

Tree Talk Plus

Branching out to empower communities

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Re-vitalising the FMNR network in Uganda

The Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Network Uganda wishes to join and applaud the voice of the 'Save Bugoma Campaign'.

As a network we demand 'systemic change' that will see such incompatible investments that have a big toll on social, economic and most important environmental well-being halted, and not endorsed in future.

We wish to see the private sector desist from 'grabbing' environment and natural resources for their own satisfaction.

We wish to see the communities rise up to demand for the stay of the forest, if government and other structures are failing.

This act contravenes the public trust doctrine, where natural resources belong to people and that government is simply a trustee. Userping and using the power of the people contravenes Section 1 of the constitution.

Once halted, we as Ugandans can use different approaches to regenerate the forest, to the benefit of posterity.

The FMNR fraternity in Uganda will be thrilled to hear that network is now supported by Vi-Agroforestry to implement activities aimed at strengthening the Network, increase the adoption of FMNR approaches as well as the adoption of the FMNR Model in Uganda.

The project activities are national in nature, with selected areas of demonstration at regional level. The support is largely for coordination, capacity building, knowledge management and evidence-based advocacy. It will last for 2 years, coordinated by Tree Talk Plus, the Secretariat and Host of the FMNR Network in Uganda.

The key outputs include:

- Recruiting at least 20 new organisations as members of the network, building their capacity to adopt, apply and integrate the model FMNR into their programming.
- Developing policy briefs for engaging policy makers so they are able to lobby for the FMNR model.
- Training 150 model farmers in forest-based enterprises and support farmers with FMNR plots to establish income generating enterprises.
- Packaging, disseminating and documenting knowledge arising from implementation of FMNR activities by the different members of the network.
- Holding engagement meetings,

steering committee meetings and annual general meetings to reflect on progress of adoption and implementation of FMNR in the country.

The expected impacts are; increased land areas reported by stakeholders that is under FMNR, integration of FMNR approaches into restoration activities and programs as well as adoption of FMNR in the national forestry policy.

Speaking at the recent Steering Committee meeting, intended to unveil the support, the Chairperson, Ms. Prudence Ayebare reiterated the need for network members to continuously spread the technology.

Carnage as trees in Acholi get depleted

Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration - the only possible solution



Northern Uganda will soon be devoid of trees, if their cutting goes unaddressed. Shea nut trees (*Vitellaria paradoxa*) are cut and carbonised to produce charcoal.

In many places, such as around Rackoko trading centre, Pader District, in the photo above, trees are cut for

charcoal. Large areas of land are ploughed for crops (as seen in Patong, Lira Kaket, with no trees left, opening up such areas to extremes of weather. Other forms of landuse affecting trees in Acholi include refugee settlements (in Palabek), overgrazing, mining (of sand), settlements and various forms of development.

District local governments in Acholi sub-region are overwhelmed by conspiracies between charcoal dealers, some cultural leaders, armed personnel, and corrupt officials who connive to let this happen. Yet, all stakeholders appreciate the role played by trees in climate amelioration

and stabilisation of catchments for water, firewood, medicines, fruits among others.

Efforts however are in place by concerned parties such as the Jule Cultural Development Foundation, working with cultural leaders, clan chairperson, hoe chiefs (Rwot kweri), clan women representatives (Rwot Okoro), eminent persons, local leaders, community and technical persons in Pader district to sensitise the public to stop the canage.

One approach they are promoting is Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration, which allows useful indigenous trees to be grown alongside crops. Rwot John P. Lugai, the Rwot (Chief) of Pajule says, 'this is the only cheap way to regenerate the trees lost, whose seedlings are difficult to germinate'.



How to start FMNR on your farm

It is so simple, anyone can do it. Follow the steps

This is a technique that our ancestors have been practicing, though with limited documentation.

It is so simple, anyone can do it and has to follow simple steps. At family level, make sure every member of the family understands the motive. It

is important to walk to identify the seedlings to manage. This is carried out in the presence of all family members. Identify different species as they have different benefits and

values. Contact a forest officer/staff or knowledgeable CSO/NGO to help. Google if you have internet or simply send an email to us.

Step 1: Identify shoots from a tree stump or roots, or the various branches of sprouts from deeply buried roots. Note the healthy stems.



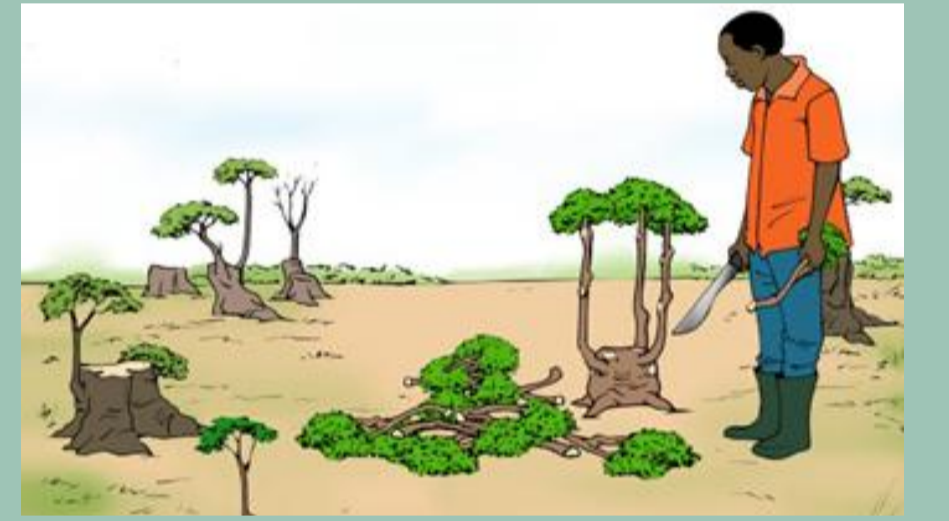
Step 2: Look out for wild seedlings which are growing from seeds that could have been dispersed by wind, birds, animals and humans.



Step 3: Select the stumps, naturally growing tree seedlings or roots which will be used for regeneration.



Step 4: Select the healthier, and/or straighter stems (three to five stems) which will be pruned and remove unwanted ones.



Step 5: Weed around the desired ones and mark/protect them.



Step 6: Tie the weak stems to enable them gain strength and become straight.



Step 7: Continue pruning the remaining stems as they grow.



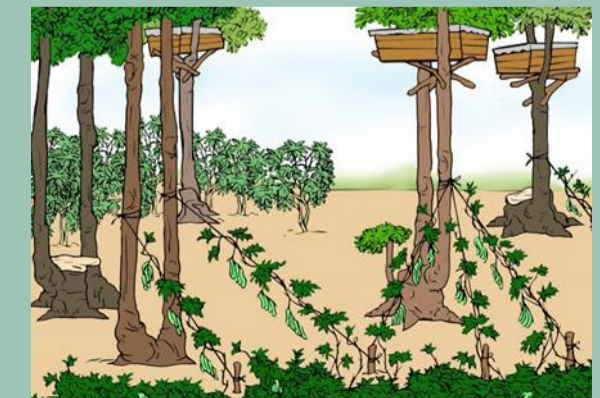
Step 8: Continue removing unwanted branches. Avoid peeling the stems



Step 9: When you harvest one stem, watch out for the new coppices that emerge.



Step 10: Add value to the stems by adding bee-hives, climbing beans, yams among others



Reports by FMNR Network Members



World Agroforestry Centre

The International Centre for Research in Agroforestry (ICRAF) is conducting practical sessions in FMNR at the ICRAF Agroforestry Learning Centre in Imvepi Parish, targeting refugees and host communities in the area.

Training refugees on FMNR approaches

Participants are equipped with tree growing and FMNR skills. During the training sessions, monitoring of survival of tree planted, and those nursed through FMNR approaches is emphasised. Monitoring the performance of trees beyond planting and beyond the first time of identification under FMNR is critical. Participants are also warned about the danger of bush fires on the success of FMNR and tree growing in general

Given the challenges associated with tree growing, ICRAF has introduced FMNR to the participants. FMNR is

a cheap and sustainable option that compliments traditional tree planting and growing.

The first session conducted between January - March 2021 involved 15 participants. Some of these are ICRAF Community Based Facilitators who support the restoration efforts in the refugee settlements of Rhinocamp (Arua District) and Imvepi (Terego district).

In addition to the practical sessions at the Learning Centre, ICRAF plants to acquire additional land for FMNR trials and tree management

demonstrations with the land owners.

It is also planned that the trained community members and farmers are to be linked with the FMNR network in West Nile for continuous engagement.



World Vision®

World Vision Uganda, and its partners such as Kukila, are unfolding the green growth revolution at community level by empowering farmers to adopt organic farming practices, including Farmer-Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), in combination with other improved soil and water conservation practices, to help reverse low productivity.

Alongside its FMNR program theory, World Vision is working to

Pursuing the green growth revolution - integrating FMNR

help farmers improve production and yield, enhancing bee keeping for honey and money, promoting energy cookstoves, raise environmental awareness through radio programming, encouraging farmers to certify their products and most importantly adopt Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration, to survive climate change and its related impacts.

Between 2018 - 2020, World Vision and its Partners concentrated its efforts in Tororo and Busia Districts, where, on the FMNR front, 4,173

farmers were recruited. Farmers realised that with almost all trees now cleared because of farming and charcoal burning, climate change impacts are rampant. The once highly productive land had lost fertility, became bare and characterised by gullies that washed away soils. Tree planting was tried but with limited success because of termites and harsh weather.

The answer was FMNR, that allowed coppices to grow vigorously and would continuously produce wood, poles required for cooking

and construction, food and fodder for humans and animals, let alone ameliorating the environment and climate.

With FMNR, the harvests are becoming a bit more, the effects of climate change are getting reversed, incomes are starting to increase, ecosystems are becoming more resilient, community livelihoods are improved and there is delightful fresh aired environment around households. The FMNR converts are committed to making a better tomorrow through the restoration strengths of FMNR approaches.

Integrating FMNR in development epicenters

The Hunger Project.

The Hunger Project in Uganda works through its Epicenter Strategy. Here, a cluster of villages within a 10km radius is mobilised to create an "epicenter." The epicenter is where community-led development emanates to the surrounding areas.

Through this fully integrated development strategy, community members establish and manage their own programs to address food security, nutrition, health, education, micro-finance, water and sanitation.

Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration is an integral component of the development process at each of the Epicenters.

Considering that tree growing through seedling distribution is expensive, farmers in the epicenters are encouraged to adopt FMNR. Currently there are 7 epicenters in Oruka, Wakiso, Namayumba, Kiringente, Kenshunga, Iganga, and Bulumagi.

At the epicenters, farmers are exposed to trainings in farming technologies, and yield improving technologies including FMNR. The year 2020/2021 has seen farmers suffer with climate change, COVID-19 impacts and FMNR will be handy in finding lasting remedies to the associated challenges.

Privileged to host the FMNR Network - *alluta continua*

Tree Talk Plus

"Empowering Communities"

It is a couple of years since Tree Talk Plus was selected to act as the Secretariat and host of the FMNR network. AND, the responsibility turns out to be an interesting one: organising Steering Committee meetings and following up on proposed action, fundraising (to support the role of the FMNR Secretariat), knowledge management and documentation, capacity building for network members, improving feasibility of the network, let alone engaging the public on key advocacy and lobbying issues.

With support of the FMNR fraternity, it is becoming an enjoyable task as Tree Talk Plus now becomes a centre for consultation on FMNR

activities in the country. You will need to know that we were invited by PELUM Association to conduct FMNR training for its members and we supported ICRAF/IUCN on production of a policy brief on Trees on Farm among others.

A consortium of network members (UNFFE, Tree Talk Plus, ICRAF among others) are pursuing inclusion of FMNR in forestry policies.

New members are joining the network. The Ecological Christian Organisation became a member of the network and now pursuing FMNR trial plots in refugee settlements in West Nile (together with Malteser International and Caritas West Nile).

A bright future awaits the Network.

Testimonies of Success

Taking pride in FMNR and taking more action

In 2019 the Participatory Ecological Land Use Management (PELUM-Uganda) trained 13 of her Member Organisations (MOs) that work with small holder farmers. FMNR formed the core of the training. PELUM Uganda recognizes the role of FMNR in building resilient and productive agricultural systems. As such, it plays a big role in attaining food security while ensuring environmental and climate amelioration.

PELUM engaged Tree Talk Plus to train member organisations and farmers in order to enhance systemic and systematic adoption of FMNR. Tree Talk Plus engaged thirteen (13) member organisations (providing information and know-how on the FMNR model). These organisations in turn promoted the model amongst their affiliate smallholder farmers. Consequently FMNR sites were established. The farmers received technical backstopping provided by Tree Talk Plus in order to ensure successful uptake at community level.

The impact is outstanding with over 15 hectares (37 acres) of FMNR sites established by 20 small holder farmers. In these sites, there are over 40 different regenerating indigenous trees species. The participating member organisations are VEDCO in Alebtong, Mpigi District Farmers Association in Mpigi, Katakwi Conserve Uganda in Katakwi, Youth Association for Rural Development –YARD in Buikwe.

To compliment the model, farmers are encouraged to plant fruit trees, as well as beekeeping, for household nutrition and incomes from the various revenue streams.

According to Mr. Erick Kizito, Program Officer at PELUM, 'the sites are thriving, more acreage is covered by new member organisations and affiliate farmer, some have been enriched with indigenous species and supported with bee-hives'. According to Mr. Charles Opio, one of the affiliate farmers visited in March 2021, 'I still maintain the 1.5 acres under FMNR since 2019, there are

14 different indigenous species most which provide herbs to community members. Mr Opio has enriched the site with fruit trees, now collects firewood and expects to sell construction poles in the years to come. He plans to introduce compatible food crops such as yams and beans alongside ecological enterprises.



Networking for a greener Africa.



Mr. Charles Opio/s FMNR Plot

FMNR in Pictures

Inspiring others



A farmer in Lira-Palwo, Pader District, leaves trees standing in his garden and has identified stamps for which he will manage coppices once they sprout - Photo by Ojok Martin, Pader District



Training on pruning for farmers at community in Pader District

Send us a picture of your trees. If it is good, we will publish it.

Email: info@treetalkplus.org or piouswamala@gmail.com

- Mayuge District Farmers' association
- Masaka District Farmers' Association
- Gomba District Farmers' Association
- Wakiso District Farmers' Association
- Bugiri District Farmers' Association
- Nakasongola, District local Government
- Kibaale District local Government.



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