

Tree Talk Plus

Branching out to empower communities

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Vi Agroforestry



FMNR
Greening Uganda

"Scaling up the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration Model in Uganda"

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IGA Income Generating Activities

In Uganda, beekeeping has been a part of agriculture for generations; using traditional basket or hollowed-log hives.

Today, farmers are gaining access to and learning to build and manage Kenya Top Bar (KTB) hives.

KTB hives have the advantage that farmers can harvest honey and other bee products from them without destroying the hives or severely disturbing the bee colonies, unlike some older methods.

It is our sincere hope that FMNR Network members integrate apiary, using KTB, and align to our income generating goals, with added benefit of supporting the health of the whole ecosystem.

It has taken a few months of steady effort on the part of our participating farmers, for our apiary to begin to thrive. In Bugiri, Sembabule and Terego districts, we are now rearing bees and planning to expand our beehives.

Among other income generating activities that we are targeting are goat rearing, keeping cows, growing of hibiscus flowers and any other activities from which income can be generated. Of course this goes with training of farmers, so they know what needs to be done, in order to generate the required revenue.

It also calls for extension services delivery from the part of government, to keep the farmers informed of the new and better approaches.

Bee-keeping investments: embrace it in FMNR sites.



Ms. Ayikoru Matida, shows off a hollowed-log hive in Terego district

Beekeeping is a comparatively low investment activity which requires only beehives, protective clothing and a few simple tools. It is also a truly sustainable agricultural activity, worthy investing in.

Within FMNR plots, there are honeybees, which is a natural resource. You do not need to

own land, and there are no daily routine of feeding, watering and medicating. The products include honey, and other hive products which can be exchanged for money.

"It is relatively cheap, does not involve mass feeding of bees, and there is little bee management all year round", says

Ayikoru Matilda, wife to Paul Abia, a prominent bee keeper.

"All the necessary inputs required for beekeeping are available locally. Some may be wasted if bees are not kept, e.g. pollen and nectar from flowering plants", Ayikoru Matilda adds.

FMNR farmers, including CBOs, churches, women's groups, youth associations and cooperative societies can initiate it. Beekeeping is self-reliant, requires little equipment and tools, and inputs.

In FMNR sites, beekeeping will improve ecology. It helps plant reproduction by providing pollination services.

Bees do not overgraze as other animals do and produce honey, beeswax and propolis that you can sell locally or abroad. These products can be produced in semi-arid areas like refuge settlements that are unsuitable for any other agricultural activity.

Embrace it in your FMNR site.

Boundary planting; a potential for investments in FMNR sites

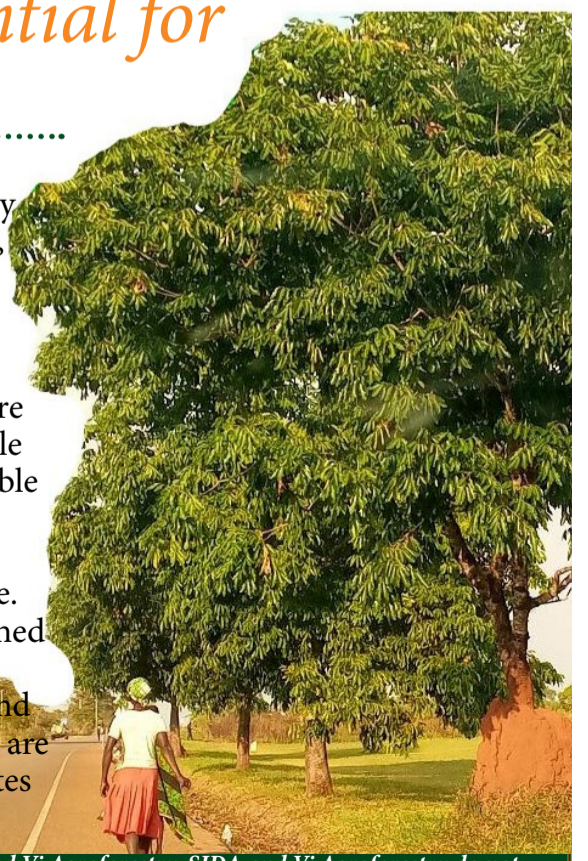
Boundary planting, or living fences or barrier planting, is the practice of planting trees along all types of boundaries. Pictured here is the boundary of Koch Ongako Primary School.

In addition to improvement of biodiversity, the boundary is used to demarcate property. But, it can also be used to demarcate agricultural fields, pastures, roads or any other place where fences might be located.

It is advisable that FMNR practitioners plant highly merchantable trees along the boundary to enhance the value

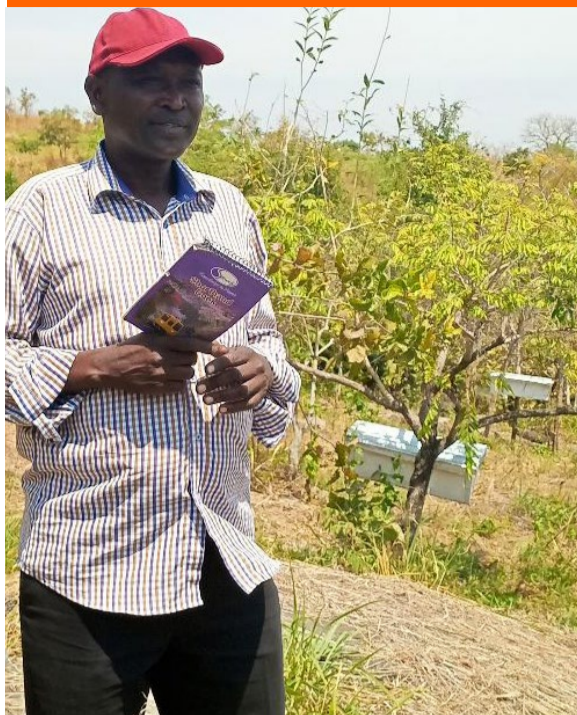
of their land resource. It is important to plant boundary trees around your bee hives, too.

Boundary planting can be a community-based reforestation initiative where group undertakes small-scale planting of trees. They are able to restore ecosystems, improve livelihoods and tackle climate change. They save critical watershed in the environment. Where there has been charcoaling and agriculture expansion, trees are planted alongside FMNR sites to enhance growth.



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Bee-keeping in Imvepi refuge settlement



Mr. Robert Bayo with Opira Apyeri FMNR group KTB hives

In Terego district, one finds Opira Apyeri FMNR Group, which has 30 members, 13 are men and 17 are women. It is supported by World Vision.

Mr. Robert Bayo, is the

chairperson. He said the group started as a demo site mainly to train farmers on FMNR practices and activities. In addition to FMNR activities, the group does other activities like small savings, community learning center,

community nursery and income generating activities like bee keeping.

Speaking about bee keeping, for which they have over 30 bee hives, Mr. Bayo says they are faced with challenges. These challenges include too much heat resulting from sunshine which affects the colonization of the bees, black ants which cause the bees to migrate, there is merely enough tools to use such as harvesting suits, gum boots and inadequate finances for sustaining the group.

However, the group has opportunities for training FMNR practitioner in Terego district since they have facilities like a fenced FMNR plot that can be used for training. They can now fund raise and encourage other groups to join. Since many farmers in the areas have vast lands, there is an opportunity for expansion so that FMNR covers a larger area. They



also stand a chance to charge fees from farmers who visit the site for learning purposes. Above all, they want to become a model FMNR in the region.

Bayo says, more farmers are targeted to become members once they start realizing the benefits of FMNR. The community would like to expand its knowledge and documentation of medicinal herbaceous plants and trees, and grow them in the nursery.

He seeks support from the FMNR Network through training on income generating initiatives, provision of tools especially the protective gear while handling bees, provision of seedlings especially the fruit trees and exchange visits for improved knowledge on FMNR practices.

ECO plans to green West Nile using FMNR



Ronald Anguonzi, pictured right, is the regional coordinator of the Ecological Christian Organization. ECO is implementing a biodiversity program in the refugee settlements in West Nile, particularly Bidi Bidi, Rhino Camp and Imvepi.

He says, "ECO joined up with other development partners to

redeem environment and natural resources management in the region".

"We have joined the Committee of Environment in the refugee camps that takes decisions and reports on activities".

"We intend to report on FMNR activities, particularly the group that is supported by World Vision".

"Where as the activities are not new, FMNR is not appreciated yet it is the only practical method

of tree growing especially where tree seedlings have been failing because of the scorching sun".

"Most interventions done in the refugee camps actually have no element of FMNR and yet it is the cheapest thing to do".

"Where as ECO is new in this arena, we will push for the implementation of the model".

"We intend to work in the districts of Terego and Yumbe, covering about 576 hectares of land and these will encompass areas around woodlands, wetlands,



forestry and restoration of natural resources". With such an opportunity, incorporating FMNR makes it handy to green the refugees landscape. Together, we will re-green the refugee landscapes, we will re-green West Nile.

Bee-keeping in Sembabule promising



This is a bee hive that was put up in Sembabule in November 2021, and to the surprise of many, it is already colonized.

This was found out during a monitoring and evaluation exercise for the FMNR activities that have so far been

rolled out.

The idea was to create a link between planned activities and on-ground accomplishments in addition to identifying challenges to FMNR activities. It was also to identify Income Generating Activities that can be replicated.

Sembabule District Farmers Association established a demonstration site that was supported by the FMNR network which also consists of an apiary site. The farmer in Sembabule has

gone ahead to recruit 3 more new farmers into his group following the exchange visit and he is dedicating 10 more acres to the FMNR practice.

This Farmer, Mr. Kennedy, also plans to increase his apiary site to at least 25 sites from the current 4 by end of 2022.

This is the only way the woodlands can be maintained, other wise they will be attacked by charcoal burners and varnish.

FMNR network has new leadership

Mr. James Muhindo, Esq the National Coordinator, Civil Society Coalition on Oil and Gas (CSCO) presided over the election of the new steering committee members.

After making a presentation on how elections were to be conducted as guided by the Constitution of the Network, Mr. Muhindo guided that only fully paid up members were eligible to participate in the elections.

Since most of the members were new, and issues of payment channels had been cited as a huge challenge, Mr. Mununuzi Moses of Vi proposed suspension

of Clause 4 of the Constitution, which the members agreed to. Those elected were:

1. **Gerald Kato** - Chairman, from Hunger Project Uganda
2. **Prudence Ayebare** - Vice Chairperson, from Uganda National Farmers Federation.
3. **Mununuzi Moses** - Secretary, from Vi Agroforestry
4. **Leo Toorach** - Treasurer, from World Vision Uganda
5. **Geofrey Musitwa** - Member, from Bugiri District Farmers Association,
6. **Pope One** - Member, from Cradle Garden Centre,
7. **Gaster Kiyingi** - Secretariat, from Tree Talk Plus

Mr. Kato appreciated the Annual General Meeting for entrusting the committee with the mantle to lead the FMNR Network. He promised to prioritize fund raising to support the Secretariat mobilize resources for the Network.

Ms. Abalo Josephine, a Board Member of Tree Talk Plus adjourned the meeting, and thanked the Secretariat for organizing the meeting.

Moving on



We would like to thank Pius Wamala (pictured above) for 6 years of working with Tree Talk Plus, and 2 years of coordinating the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration Network. You will be rewarded abundantly

Remembering the Late Fred Mujulizi



The Late Fred Mujulizi, (pictured above) worked for Vi Agroforestry for over 25 years, when he passed in on the 6th August 2021.

Tree Talk Plus talked to him before his demise.

"Vi Agroforestry has been my only employer since I came out of school. I had a lot of trainings to do, especially on the techniques of agroforestry, including the introduction of Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration by Tony Rinaudo"

"We received quite a lot of materials, especially books, on agroforestry, soil improvement and farmer managed natural regeneration. We could get any information we needed," he said.

They would go to carry out extension and advisory work with farmers. "Farmers would tell you that life was better, production was better, when there was more interaction between trees, crops, and sometimes livestock," Mujulizi said.

It was then that he concluded that agroforestry was important. "It holds the key," Mujulizi said. "When you look at the environmental and economic benefits, you find that agroforestry has a lot of value.

FMNR has a lot more value. The issue is information sharing and it is vital with the communities who are the custodians of the environment."

The late Mujulizi was an FMNR advocate, a lover of trees. He served in different positions at Vi Agroforestry. In 1997, he worked as a Field Extension Worker. He became a Zone Coordinator in 1999, later a Sub county Extension Officer in 2006. He was a Zone Manager in 2008, a Seed Officer in 2012, an Agroforestry Officer in 2016, till his death.

Time to step up fund raising; says Assoc. Prof. Okia



Tree Talk Plus recently spoke to Associate Professor Clement Okia (Pictured Above) on the subject of raising resources to support FMNR activities and this is what he had to say.

"It has been practiced in the region for ages but not known as FMNR per se". It has been on people's farms and garden for years". However, "there has been depletion of the tree resources in West Nile due to the emergence of tobacco as a cash crop, that needs wood for

curing". "Survival of trees planted is low, barely 40% survival, requiring adoption of FMNR that regenerates trees from stumps, and most of the land is rocky and arid making tree growing rather impossible".

"There has been FMNR strengthening through World Vision that established demonstration plots, so that farmers can learn and adopt FMNR. There was a demonstration in Offaka that created a lot of awareness, there is a plot in Imvepi Zones 3, in Omogo and in Yumbe".

"Coupled with regeneration, FMNR practitioners can integrate income generation activities in their FMNR plots. It is becoming trendy and the adoption rate is on the increase".

"Many NGOs in West Nile like

WENDA, RICE West Nile, DCA, World Vision, ECO, Tree Talk Plus, need to step up fund raising of resources and mobilize communities to practice FMNR since planting trees is rather complicated".

FMNR will increase trees on farm, and can be used to regenerate trees under collaborative forest management minimally.

"FMNR should be seen as a social movement requiring leadership and champions, to push for adoption."

FMNR is necessary as a mechanism for retaining trees and trees diversity as opposed to mono crops.

"There is need for a strategic meeting, bringing together practitioners, leaders of environment organization to adapt and integrate FMNR as an approach, and solicit funds for the

cheapest mode of tree regeneration.

But Prof. Okia warns that, "Don't apply for everything, be selective"

"Build alliances and partnerships with Save the Children, Catholic Relief Services, Care International, WWF, Eco-Trust, World Vision".

"Look at landscapes such as the refuge landscape, the cattle corridor and target organizations interested such as CRS, WRI, Global Evergreen Alliance, AVSI Alliance among others".

"Make sure you engage on policy, noting that there is donor intelligence, scan the world of donors, who are the people investing in FMNR and work with partners".

"For FMNR Income Generating Activities, it is a fertile ground to explore value chains for shea butter, honey value chains, and other FMNR related businesses".

FMNR group harvests trees for charcoal



Mr. and Mrs. Luzze of Wasinda Village, Kanoni District, display charcoal kiln

True indeed. It sounds illegal, but this is for real. FMNR trees regrowth for charcoal production. Charcoal farming can be achieved though FMNR.

Mr. and Mrs. Luzze of Wasinda Village in Kanoni Town Council in Kanoni District have been working with Gomba District Farmers' Association since 2016. They have a 6 acre piece of land where they are practicing agroforestry alongside regeneration of trees. They also grow bananas and coffee. The family started regenerating trees in 2017 when GODFA introduced the model to them. According to Mr. Luzze their land was getting less productive. They were introduced

to several Sustainable Land Management practices, the biggest was agroforestry and that was beefed up by Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration. The family realized that trees on farm were low. The trees regenerated by FMNR also proved to grow much faster and providing fast benefits such as shade for the coffee, firewood for the home and much to the soil.

Mr. Luzze says that in two years of FMNR their coffee yields had gone up and the banana plants which were struggling were starting to increase in yield. This he attributed to continuous support from extension workers who kept improving the way they farmed, but he also ob-

serves that the trees made the farm to completely change by reducing soil erosion that he did not need to construct the soil and water conservation structures despite his plot farm being on a slope. These trees continue to support the household with various uses such as nutrition, fuel wood and poles for construction and farm equipment. In 4 years, the trees regenerated by FMNR had grown and were competing with the bananas and other crops, which made production from the bananas to drop. In October 2021, Mr. and Mrs. Luzze decided to thin the trees to sell them for firewood and to use the smaller ones to make charcoal. This brought in a combined 1.7 million shillings. Mrs. Luzze said. 'We made 20 bags of charcoal which we sold at Shs. 30,000 each giving us Shs, 600,000 and we also earned over 1 million from selling 5 trucks of firewood'. This income was not expected by the family and came as a big relief as they were preparing to take their children back to school when they announced their reopening in January. Mr. Luzze said 'money from crops comes seasonally and in small amounts, but the one from trees comes in big amounts'.

Stop!!!



Chris Mugasha, saved the trees from being cut, as many people today cut trees ruthlessly. He wrote on this platform to get the Avocado trees, *Persea americana*, saved from the power saw, but the tree had sustained a deeper cut, and might end up drying. He wrote:

"I almost fought with a neighbor who I found cutting this avocado tree on our boundary. It's his trees but my concern is environmental and the beauty this tree has been adding on our area. He has been selling avocados from the tree. But he went behind me and sold it at just Shs 20,000= . So I was home and heard a machine cutting! I rushed outside shouted at the machine man to stop cutting! He was hesitant but I got a panga and threatened him and finally he stopped!! Unfortunately machine had ate part of the tree but it's still standing. So pray for it so that it doesn't dry and later keep standing. I ended up refunding the buyer and the paying the machine person!!" **What do we do under such circumstances?**

FMNR taking root in Northern Uganda



Pope Onen (Pictured above) works with Cradle Garden Centre, an organization that serves more than 100 farmers, 55% men and 45% women.

The organization trains farmers on FMNR practices and income generating activities like ani-

mal rearing, bee keeping, inter-cropping and ranching. As such, he has held a couple of radio talk shows on FMNR.

The interest for adopting FMNR is high because there is degraded land available. However, it is challenged by limited resources to sustain training and awareness creation, over commercialization of trees which has led to deforestation in the area, sensitization is costly, some farmers are far to reach, roaming animals that spoil the tree stumps and wildfires that usually destroy the trees inclusive of their stumps.

Mr. Onen hopes to train more farmers on FMNR, mobilize funds and involve government initiatives.

Mr. John Lugai, pictured left, works with Jule Cultural Development Foundation in Pader District. John a traditional chief with over 15 acres of land but 6 acres under FMNR practices.

The foundation serves more than 100 households, 40% men and 60% women plus youth.

John joined hands with traditional chiefs in Pader to promote FMNR, Agriculture and conserving the environment.

The problem is charcoal burning in Pader which has hindered the growth and wide spread of FMNR. John believes with the wiping of charcoal out, FMNR has potential to regenerate trees. The challenge



is negative mind-set, lack of knowledge on FMNR, limited support from the local government and inadequate resources.

John pledges continued capacity building through training farmers, awareness raising through the cultural leaders, mapping charcoal producers.

Send us a story.
If it is good, we will publish it.
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