

FMNR Hub Newsletter: August 2017 Update

Background

Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) is a low-cost land restoration technique used to combat poverty and hunger amongst poor subsistence farmers by increasing food and timber production and resilience to climate extremes.



Impact of FMNR in Niger:

Top picture: a typical farmland setting in 1980 where trees were removed.

Bottom picture: Through implementation of FMNR, the same general area recorded 45 trees per hectare in 2017.

In practice, FMNR involves the systematic regrowth and management of trees and shrubs from felled tree stumps, sprouting root systems or seeds. It helps poor families and communities living on degraded farms and grazing lands to:

- Make the land productive again;
- Overcome food shortage and hunger through the production of diversified nutritional crops and timber products;
- Restore natural environments, improving community's resilience to drought, flood and other environmental shocks;

- Resolve conflict;
- Improve environmental biodiversity;
- Connect with markets for increased incomes and living standards;

Purpose

The Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR) Hub is aimed to lead and foster the development of FMNR globally through coordination, communication, collaboration, technical support, building scientific credibility, advocacy and project fundraising. The activities include:

- Initiate projects in new regions through scoping, training workshops and conferences.
- Maintain a website that acts as a communications hub and knowledge bank.
- Build and coordinate a global movement through a network of partners and collaborators.
- Advocate and raise funds for FMNR projects.
- Provide technical support to projects.
- Build scientific credibility through operational research and evaluation.

FMNR HUB

Its impact up to date

- FMNR practice has been spread and implemented in new countries, reaching to a total of 23, covering four regions of the globe;
- Technical capacity to develop and deliver FMNR projects has been built across the World Vision Partnership. Up-to-date 91 trainers have been



trained through the FMNR online Platform; in addition, 2750 people who participated in face to face workshops;

- Partnership is built: the Hub is a founding member of the Evergreen Agriculture and an active contributor in international policy initiatives;
- FMNR projects have attracted more than US\$37.5 million of investments;
- The FMNR Web site receives 40,000 users;
- FMNR technique is used as a fundamental approach globally such as Global Restoration Initiative and as a project model by partners such as World Agroforestry Centre;
- Over 177 Area programs within World Vision are implementing FMNR activities globally, restoring and regenerating land to provide food, shelter and medicine to poorest and most vulnerable communities.

“In my father’s time, there was a huge forest including fruit trees. We used to go to the mountain to collect fruit to eat and to sell. We also used to go and hunt wildlife and this was a benefit. When the trees were dense, downstream it was like a paradise. But it was lost, it was a crazy history. But because of FMNR – these things are coming back...many of them have come back and even the fruit trees are coming back. Now the forest is protected, the lost life is coming back and we are expecting things to go well.”

FMNR activities around the Globe

Australia

To continue on its mission of creating more FMNR trainers world-wide, the FMNR Hub started its third intake in July with 31 participants. Through its Online platform, the 12-week course is aimed at enhancing the knowledge and skills of FMNR practitioners around the world. This would bring the total number of FMNR trainers to 91 globally.

The course has proven very popular which has led us to discuss a more global platform that can reach to other NGOs, government departments and international organisations. This could help the spread of FMNR global movement through our partners and collaborators.

Afghanistan

Badghis a semi-arid province in the isolated hills of north-western Afghanistan. Agriculture is the main source of income for its 495,958 population (2015 Stats). The region faced severe drought during the 1990s and 2000s.



Once a leading region in pistachio production, it has lost 50% of pistachio woodland and trees during the conflicts of the past decades. As forest cover decreased, the land has become less

productive, threatening the livelihood of rural population.

To tackle this problem, the Afghan government and NGOs have teamed up in the past several years to turn Afghanistan green again by planting trees. A visit was taken to establish the feasibility of establishing FMNR. In addition to pistachio trees, two other possible species, *Prosopis cineraria* (a species of pea family) and *Ailanthus altissima* (Tree of Heaven), was identified that could play a role in revegetation of Badghis.



The region may never be able to support a dense forest, but it may recreate a woodland to provide food and fuel for the most disadvantaged and underprivileged. Consultation and training continues.

Ethiopia

Tigray is one of the driest regions in Ethiopia. In the past, but also today, the region has repeatedly been hit by catastrophic famines. Many fled abroad or to other regions in Ethiopia as they did not see a future for themselves and their families. This has changed when World Vision began implementing DryDev program in multiple areas in Tigray in 2014.

Three years later and the targeted sites have been transformed from dry soil and sand to green valleys with pastures, grain and vegetables and revegetated hills.



In Dimelo sub watershed, 132 farmers and their families are benefiting. They are no longer interested in migrating, but are now saying we “will not leave this valley again. We all do well here, so we can stay”.

Lesotho

Farmers—powerful extension officers

The population of Lesotho is predominantly rural with total reliance on subsistence farming as their main source of income. As deforestation and land degradation has made it totally unproductive in many parts of the country,



FMNR is used as a catalyst to regenerate these lands. In June, a group of FMNR champion farmers made a visit to Seapala community and helped their fellow farmers to establish FMNR and regenerate the land to its formal productivity.

They worked alongside each other pruning trees and digging holes to assist with the regeneration of indigenous trees. This group which meets once a month, focused their June activity on establishing nursery for fruit tree seedlings and beekeeping as a means of generating income during FMNR establishment phase. "Farmers learn best when they are trained by their fellow farmers", says a World Vision staff, who has been working with these communities since 2016.



"Ten years ago, my land was bare, except for the two large trees you see over there.



Following training given by World Vision, I began practicing FMNR and I've noticed that my crop yields have increased year by year and the soil has become more and more fertile. My millet yields have risen from 2-2.5 tonnes to over 6 tonnes on the same paddock. I invite all farmers to implement FMNR. More trees attract more rain. The FMNR fields retain moisture better than the fields with no trees."

Senegal

The peanut basin regions of Kaffrine and Fatick Regions has experienced significant climate related shocks affecting production and food security. In the past 10 years, farmers have adopted FMNR to combat these challenges. Now FMNR is spread over 65000 hectares with an average of 40 trees per hectare. The revegetated area has helped restore soil fertility, rehabilitate springs and water table, increase crop yields, provide firewood, fodder for livestock and increased incomes.

To build on these successes, a workshop was held in February in Kaffrine. The event brought together local partners and farmers, practitioners, livelihood specialists, NRM Advisors. After two days of study, consultation and planning, the workshop concluded with an FMNR field trip. The participants were encouraged to see and hear first-hand from Moustapha Touré about implementing FMNR on his farm:

Zambia

Katete district in the Eastern province of Zambia has also not been spared by massive deforestation. As a concern of Civic and Traditional authorities, FMNR is adopted to regenerate the land, increase food production and resilience to climate extremes.

In June, meetings were initiated with six community that included participation from village Chiefs, District Commissioner, farmers, Forestry officers, and community development officers. Satellite maps were used to show the extent of deforestation and land degradation in the district. This was followed by a rich discussion on alternative forms of production—such as small livestock husbandry, fruit farming and beekeeping— which opened the way to adopting FMNR in the district.

This was followed by a visit to Benson Zulu's field, who has been practicing FMNR since his training with World Vision.

Farmer Benson shared, “Before there were no trees, it was bare degraded land and temperatures were very high. After protection, the trees started growing fast, wild life started coming back, the temperature has gone down, and rainfall is getting better.”



The efforts in Katete pointed once again to importance of individual and community engagement. Without the active involvement and decision making of all stakeholders, particularly those who live closest to the land, FMNR is not likely to succeed. For instance, during the establishment phase of FMNR, women experience more hardship walking long distances to collect firewood. Including



them in the decision-making process will assist in finding alternatives. As such times were taken to answer questions about supply of firewood, pasture for livestock and improved crop production to ease concern and gain the full support of community and leadership in making the project work.

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FMNR in Media

FMNR attracts continual media attention in world’s major research and development organizations. See the latest article on the World Resources Institute Website: [Malawi Turns a Corner on Solving Its Deforestation Crisis](#)



Newspaper Article

Lydia Magazine, Germany

A Christian women's magazine that acts as a platform for women of all strata to learn from each other and advise on their challenges. They remotely interviewed Tony and Liz Rinadou on their experience and contribution to serve the world when they moved to Niger and the birth of FMNR as we know it today.

Sydney Morning Herald, Australia

Wildfires, desertification and mud slides are terrifying results of increasing deforestation is the title of an article published in a national newspaper. The article elaborated on two approaches for land regeneration. Calling FMNR as "back to-basics approach, that has reaped highly encouraging results." You can read the full article at

<<http://www.smh.com.au/good-weekend/can-swarms-of-seedbearing-drones-help-regrow-the-planets-forests-20170823-gy2ei5.html>>

Book

Tony Rinaudo travelled back to Niger in June to meet with an author who is writing a book on FMNR. The book is commissioned by an Austrian publishing company and will be printed in German and English. It is envisioned that this will lift the profile of FMNR globally.

United Nations Environment Magazine

The latest issue of UN Environment Programme's flagship magazine, **Our Planet - World Environment Day 2017** included an article on FMNR inception and progress.

Science Week

As part of Science week, the University of Melbourne in Australia, hosted a panel of experts to discuss solutions on feeding the world. Tony represented World Vision Australia on the panel.



Ongoing financial resources

The FMNR Hub continues to seek additional financial support to meet its future objectives.

A properly resourced FMNR Hub offers the flexibility to initiate and support the further development and spread of FMNR globally.

Your ongoing support is very much appreciated and is making a significant difference in the lives of many hundreds of thousands of children, farmers, communities in the restoration of natural environments.

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