

Chapter 7

Ensuring FMNR is inclusive

Summary: Ensuring FMNR is inclusive

- Everyone in the community has something of value to offer FMNR work. Including minority groups can contribute to the success of FMNR by eliminating problems before work begins, such as land use conflict or competition for tree resources.
- Often there are ways to resolve problems that benefit all stakeholders, but making FMNR inclusive requires intentional planning to allow for the active engagement of different groups with different needs.
- Particular efforts should be made to include groups such as:
 - people who do not own land
 - women
 - pastoralists
 - people living with disabilities
 - children and young people
- Managing trees isn't possible or suitable for everyone, possibly due to different abilities to access or manage land or trees, for example. There are many other roles available that still contribute towards FMNR, including:
 - providing insight and assistance at all levels of FMNR, such as monitoring and coordination roles;
 - developing enterprises such as beekeeping and the sale of firewood, fodder, medicine and fruit;
 - providing tourism or ecotourism services;
 - providing services such as pruning and harvesting of wood and non-timber forest products;
 - patrolling fields and reporting infringements, acting as fire wardens, etc, in return for payment or voluntarily;
 - communication and promotion of FMNR to others; and
 - advocacy for improved policies and government support.

Resources

- Manuals from Uganda and India for including children and youth in FMNR through school programs and environmental clubs:
 - [Children's Handbook: Exercises for Learners](#)
 - [Activity book for children](#)
 - [Handbook on Our Environment: A Guide for Teachers](#)

Involving everyone who uses or has access to the environment being regenerated by FMNR has a direct impact on the success of the work in two ways:

1. It is right that FMNR is available to everyone.
2. Including everyone is the way that FMNR works best.

A well-designed project will involve all stakeholders, from the most powerful to the most vulnerable, and ensure information on FMNR and its implications is made accessible to all. The workshops and training activities described in this manual intentionally include everyone who uses and has access to the land: women, men, youth, ethnic and religious groups and other minorities, as well as people from all livelihoods and stations in life.

Ensuring all groups are included and empowered to influence decisions, and make FMNR work fair and profitable for their needs, requires intentional planning on the part of anyone facilitating FMNR in a community.

Remember to:

- Involve all stakeholders in early consultations and in the establishment of community-owned procedures and bylaws. This includes women, men, youth, elders, crop farmers, pastoralists, non-timber forest product users, nomadic groups, ethnic groups, religious and social groups, minority groups, vulnerable people and people with disabilities.
- Give all stakeholders equal access to information.
- Ensure those entitled by the community have a share in and benefit from the management of trees on communal land.
- Recruit members from all stakeholder groups for activities and decision-making roles, such as training for FMNR champions.
- Respect and actively seek local and indigenous knowledge about farming systems and natural resource management, including any FMNR-like practices traditionally used to manage trees. (This can also increase the participation of elders in FMNR discussions.)
- Support all participants to gain access to land, benefit from home consumption or sale of FMNR products, and to share decision-making rights over the use and harvest of trees and other resources.

Different stakeholder groups may require different approaches of engagement to ensure they are given adequate opportunities to participate. This chapter provides some suggestions around approaches to engage different groups in FMNR projects, and the important roles these groups play in the success of FMNR.

People who do not own land

Community members who do not own or have secure access to land can still benefit from and support FMNR.

Where there is communal land, the landless should have at least the same participation and access rights as the rest of the community. There are examples from Tigray, Ethiopia, where community leaders have granted plots of communal land to female-headed households, landless youth and people living in poverty to manage, use and benefit from.

In projects without communal land, those without land can support FMNR in different ways, including:

- Providing insight and assistance at all levels of FMNR, such as monitoring and other support services.
- Developing enterprises such as beekeeping and selling firewood, fodder, medicine and fruits; or filling employment opportunities created through increased tourism or ecotourism.
- Selling services such as pruning and harvesting of wood and non-timber forest products, patrolling fields and reporting infringements, or acting as fire wardens.
- Utilising the availability of wild fruits and traditional medicines to contribute towards nutrition, health and income. While private property needs to be respected, community consultation may result in special allowances enabling the most vulnerable members of society to have agreed levels of access to certain products.

Women

In many communities around the world, women are the primary harvesters and users of firewood and many other tree products. They are also often the custodians of unique knowledge on plant uses for health, nutrition, religion and culture. Women are most frequently responsible for the majority of childcare, and for the health of family members – through preparing food and providing care during illness or injury. These roles make women key stakeholders in FMNR processes, and critical to the achievement of many of FMNR's outcomes for household resilience and health.

Women are often strong allies in the promotion of FMNR, due to their social networks within the community and potential for influence. Women often have skills in negotiating, advocating, solving problems, resolving conflict, planning and monitoring progress, which are valuable for working with groups of people to achieve a common goal. Because women are not always included in community initiatives or given priority access to resources and information, a well-designed FMNR project provides an opportunity to rectify these inequalities.

The physical practice of FMNR is completely accessible to women, who can manage trees, harvest and market wood, keep bees, gather wild fruits and other forest products, as well as pursuing other activities associated with FMNR. In some communities, cultural norms may suggest that women cannot adopt some of these roles, such as harvesting and marketing timber; however it is important to identify and challenge these ideas to allow for fair distribution of benefits where possible. For example, while some women may not be able or want to manage trees, they can still manage shrubs, which can provide an entry point for producing more valuable products such as timber and fodder.

Because women and children provide a disproportionate amount of household agricultural labour, FMNR can become a strategic liberating mechanism that improves their quality of life. While pruning and management of trees requires some labour, this is often offset by the time saved having firewood and fodder close to home. This potentially increases women's time for other activities such as caring for children and pursuing businesses. Increases in women's income and assets also translate into better quality of life for children, which can boost their health and help them develop, learn and succeed in life. FMNR provides particular value to vulnerable female-headed households, due to increased availability of domestic products and income opportunities close to home.

Ensuring women take an active role in FMNR activities may require some of these strategies if barriers exist:

- Ensure there is the participation of both women and men in groups, trainings and as FMNR champions.
- Consider the timing of meetings and trainings. Will women be able to attend or will other responsibilities, such as childcare or meal preparation, prevent this?
- Encourage and facilitate sensitivity to gender-based needs. For example, FMNR can greatly decrease the burden of firewood collection, which normally falls on women. If this does not happen automatically, programs need to be designed to assist men and women to cooperate.
- Arrange for a crèche or childcare to be provided at community meetings or trainings to allow women with children to fully participate.
- Recognise that multiple nights away, or long travel distances to meetings, trainings or site visits, may prevent some women with small children participating. If travel overnight cannot be avoided, consider allowing babies or carers to attend too!
- Provide opportunities for women to hold leadership positions in FMNR practitioner groups, or in other project and community organisations. A rotating chair, which changes each year, is a good way to provide opportunities for many people to build their skills and confidence in these roles.
- Ensure all monitoring and evaluation data collected is gender disaggregated.



Case study

How FMNR is uniting women in Kenya

“Another woman in our village said to me, ‘You have been blessed with many trees on your farm.’ ‘I have not been blessed,’ I said. ‘I take care of the trees that I have.’ So then the other woman returned home and her farm looks the same now too.”

Nancy is an FMNR champion and leader in her Taking Care of Home women’s group in Mogotio, Kenya.

For the past three years, Nancy’s group has worked with World Vision’s FMNR project in the area, although the women’s group was established earlier. It started the same as many have in Africa: as a ‘merry go round’ savings scheme, which allows women to eventually receive the benefit of a lump sum to invest in farming assets or pay school fees. From there, they moved into skills development, including poultry, mango farming and dairy farming. While they trained as a group, they operate independently.

From small beginnings, Nancy has become a leader in her community and the go-to farmer for implementing FMNR, new technology and piloting innovations.

“FMNR has taught us the knowledge of taking care of trees but now we have [also] gained from increased pasture and milk production. I am happy as a farmer, having been recognised. I am able to pay school fees for my children without panic.”

Nancy’s work has not gone unrecognised.

“Through FMNR, I have also been chosen as committee member in the Ngusero water project committee [and] to represent Baringo County women in development matters in my village. I did not ever think I could be chosen for such [a project]. I am proud of FMNR, as it has moulded me as community leader. FMNR has changed my life.”

FMNR has been so successful that Nancy is now selling excess grass that her cattle do not need.

“FMNR has improved the pastures. After clearing the bushes and the thorns, the landscape now looks very smart. The thorns used to harm the livestock so clearing the understory has improved animal health and even the cows are happy now!”

After the women’s husbands started seeing the benefits, they started to join and help with the pruning too. While the community is currently experiencing drought, FMNR has enabled women like Nancy to cope well.

“During this drought we are cutting the lengne [Acacia seyal] tree and feeding the bark to the livestock. Without these acacia trees, the livestock would be suffering.”



Figure 1 Nancy with her niece, who she also cares for. Kenya (2016). Photo: A. Crawford

Always looking for new opportunities, Nancy and her group are growing vegetables in a kitchen garden and are starting out with beekeeping, establishing 15 hives.

The women's group also now runs a table banking scheme to provide loans to its members. Women pay 10 percent interest on their loans, which they use as 'emergency funds' to help vulnerable individuals, providing a safety net for their community.

Members feel they are more respected in their community now too, as others have seen the results of their efforts.

"There is more time to speak and our views are heard," says Nancy. "We are allowed into the leadership of public meetings. We're challenging each other, too – for example, if one of us is producing less milk than the others, then we will work harder to encourage and support them."

Nancy and her group plan to continue to create awareness about FMNR and improve agricultural practices in the community. They're always looking for the next opportunity.

Pastoralists and livestock herders

In many communities, there is conflict between crop farmers and pastoralists. This is unfortunate, because by working together these two groups can realise much greater benefits than they can by working against each other. Since most FMNR work so far has taken place in areas where both farmers and herders use the land, collaboration between these two groups has been very important.

Many farmers have had the frustrating experience of losing some crops, or young trees, to livestock. It is all the more frustrating when the animal belongs to someone else! The benefits that livestock bring to farms and forests are often overlooked. In fact, fields visited by livestock can provide more than twice the crop yields of those left alone.

Livestock seek shade in hot weather and are attracted to trees bearing edible leaves and seedpods; in the process, they fertilise the soil with their dung and urine. Livestock are also valuable in areas where there are no remaining stumps or self-sown seeds. By breaking up hardened soil with their hooves, and providing tree seeds along with natural fertiliser in their dung, livestock can be important partners in regenerating barren areas. At the other end of the spectrum, livestock can provide 'grazing services' to clear firebreaks of vegetation, and keep regeneration areas free from weeds.

FMNR also brings gains to herders and their animals, because as the trees regenerate, the amount of grass, leaves and seedpods increases, so more fodder is available year after year. Water may also be more available after reforestation through the recharging of groundwater and rejuvenation of springs, wells and streams. Animals are also less stressed by heat and wind. All of these benefits can increase meat and milk production, lead to more successful birthing and survival rates, and increase herd health.

As it is in the mutual interest of both farmers and pastoralists to collaborate in reforestation efforts, time should be invested in breaking down animosity and in winning the trust of pastoralists and farmers so they can work together. This can be encouraged by:

- Including both pastoralists and farmers in early FMNR consultations and exchange visits to clearly demonstrate the net gain in fodder that will occur with the return of trees, the benefits of free fertiliser and of harmonious co-existence and collaboration.

- Adapting FMNR communications to suit the context of any nomadic stakeholders. For example, by using SMS and radio to announce meeting times and communicate information. (Here's an example of [how SMS is being used in Tanzania](#).)
- Ensuring FMNR agreements and bylaws do not exclude pastoralists from traditional grazing areas, except perhaps for a short period while trees are still small and easily damaged, and then only by mutual agreement.
- Encouraging pastoralists to manage stock in ways that do not destroy emerging trees, and to use trees sustainably rather than destroy them for one day's worth of fodder.
- Encouraging communities to establish mechanisms to ensure fodder is available, risks to trees are reduced, and animals are seen as an asset to the FMNR work, such as:
 - pruning trees in a way that livestock cannot easily break them;
 - creating temporary fencing to protect trees in the early stages of regeneration;
 - harvesting seedpods and leaf fodder for animals to eat;
 - establishing cut-and-carry agreements to make sure that grass is available to herds;
 - cutting grass for hay to use when green grass is not abundant; and
 - encouraging livestock to spend time on farmland during the off-season to contribute to soil fertility for the next set of crops.
- Considering whether to institute agreements to use herds for fertilising and breaking up ground, 'cutting' firebreaks and other tasks that herds accomplish more efficiently than people.



Pastoralist Managed Natural Regeneration

Much degraded grazing land is only ever visited by pastoralists, so they are best placed to make the changes needed to reverse that degradation. Managed natural regeneration of trees, in the hands of pastoralists, could transform large areas of barren landscape.

In 2015, World Vision **Tanzania** facilitated a workshop to promote the idea of Pastoralist Managed Natural Regeneration (PMNR), which mirrors FMNR while also encouraging pastoralists to adopt planned grazing practices. In collaboration with national park staff, cultural leaders and others working with pastoralists, 65 pastoralists were challenged to think about ways they could help solve degradation. This radical idea surprised and inspired the pastoralists, since they had long grown tired of being told they were a problem and cause of rangeland degradation.

Participants rapidly understood the value of managed natural regeneration of trees to not only restore rangelands, but increase fodder, tree products, infiltration and retention of rainfall in the soil, as well as building social capital and reducing conflict. After the workshop, work began to develop appropriate bylaws and agreements and collaborate more widely.

In **Swaziland**, the importance of 'herd boys' to the success of FMNR was recognised. Efforts were made to create herd boy associations and provide training to lift both the skills and status of these boys. Imagine the possibilities of not only enlisting herd boys as allies to protect FMNR regrowth, but empowering them to practise FMNR wherever they take their herds. Pastoralists can be with their livestock 12 hours or more a day, and practically all pastoralists across Africa are equipped with a machete. The number of trees that a single herder could prune in a single year while going about their normal business is quite staggering.

People living with disabilities

"I am a disabled farmer. I grow crops and keep animals, but harvest very little. I am fully involved in FMNR even though physically it is a challenge. My message to other disabled people is 'you should participate, no matter what, according to your ability.'"

– Philemon

Those with disabilities or debilitating illness may be concerned that they will be unable to practise FMNR, but there are roles for all members of the community when regenerating their land. Some disabilities will have no effect whatsoever on a person's ability to manage trees, so depending on a person's disability and capacities, they can participate in any aspect of FMNR.

It is important to ensure that certain community members like elders, people living with HIV and AIDS or with disabilities are not marginalised because their physical contributions are less; these community members are still able to contribute significantly to the overall process of FMNR.

For anyone whose health or disability status limits their ability to manage trees, dig, haul wood, etc, there are many other activities that are part of the FMNR movement that may be preferentially reserved for their participation, such as:

- marketing;
- record keeping;
- acting as a fire scout, or as a look-out for unauthorised activities;
- contributing to the creation of bylaws;
- observing and understanding the environment;
- negotiating, advocating, solving problems and resolving conflict; and
- planning and monitoring progress.

Those who have lived with illness or disability for any length of time will have valuable insights into how the environment can be managed in a way that reduces their disability and increases their ability to contribute. Many who live with disabilities are also very skilled in adapting, and can provide innovative solutions for challenges the community will face.

Plots of land may be managed by the community for the benefit of those whose disability status or other illness keeps them from physical labour, either as a free-will service or in exchange for other roles that the disability does not affect.

Children and youth

FMNR holds particular benefit for children, as restoring degraded land today will help to create not only a secure present, but a resource-filled future.

Children should not be worrying about the future. Include them in your FMNR programming to help build confidence in what lies ahead.

"If our parents kept destroying the environment at the rate that they were, when we grow up we would not be able to have children of our own, because we would not be able to feed them." – school boy, Senegal

For children, ongoing land degradation means more time collecting cooking fuel and fodder, longer periods herding livestock in search of fodder and water, increased incidence and impact of drought and heavy rain, crop failure, malnutrition, poverty, reduced education prospects, absent parents, increased conflict over scarce natural resources and, eventually, migration.



Figure 2 Philemon, Tanzania (2013).
Photo: T. Rinaudo



Figure 3 Community FMNR field day, Aileu district, Timor-Leste (2013). Photo: T. Rinaudo

However, with FMNR, firewood and other resources become more plentiful. Children can spend more time at play or studying, and are more likely to be allowed to attend school, rather than being used for their labour on the family farm.

Children benefit when FMNR increases their parents' and guardians' income, making more resources available for school fees and expenses. They can learn better when increased quality and quantity of cultivated and wild foods improve their nutrition.

Increased access to wild foods also reduces children's hunger and malnutrition in poor communities. The authors have seen regenerated trees filled with laughing children, eating their fill of wild fruits. In existing FMNR communities, instances of children creating their own income-generating projects, harvesting wild fruit from the regenerated forests and selling it at local markets have been noted.

Children can also contribute a great deal by being involved in FMNR activities. There are opportunities for children to:

- Become part of the processes of community engagement and advocacy for change. This provides children with critical skills for their futures, as well as the opportunity to improve the physical and policy environments which they inherit from their elders.
- Learn from being active participants in decision-making and community development, and by seeing the processes of inclusion, cooperation and community engagement that are inherent in FMNR.
- Help create environment clubs in schools, providing an opportunity for them to not only learn about the function and importance of the environment, but also how to manage it better. Children are also powerful advocates for these messages at home and elsewhere in the community.
- Help establish FMNR plots in schools, which provides children, school staff and their families with opportunities to see FMNR in practice, as well as its outcomes. Schools, which are often resource poor, are also able to benefit from products such as firewood and fodder, as well as an improved environment for play with less wind, more shade, cooler temperatures and less dust. (Note: it is also important to ensure that children who are not in school can also participate in FMNR training.)

Youth receive the same benefits from FMNR and can contribute in the same ways that younger children do, but there are additional ways for them to connect with FMNR through:

- Opportunities to begin to make an income and build savings.
- Opportunities to diversify livelihoods through the many businesses that become available with reforestation.
- Working within their community without having to seek work elsewhere – as FMNR restores the fertility and function of the land, both children and youth can have realistic hopes for productive futures.
- Productive activities that reduce the risk of youth getting into trouble, or losing hope about their ability to succeed in life.

Any project that involves children should also incorporate principles to protect children from injury or abuse. In FMNR projects this means:

- Supervising younger children carefully when they are using sharp tools or spending time in the fields.
- Ensuring any FMNR exposure visits for children are of limited duration and primarily for education, exposure and participation – not for carrying out extensive practical work such as tree pruning. (Although it may not always be possible, as in the case of child-headed households, projects should aim to ensure that while children are exposed to FMNR activities, they are not required to be part of the labour force, and are able to go to school.)
- Ensuring that activities involving children should not leave them alone with a single adult, but with a group of responsible adults including parents or guardians.



Special situations: youth- and child-headed households

If there are youth- or child-headed households in the community, it will be necessary to support these households with extra training to safely and successfully practise FMNR. If they do not have land, they should be supported either by being allowed to regenerate nearby communal land, or given a space on which they can practise FMNR. Communities may also set aside other roles, such as marketing FMNR products, to provide options for young heads of household.



Case study

FMNR in schools in Kenya and Ghana

World Vision promotes FMNR to land users, but also to children and youth. Why would children need to know about regenerating trees? So that the leaders of the next generation understand the links between caring for the environment and having enough food for the future!

Promoting FMNR in schools involves a range of creative approaches, including group discussions, poetry writing, essay competitions, dances and drama performances. Through these activities, children increase their understanding of trees, crops and the environment, and they return home to teach these lessons to their families.

In Kenya, FMNR has been taught in many schools for the last three years with some exciting results coming from the community. For Kibe, a primary school student, learning and implementing FMNR has had a whole range of benefits for his family.

“FMNR has brought many blessings in our home,” he says, emphasising the importance of readily available firewood. *“We have enough firewood at home that can take us [through] the whole term and I cannot therefore miss classes, as I do not have to go to look for firewood from the forest, which is five kilometres away.”*

“I no longer come home as early as 2pm to fetch firewood but stay in school until 4pm studying.”

Kibe’s family is also prospering through increased milk production.

“Our two dairy cows used to produce four litres of milk per day but since practising FMNR they now produce 10 litres per day. I now drink enough milk in the morning before going to school. I am happy because of this project.”

As head teacher of a primary school in Kenya, Dickson Changwony saw how FMNR offered new opportunities for his school and community.

“I learnt about FMNR through a sensitisation meeting of head teachers by World Vision. I had non-economical shrubs growing on the school compound and was planning to slash them to make the compound tidy. I once tried to plant exotic tree species in the school but none survived because of the harsh weather conditions in our locality. One teacher from our school was also trained by World Vision as the FMNR site three months into the project and the school management leased out the grass to farmers and we received 3,000 shillings from



Figure 4 Signs around Kenyan schools remind children of the importance of trees (2016). Photo: S. McKenzie

the site. We used the money to repair desks and buy revision papers for the pupils. Our school has become an FMNR learning site where farmers come and learn from it. We are proud as a school. FMNR is real.”

In Ghana, World Vision has facilitated 10 school clubs in the Garu-Tempene District and trained their members in FMNR to help scale up children’s interest in environmental issues. Children can be good agents of change; by introducing FMNR to them early, they can help share the concept beyond their communities. It is also good to catch them young with this initiative as they are the ones who will suffer the consequences most from the hazards of environmental degradation in future. As FMNR has been adopted in the area, land users have noted the benefits to their land and production. The schools have also been able to benefit, with children picking fruit from regenerated trees whenever they are hungry.



Figure 5 School environment club in Garu-Tempene District, Ghana, whose members have been trained in FMNR (2016). Photo: World Vision Ghana



Resources for teaching FMNR in schools

Many resources have been developed to support the establishment of environmental clubs at schools or for teaching FMNR in schools. You can find several of these manuals on the [FMNR Hub website](#), which may be able to be adapted for your project.

[The International Tree Foundation](#) have also published a teaching resource aiming to inspire children about the vital importance of trees locally as well as globally.