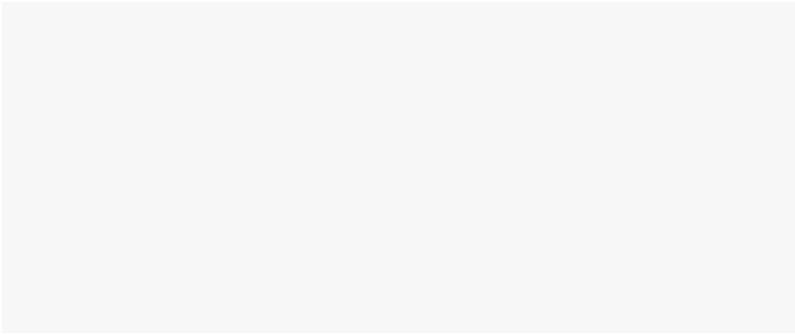


Figure 5 can be used to better understand the resources and network available to you. Mapping the assets in your community will give you an idea of the types of resources that you can use to push your solution forward once you are ready to take action.

You'll find that the mapping is divided into two categories: "What do they have" and "Who are they?". The first category on the left can be used to map the resources available to you. On the right you can map the provider of resources or to whom the assets can be attributed.









Not every movement, campaign, or action will include these steps, that's okay, a boots-on-the-ground movement can be just as impactful. These are just some possible ways that you and your community can cement your movement for the long haul and inspire others to follow your lead!

In the gradient to the right, Figure 1, you can see the progression of outcomes that your action could achieve. Beginning with individual and community action is important. It allows you to get the ecosystem back on the right track as soon as possible and it also helps you gauge and increase support for the cause within your area. Once the ecosystem is out of harms-way, that is when larger steps can be taken. It is these final steps that can best ensure the long-term health and safety of the ecosystem.

on how to integrate your experience and e-partners

STEP 5: WIDER GOALS KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

How well do you know your

7



WHAT?

Is your community more urban or rural, are you surrounded by nature or mostly small parks?



How familiar is your community with methods to solve the environmental challenges in your area?



How many



Do most

How easy

Is there a plan

How many people in your community have written memos



WHY?

This can tell you how familiar your community may be with an healthy-looking ecosystem.

This can tell you how in-depth to obtain your knowledge in sharing.

This will tell you how many or more people have.

This can tell you if your community is prepared.

This can tell you if your community is

This can tell you

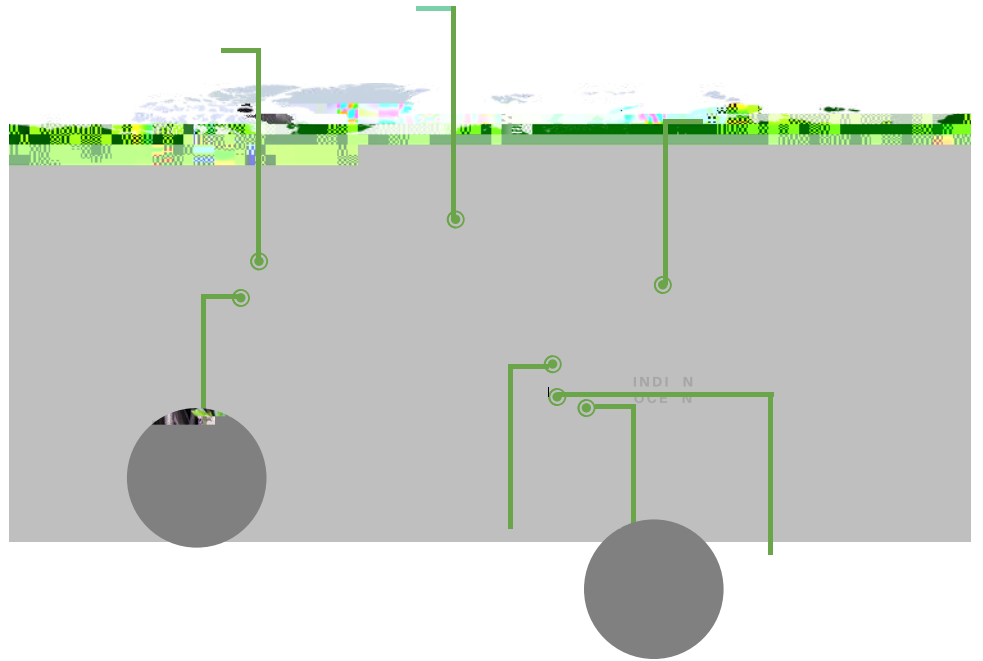
This can tell you



A long-term cultural shift is the final seal of success for any movement. When the community shifts from a mentality of depletion and extraction to one of educated stewardship, that is when you know you have truly changed the future of the ecosystem.

This step will likely require the above two goals. Education and regulation, over time, can lead to a change in the perception and desires of a community. A community that used to think nothing of logging a forest or littering on a beach can completely transform if given time, resources, and empowerment. For smaller campaigns or actions, a cultural shift does not always have to be community-wide. Changing the minds of a block, cul-de-sac, or even one household can light a spark for





KAYOLE, KENYA

Our first case study is based in Kayole, a suburb of Nairobi, Kenya. Samuel Odamo, a garbage collector and community leader, noticed people in his community would often go into the city of Nairobi to relax and gather in the parks. He wanted to make it possible and attractive for his neighbors to have recreational space in their own community. A space where children and families could feel safe to play and congregate.


Kayole was one of the communities that benefitted from the Nairobi Sanitation Project. This project afforded them funding for sanitation and water services. Odamo's organization, Kayole Mtaa Safi, thought this would be the perfect opportunity to allocate open space for recreation areas. Together, the community began to pick up trash, plant trees, and create simple structures for children to play on and paths for people to walk on.

Kayole Mtaa Safi, photo by Kayola Mtaa Safi

"We see the community is really appreciating what we are doing. They are realizing the benefit. When you engage that community and the community takes the ownership, that means sustainability of the project is guaranteed. We put our hands together and we do something for our own benefit. Then it works well." - Samuel Odamo

Perhaps the more remarkable result of the project has been youth involvement. Many of the young community members have become passionate about the project as well. Between 60-70 young people regularly take part in protecting and maintaining the estate. Odamo has leveraged the project as a learning opportunity, seeking to teach school kids about environmental stewardship and community organizing.

Odamo and the people of Kayole saw a need in their community and an opportunity to help themselves while helping their ecosystem.



As a single mother of three, Pabla sought out to inspire youth in her hometown of Barra Del Motagua - located on the Caribbean coast of Honduras - through preserving, conserving, and restoring the area's local mangroves. Mangroves are an important tool for her community, protecting their land from storm action, erosion, and flooding.

After taking part in the IUCN and USAID-led Regional Coastal Biodiversity Project, Pabla brought together 14 community members to take action to restore one hectare of the local mangrove ecosystem, nursing 2,500 red and black mangrove seedlings and planting 3,500 trees.

Since starting her restoration work in 2011, Pabla continues to provide leadership, lending her expertise in monitoring and georeferencing the mangroves while supervising beach and mangrove cleanup campaigns to support community tourism.

Her purpose in taking part in ecosystem restoration has been two-fold. Pabla's motivation for mangrove restoration efforts has been to protect the local community from the negative impacts of increasingly stronger storms and hurricanes. Besides this, she has also focused on encouraging youth to stay in the community rather than migrate to bigger cities. Her restoration work can increase jobs through recuperating fish stocks and increasing tourism. By involving youths in these efforts and improving the beauty and vivacity of the local area, Pabla has encouraged youth's commitment to the community and ecosystem conservation so that they continue to make it a better place for generations to come.

The Cabula Initiative is a Spanish pro



The island system of The Bahamas, like many other Small Island Developing States (SIDS), has an intimate understanding of climate change and environmental degradation. The ravages of irresponsible tourism, in addition to ever-increasing hurricanes and ocean acidification, create an unsure future for many of these countries. [The Youth Marine Explorers](#), or YME, is taking a stand. Through youth education and empowerment, YME aims to empower future Bahamians to be stewards of their seas and landscapes.

YME, then the Youth Bahamian Marine Scientists, was founded by Nikita Shiel-Rolle, a recent graduate who saw the lack of marine education and empowerment amongst Bahamian youngsters. Through their own research, YME found that a driving factor of environmental degradation was the low-quality education received by the majority of Bahamian youth. To meet this need, YME shifted to encouraging sustainable choices through academic excellence and behavioral change. Since its founding, YME has worked with over 2,000 students on six islands. Many workshops center around emphasizing the student's responsibility and ownership over their oceans and lands. By showing students the duty they have to their country, YME hopes that they will make more sustainable choices going forward.

The organization has expanded rapidly in the last few years. In 2015, Nikita received The Bahamas Icon Award for Outstanding Achievement in Youth Development. In 201 , The Cat Island Conservation Institute, or CICI, was founded to bring together Bahamian marine experts to develop innovative solutions to climate change and natural disasters. YME and CICI seek to foster a brighter and more prosperous future for the Bahamas through sustainability and education.

Justdiggit was founded 11 years ago by Dennis Karpes. Dennis met the late Peter Westerveld, who was born and raised in Tanzania, who showed him that it was possible to transform completely dried up ecosystems into ones that are green and lush. Justdiggit focuses on simple, highly scalable, and low-cost restoration techniques. One of them is Rainwater Harvesting and the other one is Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR): bringing forgotten tree stumps back to life with a simple pruning technique. By reviving trees on farmland and combining trees and crops on the land, rainwater is captured and soil fertility increases resulting in better yields, which leads to more income for farmers and a greener land, and higher carbon intake.

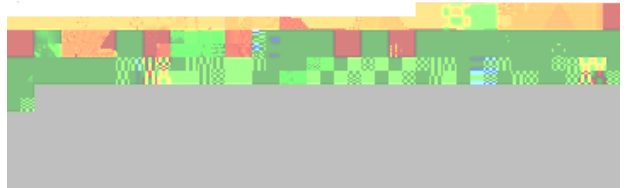
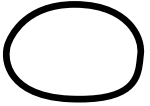
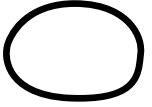
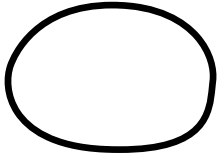
With this approach, Justdiggit has positively impacted the lives of 1 million people in Tanzania, brought back 4.5 million trees and an area of 55,000 hectares (135, 07 acres) unde

ARE YOU READY? SELF-ASSESSMENT

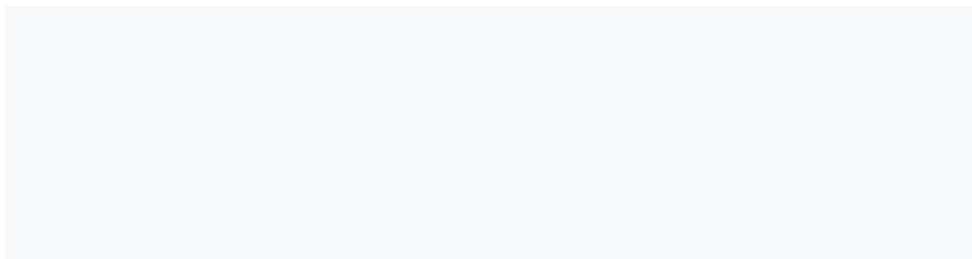
Congratulations, you have made it to the end of this grassroots organizing toolkit. Now you are ready to take action!

You can use the self-assessment checklist to test your readiness level as you follow the steps outlined in this toolkit. Tick the boxes to reflect on what you have done.





DETERMINING YOUR IMPACT



STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, RESOURCES, CONSTRAINTS, AND CAPABILITIES

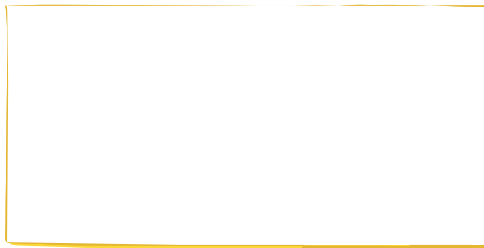


DISCOVERING YOUR COMMUNITY ASSETS

Knowing your individual and comm **hi**

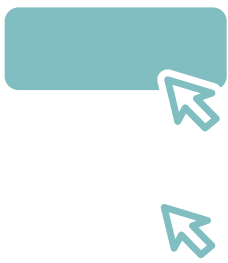


BRAINSTORMING A VISION FOR YOUR GRASSROOTS ACTION



ANNEX B ONLINE RESOURCES

Ecosystem restoration goes far beyond the scope of what is covered in this toolkit. Below is a collection of helpful resources covering important topics on the many different aspects of restoration both general and specific to different situations and populations. Questions or comments, or just want to know how you can get started? IUCN is also or ns or



ANNEX C FINANCIAL RESOURCE EXAMPLES

Innovative Finance Mechanisms for Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) & Nature-based Solutions (NbS) by Ecosystem

Urban areas

Mechanism	Resource
<u>_____</u> KiY_A	<u>Manual</u> <u>Microsfere</u> <u>Kiva</u>
<u>Conservation Easement</u> : Tax incentive to convert private property into reserves.	



ANNEX C FINANCIAL RESOURCE EXAMPLES

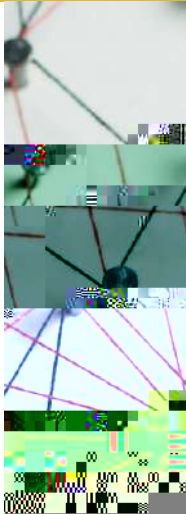
Rural/agricultural areas

Conservation Easement: To convert private property into reserves.

Manual
NCED

Forests and wetland areas

Water Fund: PES to conserve forests and water supplies
n/18s Bs



ANNEX C FINANCIAL RESOURCE EXAMPLES

Mechanism	Resource
Conservation Easement: Tax incentive to convert private property into reserve \$100,000	





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