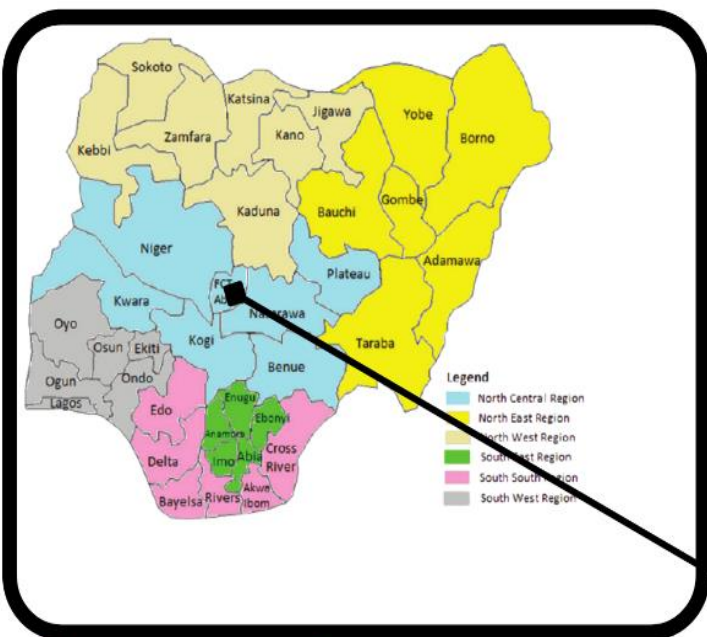


Name: Bature Patience

Affiliation :New Dawn for the Elderly Foundation (NDEF) | Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants Programme (SGP) UNDP Nigeria

Introduction: The rural community of Awawa, situated within the Kwali Local Government Area of Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory, faces acute environmental and socio-economic challenges. Rapid landscape degradation and severe deforestation are primarily driven by an over-reliance on traditional firewood as the primary source of household cooking fuel. This ongoing depletion of the local ecosystem is further compounded by unsustainable agricultural practices and rampant wildlife hunting, which actively threaten local biodiversity. Depleted soil nutrition and dwindling agricultural yields leave smallholder farmers facing severe economic insecurity. To break this cycle of degradation, this project introduces an integrated "waste-to-wealth" circular economy model. By pairing strategic reforestation with clean energy alternatives and sustainable aquaculture, the intervention successfully separates rural livelihoods from the direct exploitation of local forest resources.

Objectives: The objective of this initiative is to establish a climate-resilient community framework through targeted environmental and economic interventions. Specifically, the project aims to restore degraded forest cover by planting over 5,000 economic and indigenous trees, thereby fostering long-term biodiversity conservation and carbon sequestration. Simultaneously, it seeks to drive a clean energy transition by replacing hazardous, traditional firewood practices with high-efficiency biomass briquettes manufactured from agricultural waste. To provide a sustainable economic safety net and discourage wild wildlife hunting, the project establishes community-managed integrated aquaculture units, creating an alternative protein source and diversifying household incomes.



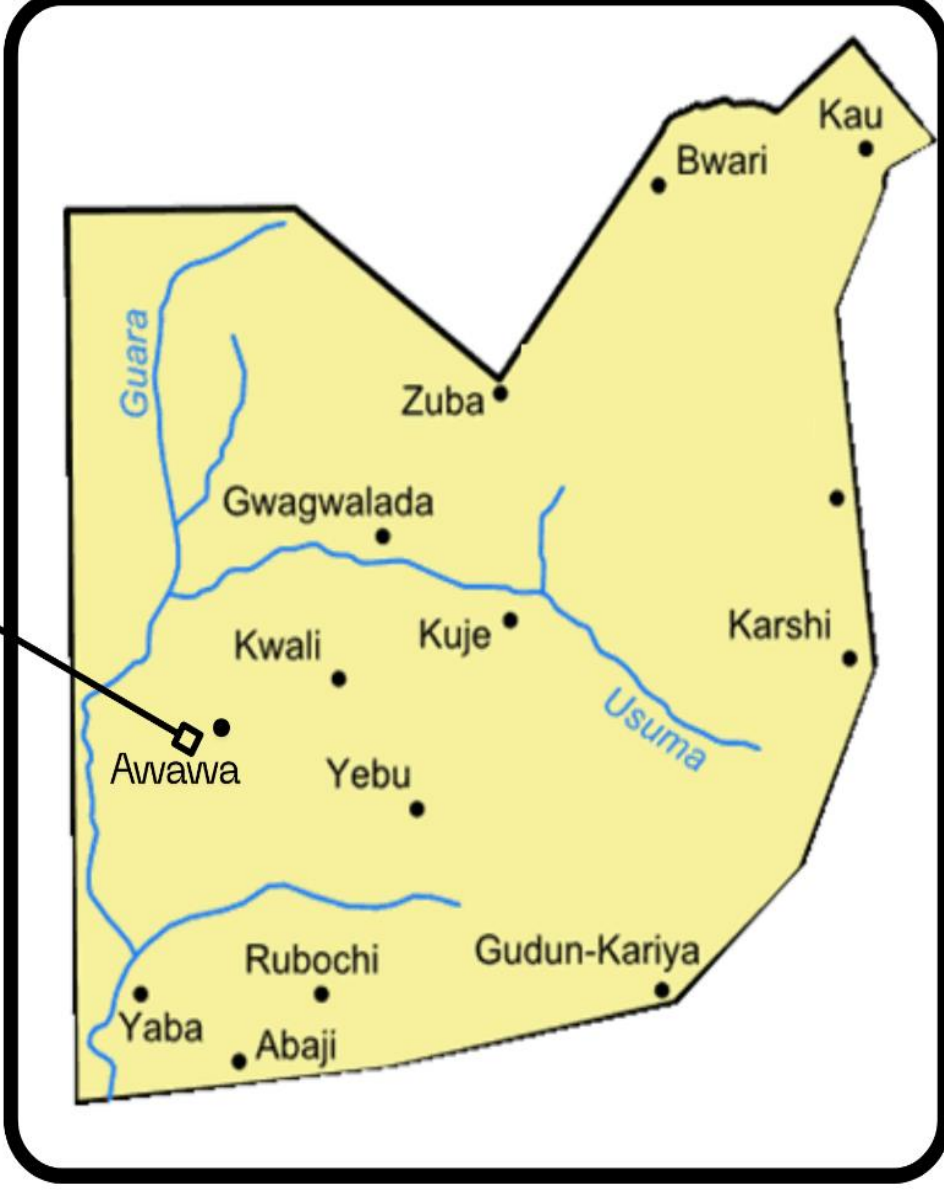
Legend

Nigeria

Abuja

20 Kilometers

20 10 5 0



Methodology: The project execution followed a structured approach grounded in community ownership and circular design. Initially, local management committees were established in Awawa to ensure community-led governance. For the reforestation component, localized nurseries were developed to cultivate and strategically plant more than 5,000 high-value economic tree saplings across degraded community lands. To address food security and wildlife protection, integrated fish farming units with a capacity ranging from 3,000 to 6,000 fish were constructed, introducing a reliable protein alternative that actively curbs bush meat hunting. In parallel, the clean energy technical design featured the deployment of hand-operated briquette presses. Local operators were trained to salvage and process agricultural waste residues—such as rice husk, cassava peel, palm kernel nuts and compressing them into high-density, smokeless biomass fuel blocks.

Results and Discussions: The integrated intervention yielded significant ecological, operational, and financial milestones. The successful cultivation of over 5,000 economic trees has established a verified baseline for landscape restoration and biodiversity recovery in Kwali. In terms of energy displacement, a substantial portion of household cooking needs has successfully transitioned away from raw forest timber to recycled biomass briquettes. Financially, a robust cost-benefit analysis of the aquaculture units confirms high commercial viability; the 3,000 to 6,000 fish capacity generates a steady, climate-resilient cash flow for local operators while slashing household protein expenditure by over 30%. Critically, the immediate economic returns from fish marketing and economic fruit trees created an effective behavioral shift, successfully neutralizing the financial incentives that previously drove local wildlife hunting.

Conclusion and Future Work: The Awawa community project demonstrates that combining landscape-level forest creation with immediate, high-yield circular agro-ecology solutions provides an exceptionally viable blueprint for rural climate resilience. By addressing environmental degradation and economic poverty simultaneously, this integrated framework proves that grassroots conservation thrives when linked to sustainable livelihood incentives. Ultimately, this model serves as a scalable roadmap that directly accelerates Nigeria's commitment to UN Sustainable Development Goals, specifically SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

References
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Fig. 1: Project Location Map