

Goal #15: LIFE ON LAND

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Protect, restore, and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss.

Global Goal 15, Life on Land, may not seem directly related to World Vision's work. However, it affects every aspect of children's well-being and communities' hopes of escaping poverty and securing safe, healthy, prosperous lives. The words "sustainable development" cause people to think of goals focused on caring for the environment. Another purpose is to ensure that the environment can provide for all people. Global Goal 15 exists to make sure that the life-supporting systems we need as human beings continue to operate.

From the air we breathe to the water that makes up most of our cell structure, our natural environment creates, regulates, and purifies the basic elements of our survival. Thriving local environments reduce and help control many of the world's most serious health burdens such as malaria, malnutrition, and diarrheal disease. Healthy natural systems produce more and better quality crops for food, which are less likely to be overrun by pests or disease. Because more people throughout the world make their living off environmental resources than any other means, keeping a local environment strong and healthy is critical to escaping poverty. Healthy, natural environments reduce the risk of weather- and conflict-related disasters by forming protective barriers, moderating weather, and increasing the available resources for everyone.

By helping communities restore and maintain their local resources, they are empowered to take control of their own well-being and futures. [Rebuilding forests](#) brings more fresh water, healthier crops, safer living conditions, and reduces the work necessary to survive – especially for women and children. [Farmers](#) who have healthy, resilient soils and adequate groundwater can grow more crops to feed their families. More efficient cook stoves and [safer sources](#) of power mean communities have less risk of fires and illness, can save money, and can be safe. These things help poor communities make a difference for all their global neighbors by being a part of the solution to climate change and other global crises, instead of part of the problem.

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