Background

Three landscape restoration models in the Bono Region of Ghana are presented here: Community-based Forestland Restoration, Forestry Commission/ Timber Industry Plantation Development and Forestland Restoration by Public-Private Partnership.

Aim

The overall aim of all these projects was to improve forest cover in already degraded areas thereby restoring forest-based ecosystem services as well as improving livelihood of local communities.

Outcomes/benefits

1) Household incomes of local communities improved through sale of food crops (e.g. maize) and non-timber forest products (e.g. firewood).
2) Farmers have access to fertile land for cultivation, which without the project would not have been readily available owing to land tenure issues.
3) Increased forest cover.
4) Enhanced carbon sequestration.
5) Restoring buffer zones has reduced erosion and prevented sedimentation into streams and rivers.
6) Gradual return of wildlife diversity.

Lessons learned

1) Community involvement: close collaboration with fringe communities and relevant stakeholders through all stages of the project, from planning to implementation, is critical to ensure success.
2) Effective communication: frequent and effective communication with relevant stakeholders such as traditional leaders, landowners, farmers, and government agencies should be maintained.
3) Institutional partnerships: strong partnership is needed among relevant stakeholders, including government.
4) Provide incentives: as much as possible, it is important to provide incentives to local communities so as to obtain their full participation and support. Strategies to improve livelihood enhancement opportunities should be explored.