



# 2021 TRIENNIAL IMPACT REPORT

BASED ON A STUDY TO MEASURE GLOBAL IMPACT  
2018-2020

PLANT  WITH PURPOSE



Plant With Purpose is an international Christian nonprofit organization working at the **intersection of poverty alleviation, environmental restoration, and spiritual renewal.**

*We are committed to holistic, sustainable development through local empowerment, regenerative agriculture, reforestation, economic resilience, and the restoration of relationships throughout all of creation.*

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# IMPACT MATTERS

**Every three years, our team conducts an in-depth impact study** applying evaluation best practices. Research was further validated through comparison to our prior triennial analysis (2015-2017), which indicates consistency of results and trends.

## Triennial Reporting

Study Years	Reporting Year
2015-2017	2018
2018-2020	2021

## Program Countries (2018-2020)

Burundi • Democratic Republic of the Congo • Dominican Republic • Ethiopia  
Haiti • Mexico • Tanzania • Thailand

## Research Methodology

Process	Method	Tools
<b>Participatory Workshops</b>	Community members share their experiences through mapping exercises and tools to help identify key changes in their watershed.	<b>Mapping exercises</b> <b>Facilitated discussion</b>
<b>Regional Surveys</b>	Random sampling was applied, resulting in a total sample size of 4,225 households. Sample size supports a 95% level of confidence.	<b>Difference-in-Differences Study</b> Household surveys comparing participating and nonparticipating groups and regions over time.
<b>Remote Sensing</b>	Forest/vegetation density and health.	<b>NDVI (Normalized Difference Vegetation Index) and % Tree Cover</b> Measures vegetation change using satellite imagery.



# RETHINKING POVERTY

## MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX (MPI)



## What does poverty look like?

*Poverty is not about money alone.*

*To measure our poverty alleviation efforts effectively, we evaluate 12 key indicators. This MPI is*

*based on recognized benchmarks used in global development.*

*This approach to evaluating poverty alleviation is more meaningful, balanced, and comprehensive than using a single metric.*

The crisis of poverty is environmental, economic, and spiritual. For the 800 million people living in poverty,\* these aren't separate issues but rather different facets of the same struggle.

For many families in countries like Haiti, Ethiopia, and Burundi, survival is a daily challenge. Farming a steep and eroded hillside is increasingly difficult as climate change and soil depletion reduce crop production year after year.

The problem is exacerbated by lack of access to banks or other sources of emergency financial support. In a desperate attempt to make ends meet, many resort to selling animals or cutting down their trees, fueling a downward spiral. These populations become vulnerable to the perils of human trafficking, guerrilla militias, hazardous mining jobs, and even becoming refugees.

### HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE IN MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY?\*



\*United Nations Development Programme





*Program participation means that families reduce the impact of poverty on their daily lives.*

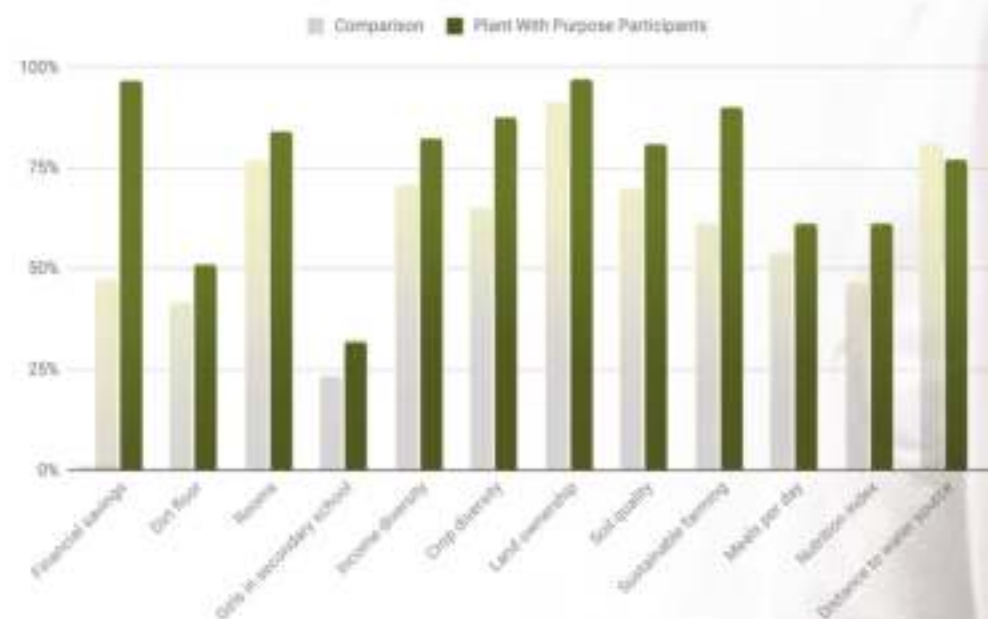
*This is about much more than money (see MPI, page 4).*

*It means that their lives and future prospects improve significantly.*

On average, Plant With Purpose families experience a **55% reduction in poverty**, directly impacting basic human needs like regularly eating nutritious meals and having a safe, liveable home. And while this is an average, for many families the improvement is far greater.

## MPI KEY INDICATOR SUFFICIENCY

% households sufficient in each indicator



## INDICATOR SUFFICIENCY

8

PARTICIPANT FAMILIES

4

NONPARTICIPANT FAMILIES

Plant With Purpose participant families in the DR Congo are sufficient in an average of 8 of 12 indicators on the Multidimensional Poverty Index. Nonparticipant families average 4.

# GROWING OUT OF POVERTY

## ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

### Families are growing resilient

Participation in Purpose Groups—which includes community-based savings groups—promotes economic resilience in the face of challenges. People who have participated in group savings activities for three or more years are twice as likely to save, and typically have around 2.5 months' worth of expenses saved.

### Lives are being changed

This reduction in poverty is consistent with the results of our previous impact evaluation reported three years ago (statistically similar—63%). The Plant With Purpose program is truly empowering families and making a difference over time.

### Together we are building hope

Purpose Group financial activities not only increase savings but also confidence and members' ability to improve their own lives, families, and community.

*Families are twice as likely to save money.*



The following statements were shared by participants of an impact evaluation workshop held in Haiti.

Because of savings groups, we experience:

"More pride, confidence, and capacity to spend or invest"

"More economic assurance for families"

"More development and strengthening of local businesses"

## MONTHS OF SAVINGS

2.5

PARTICIPANT FAMILIES

1

NONPARTICIPANT FAMILIES



# A SOLUTION THAT WORKS

## THE PLANT WITH PURPOSE WATERSHED MODEL

A **watershed** is a region defined by rivers and streams that all flow into a common larger body of water. As environmental improvements happen and agricultural techniques are learned, there is a literal "trickle down" effect throughout the region and from neighbor to neighbor. By reaching about half of the families in a watershed, the entire region experiences a reduction in poverty. Ecosystems are restored and deforestation is reversed—the benefits to a community are long-term.

### Purpose Groups

Community-based and locally-led, Purpose Groups are the foundation of the watershed model, bringing neighbors together to learn, collaborate, and encourage one another.

### Community Selection

We select communities based on levels of poverty, difficulty of terrain, environmental degradation/deforestation, and vulnerability of the people, as well as their mutual interest and readiness to work with us.



### Savings Groups

*Economic resilience, self-reliance, and growth opportunities are increased*



### Farmer Field Schools

*Soil health and crop yields are increased through the application of regenerative agriculture techniques*



### Reforestation

*Ecosystems are restored by growing trees and protecting soil*



### Spiritual Encouragement

*Discipleship curriculum and partnership with churches elevates the value of people, environmental stewardship, work, and community*





# REVERSE DEFORESTATION

2.7%

## MORE TREE COVER

Tree cover is increasing or stable in all of the watersheds where we work, growing at a global average of .39% per year. In contrast, tree cover globally, including the countries where we work, is decreasing at an average of .51% per year. We estimate that, for the three-year period covered by this study, the change in tree cover has diverged from national trends by 2.7%, representing 2.2 *million* acres of land protected or restored.

Trees can contribute to cleaner and more abundant water resources, improved soil, cooler temperatures, increased biodiversity, greater crop yields, and so much more.

These changes benefit partnering families, communities, and entire watersheds. Reforestation also increases carbon sequestration, helping to reverse climate change.



# ECONOMIC RESILIENCE

2.5

## MONTHS' WORTH OF SAVINGS

Families experiencing poverty face many difficult choices. An illness, natural disaster, or other crisis can put their very survival at risk. Building emergency savings builds economic resilience and helps families create a better future.

Program participants have an average of 2.5 months of savings and are twice as likely to save as nonparticipants, who typically have only 1 month of savings. Economic resilience makes watershed resilience possible.

# WATERSHED RESILIENCE

89%

## INCREASE IN APPLICATION OF REGENERATIVE AGRICULTURE

In program areas, families are trained in and apply regenerative agriculture techniques. These practices are revitalizing farms and shared land throughout their watershed, specifically impacting critical ecosystem zones.

Compared to nonparticipant (control) watersheds, families in participant watersheds are applying these restorative practices at a far greater rate.



# REVERSING POVERTY

55%

## REDUCTION IN POVERTY

Program participants experience a 55% reduction in poverty levels. Using the 12 metrics of the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), after three years, partnering families in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (for example) have sufficiency in an average of four more areas vs the comparison group.

This growth makes families more resilient and able to improve their quality of life, benefiting themselves and the next generation. We observe that people have greater hope and a stronger sense of responsibility toward their community and environmental stewardship.



# SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

70%

## BELIEVE THEIR WORK IS A GOOD USE OF THEIR TALENTS

A maturing faith is not necessarily quantifiable. However, it is made evident through observable attitudes and actions. This statistic, compared to nonparticipants (58%), indicates a far greater sense of personal value and agency, compared to the control group.

Spirituality is also acted out in caring for neighbors and strangers, reconciliation, commitment to spiritual practices, and unity. We observe that people have a greater hope and a stronger sense of responsibility toward their community and environmental stewardship.





# RESTORING ECOSYSTEMS

## FARMERS ARE REGENERATING ENTIRE WATERSHEDS

Farming on degraded land means farmers have to work harder each year for less food and income. Erosion, irregular rainfall, and conventional farming practices such as tillage or burning, further degrade soil and the surrounding environment. Farmers participating in Purpose Groups reverse this cycle and become agents of regeneration.

*Participating farmers apply 89% more regenerative agriculture techniques.*

### Regenerative Agriculture

Farmer Field Schools create a place for participating farmers to test and codevelop regenerative agricultural practices within their communities.

These practices rebuild healthy soil, increasing crop diversity and yield long term.

- 86% of partnering farmers are sharing knowledge of regenerative practices with their neighbors.
- 76% of partnering farmers observe that their neighbors are also applying at least some of those shared practices on their own farms.

*Participants plant 4.3X as many trees as nonparticipants.*



## REGENERATIVE FARMING

Participants are more likely to apply regenerative farming techniques compared to nonparticipants. These are highlights from our survey:

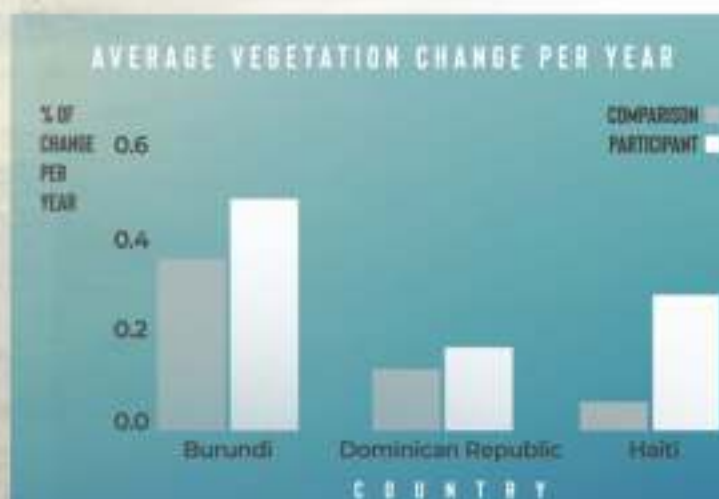
Technique	% more likely
Composting	100%
Use of Green Manure / Cover Crops	109%
Establishment of Woodlots	412%

### Reforestation

Tree and plant coverage is increasing or stable in every watershed where we work. Plant With Purpose partners plant trees on farms, in common areas, and in forests, transforming their entire watershed. Trees can reduce erosion, restore water cycles, capture carbon from the atmosphere, and promote biodiversity. Additionally, participants are nearly twice as likely to plant native trees as nonparticipants (50% vs. 27%).

### It's all connected

Regenerative agriculture techniques contribute to 37% higher crop yield (as measured in a separate Plant With Purpose study), which increases farmer income and quality of life for their family and community, reducing poverty (see MPI, page 4).





# RESTORING RELATIONSHIPS

## BUILDING HOPE

Plant With Purpose teaches best-in-class development practices that are based in scripture and Christian values.

We honor the contributions of our participants, learning alongside them as equals, and reminding them that their lives and work have infinite spiritual value. We are gratified that our partners feel highly respected by Plant With Purpose staff (average score of 4.6 on a scale of 1-5).

By embracing their God-given calling to be stewards of the land, farmers also experience a renewed sense of purpose and self-worth as they improve their lives, plant trees, and share their knowledge with others.

And while spiritual growth is often difficult to quantify, it is demonstrated in the observable, and reportable, attitudes and actions of our program participants.

*Our relationship  
with God is  
reflected in the  
way we see  
ourselves, serve  
our neighbors,  
and show up in  
the world.*



SPIRITUAL RENEWAL

### Personal empowerment

70% of partner farmers believe their work is a good use of their talents. Compared to nonparticipants (58%), this indicates a far greater sense of personal value and agency.

Faith is also acted out in caring for neighbors and strangers, reconciliation, commitment to spiritual practices, and unity. We observe that people have greater hope and a stronger sense of responsibility toward their community and environmental stewardship.

### Faith in community

We come alongside local churches to encourage communities to grow in their love and care for their neighbors and creation, reflecting God's love.

### Opportunities for women

Plant With Purpose participants are 18% more likely to send their girls to secondary school than nonparticipants, helping to break the cycle of poverty for future generations.

Women and girls often bear a disproportionate burden of poverty. The ability to attend school, provide for a family, and run businesses means a better future for themselves and their families.

### Spiritual Impact

Participants vs. nonparticipants that agree with the following statements

Statement	Participant	Nonparticipant
Our community works together to solve problems	96%	84%
My work is a good use of my talents	70%	58%
I have helped my neighbors (times in the previous month)	5.7	5
I have the ability to improve my life	51%	47%
I now feel pride in the work I do	95%	87%

**70%**  
OF PARTNERS BELIEVE  
THEIR WORK IS A GOOD  
USE OF THEIR TALENTS

**96%**  
OF PARTICIPANTS  
AGREE WITH THE  
STATEMENT, "MEMBERS  
OF MY COMMUNITY  
WORK TOGETHER TO  
CHANGE THINGS THAT  
ARE WRONG IN MY  
COMMUNITY."

**18%**  
MORE LIKELY TO SEND  
THEIR GIRLS TO  
SECONDARY SCHOOL

**2/3**  
OF PARTICIPANTS ARE  
WOMEN. MANY ARE IN  
LEADERSHIP POSITIONS  
IN THEIR COMMUNITIES



MEXICO  
HAITI  
DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

# HOPE FOR A WORLD IN CRISIS

ETHIOPIA

THAILAND

DR CONGO  
BURUNDI  
TANZANIA

Our changing climate is in the news daily, and it's not our only environmental crisis. The world is rapidly losing biodiversity, forests are shrinking, and we are losing arable land to deserts. These crises affect us all but not equally. Families in lower income countries often feel the greatest impact, compounding the socioeconomic challenges they face. Environmental crises are deepening poverty, leaving families vulnerable and searching for hope.

Plant With Purpose is recognized for our locally-led interventions that cut poverty by more than half while reversing deforestation and restoring ecosystems, mitigating climate change. Through agroforestry, tree planting, and other regenerative techniques, partnering families each sequester an estimated 6 tons of CO<sub>2e</sub> (carbon dioxide equivalent) annually (based on supplemental research).

We are proud that our work has been recognized by many monitoring organizations and is aligned with the world's most significant environmental restoration and poverty alleviation efforts.





# THE NEEDS ARE URGENT OUR APPROACH WORKS IT'S TIME TO GROW

Every day you hear more reports on poverty and environmental challenges. These fuel the urgency of our mission. The measurable impact reported in this triennial study documents our program effectiveness and results. It also demonstrates that, with support and training, our global partners are themselves the agents of transformation.

Plant With Purpose exists to spread God's love, help rural farming communities experience sufficiency and hope, and restore a thriving and abundant Earth. With your partnership, lives and ecosystems are being transformed... let's do more.

Thank you for being part of the solution.

*"Plant With Purpose has a strategy and the results to literally bring people out of rural poverty. Very few ministries have such well-documented impact."*

*- Paul Penley, Managing Director, Excellence in Giving*



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