

FARMER MANAGED NATURAL REGENERATION NETWORK

FMNR Network - Uganda

Project Title: “Strengthening the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Network to increase adoption of the FMNR Model in Uganda”

Activity Concept

Online FMNR Training and Recruitment of Prospective Members of the FMNR Network

Dates: August 18th – 19th, 2021

Time: 10:00am – 1:00pm

1. BACKGROUND

Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) is a low-cost, sustainable land restoration technique used to combat poverty and hunger amongst poor subsistence farmers in developing countries by increasing food and timber production, and resilience to climate extremes (Hollan et al, 2012)¹. It envisages a systematic regeneration of natural trees from stumps, seeds, and roots (Doherty, 2018)². It hinges on the inherent ability of some tree species (especially indigenous trees) to regenerate, re-sprout, or coppice naturally, after they have been cut down. FMNR was born out of frustration with tree planting efforts which were becoming fruitless under harsh conditions such as drought, strong winds, pests, trampling and browsing by animals among others (ICRAF, 2018)³.

The FMNR model was first introduced in Uganda in 2010 and piloted in Offaka and Anyiribu Sub Counties, Arua District. A follow up collaborative project between World Vision and ICRAF scaled the FMNR model to four other districts of Kibaale, Nakasongola, Abim and Kotido (Okia et al, 2017)⁴. During that same period, World Vision mainstreamed the FMNR model into many of its Area Development Programs throughout Uganda. Currently, the FMNR model has been embraced by the Government of Uganda (MWE, 2018)⁵ as a low-cost approach to re-greening landscapes, increasing tree cover and creating resilient livelihoods in the country.

2. ABOUT THE FMNR NETWORK UGANDA

With rapid replication of the model, the FMNR Network - Uganda was formed out of the July 2014 national conference. Currently hosted by Tree Talk Plus (as the Secretariat), the Network aims to raise awareness and adoption of FMNR in all parts of Uganda through its members

¹ Holland, Mina; et al. (2012-08-26). "[Africa innovations: 15 ideas helping to transform a continent](#)"

² Doherty, Ben (2018-12-13). "[Reforestation the world: the Australian farmer with 240m trees to his name](#)"

³ ICRAF, 2018: FMNR, A users guide for practitioners in Uganda

⁴ Okia C. A., Buyinza J., Muriuki J. and R. Esimu (2017). Forest Landscape Restoration in Uganda: The Case of Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR). Policy Brief. ICRAF Uganda, Kampala.

⁵ MWE, 2018: The National REDD+ Strategy

that are mainly multi-stakeholder organizations. The network has 19 registered member organizations and over 55 potential members that have expressed interest to join. The primary role of the Secretariat is to ensure member recruitment/retention and provide services to members such as capacity building, information generation and sharing, advocacy for scaling up of the model among others. The core areas of work for network members are improving food security, increasing tree coverage on farm, enhancing income security and building resilience to climate change. The Network is steered by a Taskforce comprising of nine (09) member organizations that are responsible for providing strategic direction to the Network and guide its operations to achieve its goals and objectives.

The FMNR Network in Uganda has a national outlook and works to create a national FMNR movement with the aim of scaling up FMNR practices across the country since the challenges of deforestation are countrywide. The strategy is to support members to build alliances and synergies for scaling up of the FMNR model, enhance the knowledge, skills and capacity of members on the model and advocate for mainstreaming the FMNR model within government ministries, departments and agencies in the sectors of agriculture, lands, water and environment.

3. RATIONALE

Trees and forests are critical resources for people's livelihoods, environmental conservation, and national economic development (Bush et al, 2004)⁶. In Uganda, forestry contributes between 6% (formal) and 8.7% (including informal sector) of the country's GDP (MWE, 2016)⁷. Trees and forests also provide critical ecological services such as carbon storage, nutrient cycling, water and air purification, and maintenance of wildlife habitats (Bush et al, 2004). Trees are also a source of timber, fuelwood, and other no-timber forest products such as fruits, fibre, medicines (NEMA, 2011)⁸. Despite their importance, Uganda continues to lose her forests at an alarming rate. Current national deforestation rates stand at 2% annually with an average of 122,000 hectares lost every year (MWE, 2016). The most recent biomass inventory (NFA, 2015), indicates that 65% of forest degradation takes place on private land and on several occasions the land owners choose land use change from forestry to agriculture, industry or settlement for livelihood support. The loss of tree cover exacerbates the impacts of climate change on smallholder farmers' livelihoods (MWE, 2018)⁹. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration has been identified as one of the strategic options to increase tree cover and address climate change impacts (MWE, 2018) as well as a means of increasing trees on farm (ICRAF, 2020)¹⁰.

Government Ministries, Departments, Agencies and Local Governments, as well as non-state actors, have developed programs and projects aimed at improving tree cover in both protected areas and private land. These projects and programs include among others the Sawlog Production Grant Scheme, Farm Income Enhancement Project, Agro-forestry project among others. However, tree planting by use of seedlings has in one way or the other

⁶ Bush, G. et al, 2004: Trees and forests are critical resources for people's livelihoods, environmental conservation, and national economic development, published by Wildlife Conservation Society.

⁷ MWE, 2016: The State of Uganda's Forestry, 2016

⁸ NEMA, 2011: Uganda Forestry Accounts Report

⁹ MWE, 2018: Proposed Forest Reference Emission Levels for Uganda

¹⁰ IUCN, 2020: The roles of trees on farms in Uganda. Current status and policy recommendations for future development

promoted monocultures of tree crops. The other challenges include low survival rates for indigenous tree species as a result of drought, stray animals, poor quality seedlings, low technical awareness by farmers and the cost involved in purchasing and managing planted seedlings.

To embrace the FMNR model is one way to address the above-mentioned challenges. Whereas the model has gained popularity among pioneer groups and model farmers, there is need to scale it up among other categories of adopters such as ranch owners, small farm establishments, model farm, subsistence farmers, private sector engaged in agriculture and environment as well as Civil Society Organisations actors.

4. THE ACTIVITY

With generous support from VI Agroforestry, the FMNR Network is implementing a 2-year project that targets to strengthen the FMNR Network, project a positive public image of the FMNR model, and enhance adoption of the FMNR approach in Uganda. Specifically, the project intends to i) strengthen coordination of the FMNR Network and its activities, build the capacity of members in the FMNR model, and document and disseminate FMNR best practices to inform evidence-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

This particular activity directly contributes to Objective ii) which targets to build capacity of members in implementing the model. The Network has already undertaken a Training Needs Assessment of the members, developed modules and a capacity building plan and this will form a basis for the upcoming training. The online training for potential members will therefore take 2 days.

Specifically, the training will aim at:

- i. Introducing and unpacking the FMNR model.
- ii. Creating awareness about the potential of FMNR as a key restoration model in Uganda's forestry sector.
- iii. Exposing participants to actual implementation of the FMNR model - 'virtual FMNR site' (video for online training)
- iv. Raising awareness on the importance of FMNR – alternative livelihood enterprises for smallholder forest management units (communities, private forest owners).

The FMNR network has a recruitment and accreditation plan for new and potential members. After the training and awareness on FMNR and its implementation, the target institutions will participate in recruitment meetings. During the recruitment meetings, presentation of the benefits of becoming members to the network will be made, alongside the principles underlying the FMNR model. As much as possible, the meetings will be intended to lure members to join, to increase the FMNR constituency and voice. This will still be done for the four regions, and the target is to recruit over 60 members of the Network.

Specifically, the recruitment and membership drive will aim at:

- i. Introducing the FMNR Network formally to the members (its vision, mission, objectives, governance structures, and core business of the network).

- ii. Creating an understanding of the strategic and direct interventions of the Network and her members.
- iii. Sharing the internal and external benefits and opportunities of becoming a member of the Network.
- iv. Taking potential members through the process of formalizing membership, sharing the membership forms, and follow up mechanisms.

5. FACILITATION AND PARTICIPATION

The training will be facilitated by resource persons. Experts in the FMNR model, FMNR related livelihood enterprises, policy advocacy, and other skills will be identified and conscripted to support the training process. Over 60 participants from five different regions (National level, West Nile, Albertine, Northern, Eastern, and South western) of the country will be mobilized to attend the online training. Participants will be drawn from the civil society organizations implementing activities in the sectors of forestry, agriculture and climate change.

6. APPROACH AND METHODS

- PowerPoint Presentations
- Plenary sessions (oral communication and use of the chat box)
- Videos for practical sessions

7. TOOL KIT

- Zoom enabled gadget (preferably a laptop)
- Good internet connection

8. PROGRAM

The choice for organizing the training and recruitment is dictated by the COVID-19 Pandemic and associated lockdown Guidelines issued by the Ministry of Health and Presidential Directive on the same. As such, the activities will be done on Zoom as the Secretariat plans to further engage members physically later on.

Tentative Program

Moderator (Jonathan Mayanja)

DAY ONE – Training – 10:00 – 1pm			
	Activity	Time	Responsible Person
1.	Log in time and connection check	9:45 – 10:00am	All
2.	Opening Prayer	10:00 – 10:05am	All
3.	Self-introductions	10:05 – 10:05am	All (in the chat box)
4.	Participants expectations	10:05 – 10:05am	All (in the chat box)
5.	Welcome and Opening Remarks	10:05 – 10:20am	Team Leader – TTP Country Director – Vi Agroforestry
6.	Project Background and objectives	10:20 – 10:30am	Tree Talk Plus (Project Coordinator)
7.	History of the FMNR model	10:30 – 11:00am	Tony Rinaudo – Principal Climate Action Advisor, World Vision Australia
8.	Plenary	11:00 - 11:15am	
9.	Capacity building on FMNR – Include videos on FMNR	11:15 – 12:15pm	Cotilda Nakyeune
10.	Plenary	12:15 – 12:30pm	All
11.	Potential of FMNR as a restoration model – the Policy Perspective – Linking policy to practice – Comparative advantages to traditional tree planting – Cost Benefit Analysis	12:30 – 12:45pm	Clement Okia
12.	Plenary	12:45 – 12:50pm	All
13.	Closure		Regional Representatives
DAY TWO – Enterprise Development/ Recruitment – (10:00 – 1:00 pm)			
1.	Log in time and connection check	9:45 – 10:00am	All
2.	Opening Prayer	10:00 – 10:05am	All
3.	Recap of interesting lessons	10:05 – 10:10am	All
4.	Livelihood enterprises in FMNR systems – Combating poverty, improving food security and increasing household incomes	10:10 – 11:00am	Boniface Mwesigye
5.	Plenary	11:00 – 11:30am	All
6.	Recruitment of potential members – About the Network – Governance structures – Benefits and opportunities – Formalizing membership	11:30 – 12:30 pm	Mrs. Prudence Ayebare
7.	Plenary	12:30 – 12:45pm	All
8.	Closing remarks	12:45 – 12:55pm	Tree Talk Plus
ADMINISTRATIVE ISSUES AND DEPARTURE			