
AGROFORESTRY AND AGROECOLOGY IN RAS II

Host Syngenta Foundation for Sustainable Agriculture
Rosentalstrasse 67
Basel

Meeting mode: Hybrid

Date & time: 30th November 2022, 9-12 am

Facilitation: David Bexte, HELVETAS; David Streiff, HELVETAS;

Participants SFRAS members

Recipients SFRAS members, A&FS Shareweb

Minutes written by: David Bexte, Helvetas

Agenda

Time	Input
9:00-9:05	Welcoming & brief introduction SFRAS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Technical introduction• SFRAS introduction
9:05-9:20	Applying the Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration Approach in Tanzania, presented by David Schwitter (World Vision Switzerland)
9:20-9:30	Applying Agroforestry – the forest gardens in TZ, presented by Annet Witteveen (HELVETAS Tanzania)
9:30-9:40	Q&A
9:40-9:45	Introduction group work: Push-Pull-Policy for alternative agricultural practices
9:45-10:25	Group work
10:25-10:45	Debrief & discussion
10:45-11:00	Break
11:00-11:15	Nutrition-sensitive extension - Reflections from the GRFAS annual meeting, presented by Ingrid Oliveira (GFRAS)
11:15-11:25	News from members
11:25-11:40	Food Systems in practice – the Nutrition in City Ecosystems (NICE) Project, presented by Marnie Pannatier (Syngenta Foundation)
11:40-11:55	Q&A
11:55-12:00	Closing & Outlook <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Feedback form

Participants

S/N	Name	Organization	Email
1	Balmer, Andreas	Syngenta Foundation	andrea.balmer@syngenta.com
2	Bexte, David	HELNETAS	david.bexte@helvetas.org
3	Campbell, Bruce	SDC	bruce.campbell@eda.admin.ch
4	Castle, Paul	Syngenta Foundation	paul.castle@syngenta.com
5	Cavin, Valérie	Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation	valerie.cavin@helvetas.org
6	Escobar-Bravo, Rocio	Syngenta Foundation	rocio.escobar@syngenta.com
7	Fry, Patricia	HAFL	patricia.fry@bfh.ch
8	Fürst, Sandra	SKAT	sandra.fuerst@skat.ch
9	Jaisli, Isabel	ZHAW	jais@zhaw.ch
10	Jenner, Wade	CABI	w.jenner@cabi.org
11	Jung, Joachim	Vivamos Mejor	jung@vivamosmejor.ch
12	Kaufmann, Manfred	SDC	manfred.kaufmann@eda.admin.ch
13	Kohler, Fabian	Biovision Foundation	f.kohler@biovision.ch
14	Larsen, Carl	Global Forum Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS)	carl.larsen@g-fras.org
15	Mader, Sarah	Swissaid	s.mader@swissaid.ch
16	Oliveira Silva Keller, Ingrid	Global Forum Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS)	ingrid.oliveira@g-fras.org
17	Pannatier, Marnie	Syngenta Foundation	marnie.pannatier@syngenta.com
18	Reshoeft, Malte	HEKS	malte.reshoeft@heks.ch
19	Schwitter, David	World Vision Schweiz and Liechtenstein	david.schwitter@worldvision.ch
20	Slaats, Joe	Global Forum Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS)	joep.slaats@agridea.ch
21	Streiff, David	HELNETAS	david.streiff@helvetas.org
22	Suter, Christa	Fastenaktion	suter@fastenaktion.ch
23	Witteveen, Annette	HELNETAS Tanzania	Annette.witteveen@helvetas.org

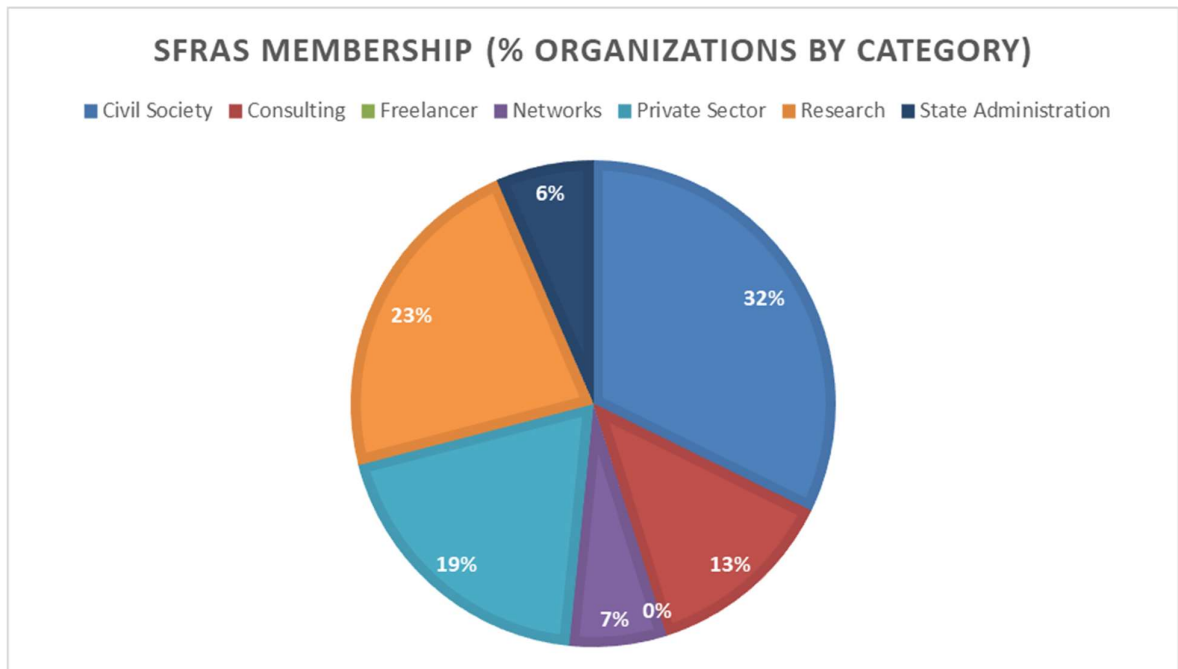
Thematic session

All presentations are available [here](#).

Introduction to SFRAS (by David Bexte, Helvetas)

- Welcoming all participants;
- David Bexte informed everyone that there are currently 31 organizations and 72 individuals registered as members (see also Annex 1 detailed membership list).

- If placed under certain categories (civil society – consulting – freelancer – networks – private sector – research – state administration) the picture looks as such:



- Short reminder: In case you should not be anymore the SFRAS focal point in your organization/leave the organization please briefly inform David Bexte.

Presentation 1: Applying Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), (by David Schwitter, World Vision Switzerland and Lichtenstein)

David Schwitter (DS) shared his reflection from a project visit to Tanzania August-September 2022. He visited the FMNR-Project in central Tanzania (Kongwa district). The objective was to support the project in strengthening capacity among local stakeholders on FMNR and agroecology in general. David explained that FMNR has to be understood as a re-greening agroforestry method. It aims to reintegrate trees back into the production system and is making use of existing living tree stumps in the field. The tree shrubs will become complete trees again by applying pruning techniques. FMNR therefore is an alternative to slash and burn and does not require replanting.

VOM PFLÄNZCHEN ZUM BAUM: SO FUNKTIONIERT FMNR

- 1 Der Bauer nutzt vorhandene, verwurzelte Pflanzen.
- 2 Bäume und Sträucher beschneidet er so, dass sich die stärksten Zweige optimal entwickeln. Ausserdem schützt er sie vor Feuer und Weidevieh.
- 3 Zwischen den Bäumen lässt er genug Platz für Nutzpflanzen, z.B. Gemüse und Getreide. Die Vorteile: Die Baumkronen sind ideale Schattenspendler, die Wurzeln speichern das Wasser und die Blätter liefern wertvollen Dünger.
- 4 Mit der FMNR-Methode bewirtschaftete Flächen bringen bis zu 300% höhere Erträge.
- 5 Natur und Klima erholen sich, es gibt mehr Nahrung für Menschen und Tiere, das Familieneinkommen steigt und damit auch die Lebensqualität. Die Kinder sind gesünder und können in die Schule.

David highlighted how important changing perceptions for the success of FMNR is. Trees need to be seen as enriching and not as a competitor by every community member. Applying FMNR actually means to work with the whole community and to involve them actively, e.g. when selecting trees for pruning. David made also clear that FMNR is not only limited to pruning but also includes and is linked to other elements, such as income generating activities. Therefore, he presented efforts to promote improved cooking stoves with a chimney using mud as the main building material. Using less wood due to improved stoves also helps saving trees and preventing slashing trees for firewood. Some slides also covered the question of how schools can be included in prompting alternative agricultural techniques. Lastly David also spoke about his visit to the sustainable agriculture training centre in Morogoro. Interesting agroforestry methods like alley cropping are being tested there.

If you want to know more about FMNR the following video link is highly recommended [FMNR Video Resources \(fmrnhub.com.au\)](https://www.fmrnhub.com.au) – Video *Everything is connected* (at the bottom of the page). On the page you also find the FMNR Manual [FMNR Manual - Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration \(fmrnhub.com.au\)](https://www.fmrnhub.com.au).

It was decided that questions would be taken after the next presentation.

Presentation 2: Introducing Forest Gardens (by Annette Witteveen, HELKETAS Tanzania)

Annette Witteveen (AW) presented an effort of HELKETAS Tanzania promoting forest gardens in the arid region of Singida. The forest gardens are promoted under the Organic Cotton project. They are part of an attempt to strengthen a landscape approach. The key question is how to increase climate resilience and to improve livelihoods at the same time looking more holistically at production systems? Together with other methods such as FMNR forest gardens have been piloted.

Forest gardens are on private land and cover roughly 1 acre/farmer. Characteristics include planting trees for land protection and healthy soils and a living fence. The trees once grown will provide a variety of fruits and vegetables, wood, fodder and some/parts can be used for medical purposes. The tree nursery is done together as a community effort but the rest is than done privately.

More information on forest gardens was provided by a movie produced by HELKETAS Tanzania. For more information see also [A Safer Future With Forest Gardens | Helvetas](#)

Q&A:

- One participant asked how it can be assured that farmers are the carriers of change – also in the long-run as there are no immediate benefits. → DS responded that though there are no quick wins the benefits of a supporting and functions ecosystems allowing higher yields are a strong argument for farmers to carry on. Both highlighted how important it is to have the community on board. If there is positive community movement around alternative methods it is a strong driver for the individual.
- Selection of trees → The advice given to farmers is to make use of what is there and be aware of potential benefits of the different kind of trees – both monetary and non-monetary.
- Is there a need to improve coordination between different actors implementing similar projects in TZ on agroforestry? → In response AW responded that agroforestry is rather small in Tanzania and there more is focus on reforestation. DW outlined how WV is supporting FMNR champions which are sent to the agricultural training institute in Morogoro to strengthen capacities. World Vision is more than happy to exchange more with other stakeholders. Bruce Campbell (SDC) highlighted that there is the risk of having a very marginal benefit of more coordination in relation of time invested. In addition it was mentioned that SDC used to have thematic working groups including one on agroecology which might be reopened in the months to come.

- How can one ensure that efforts are ongoing and sustained after the end of the project? → DW outlined how important it is to challenge the community in order to become aware of the benefits of applying alternative agricultural practices/ of the costs of not doing it. For instance, by asking them how the ecosystems will look like if you continue what you are doing now there is a reflection on the consequences of what you are doing. This creates awareness and fuels a motivation. So benefits of applying alternative agricultural practices and the value of having trees are clear to them. Community committees and local government also need to drive it and to push for it. AW explained that in the area where the forest gardens are being implemented monocropping was promoted in the past and has affected the mindset of farmers. So the mindset change has to come also in the way people do farming. However if people go for organic farming with a premium this mindset does not automatically change. Therefore she pointed out it is important to ask how one can effectively promote a shift from monocropping to alternative agricultural practices? She mentioned that for this purpose it is helpful to work with bigger players, such as gineries, from the private sector, who can promote trees, e.g. for nitrogen fixture. This will contribute to enhanced sustainability.
- Fabian Kohler from Biovision highlighted an initiative by ICRAF and Biovision which at its center is a contribution analysis. The initiative is also asking how communities can be mobilized. Regreening Kenya by scaling asset-based community-driven development tools and processes (RK-ABCD) | Asset Based Community Development (cifor-icraf.org) He also mentioned the regreening initiative which is not in Tanzania but has FMNR at its heart.
- Bruce Campbell shared some observations from past projects in Northern Nigeria which were applying very similar methods in regards of improved cooking stoves. It was taken up very well by the community but for different reasons than expected. The fact that it saved money, that it improved safety in the kitchen and that women were not required anymore to stand for hours in a smoky room were the key reasons. Question to DS: What were your experiences concerning the mud ovens? → DS replied that it is very helpful in Tanzania that everyone has a cooking shed. The reasons why people liked it have been very similar in Tanzania.

Group work

5 working groups were formed and asked to respond to the following questions: How can we promote alternative agricultural practices more effectively and sustainably?

The groups were asked to use the PUSH – PULL – POLICY model¹:

- push strategies — building capacities to engage in markets – enabling stakeholders to apply agricultural practices (2 groups)
- pull strategies — expanding the diversity and quality of accessible economic opportunities – making gains from applying alternative agricultural practices (2 groups)
- Policy – supporting/strengthening an enabling environment in which those practices and the gains from it flourish (1 group)

Debrief

PUSH

Group 1	Groups
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical knowledge in itself is overrated – talk and discuss principles behind it 	Point of departure & guiding thought: it is essential for the farmers to understand and be empowered in the market.

¹ “A push/pull approach is a market-oriented, pathways-based approach to poverty reduction that seeks to strategically link, in design and practice, efforts to support transitions out of poverty for the extreme poor and market development initiatives.” LEO Framework for a Push Pull Approach to IMSD USAID

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance to acknowledge indigenous knowledge – more cultural anthropologists than technical engineers – find people who are able to observe, to listen and to find context specific-solutions • Leave the choice to the people – informed choice - not transport of knowledge packages 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More control of farmers in the market movements – strengthens ability to coordinate in production for their own benefit - Local service providers need to work with a social systems approach to be able to speak to people in a language they understand and in order for the local service providers to overcome older approaches - Crucial to invest resources in locally based organizations to strengthen ownership - Provide resources when requested but not on their behalf! - New knowledge and capacities need to be locally institutionalized!
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PULL

Group 3	Group 4
<p>What to Do</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating actual opportunities (longer term profit) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identifying markets ○ Logistics ○ Labelling (quality) ○ New products and services ○ Subsidies ○ Enhanced ecosystem services • Creating awareness and knowledge of opportunities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consumers ○ Traders ○ Producers ○ Government agencies / Regulation bodies <p>How to do it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequence of activities (develop a full vision of the process, even if parts of it go beyond the current project aims) • Multi-stakeholder engagement (covering multiple sectors and levels) for a shared vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ It is best to build that shared vision together, making sure partnerships are established early enough for joint planning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most potential seems to be in export market, as it depends largely on the ability to pay a premium price. • How can we convince consumers about the advantages of products being produced using alternative technologies? (What is included in the price you pay?)

POLICY

- Policies need to come from organizations which can make it workable in the 1st place.
- It has been tried at different levels.

- Policy-related stakeholders need to be involved from day one.
- Policies are important for the sustainability dimension of the effort.
- Policies need to be linked to the livelihood component of the project.
- You have to merge bottom-up and top-down with the proof of concept.

Plenum discussion: The key point discussed during the plenum discussion was the question if challenges in changing practices are most related to a lack of technical knowledge or rather due to weak policies, institutional capacities and cultural mindsets and practices. Is there too much of a focus on productivity in assessing agricultural technologies? It was argued that the techniques are well known but what is lacking is knowledge in how particular societies adopt technologies and what are specific inhibitors and enablers.

Nutrition-sensitive extension - Reflections from the GRFAS annual meeting (by Ingrid Oliveira, GFRAS)

Background: From 25-27 October the GFRAS annual meeting focussing on nutrition-sensitive extension took place in Chile. It included 4 keynote addresses, 4 thematic parallel sessions, 2 field trips and a poster session. The following topics were covered during the parallel sessions: Advocacy and Policy; Capacity Building; Nutrition-Sensitive Production Systems, and Youth and Gender.

Important insights/reflections/recommendations shared during the meeting included the following:

- Effectively supporting food systems means to go beyond basic nutritional needs and to focus on improved nutrition at the individual and household levels;
- Rural advisory services can contribute to nutrition if they are part of national strategies and policies and strengthened via multi-sectoral efforts;
- Capacity building is no one-size-fits-all approach but one needs to work on different capacities for each actor (producers & farmers, primary extension agents, extension organizations and systems);
- The capacity of extension organizations to influence public policies was highlighted as a key capacity to be strengthened;
- Strengthening GFRAS global, regional and country fora & platforms will be a focus in 2023 – countries who successfully influenced/changed their national policy will be selected and asked to their present their recipe for success;
- The existing systems are not attractive for young people – include more technology and circular thinking, less top-down approaches.
- Be aware how you can best leverage on political momentum and opportunities, e.g. the reform process in Chile, and what are good entry points into the political system.

To conclude the presentation all members were informed that the nutrition working group was reinvigorated in 2022. The goal for 2023 is to increase the impact of existing knowledge on the topics mentioned above for healthier and more balanced food systems.

The working group brings together interested actors across GFRAS network and interested partner organizations. If you would like to learn more about the working group and/or participate please contact Francisco Aguirre (RELASER): faguirre@relaser.org ; aguirre@agraria.cl .

News from members

It was decided that members could share points via email after the meeting which would then appear in them minutes.

SDC

- Food for thoughts will take place for the last time in 2022 featuring an update from the SUFOSEC Learning Journey on Agroecological Systems

GFRAS:

- **Global Programme for Small-scale Agroecology Producers and Sustainable Food Systems Transformation (GP-SAEP)** is an upcoming project funded by the EU and implemented by IFAD and GFRAS. It aims to contribute to food security, nutrition and incomes of small-scale producers by supporting them in the transformation towards agroecological food systems. The project will be implemented in 6 countries, spread over Africa and Latin America and Caribbean. The choice of countries is still to be made. The project is planned to start in the first quarter of 2023 and will run for 4 years. Important partners for GFRAS are Access Agriculture, YPARD and CIRAD.

CABI:

- Three Certificate of Advanced Studies in ICM (CAS-ICM) courses have now been established and are undergoing a pilot run in 2022-2023 (20 students per course). These courses are designed for working professionals as well as students. They are spread over approximately 9 months and require approximately 10 hours of study time per week.
 - CAS1-ICM: Sustainable Production Practices
 - CAS2-ICM: Aspects of Implementation
 - CAS3-ICM: Biological Control and Ecosystem Services

Food Systems in practice – the Nutrition in City Ecosystems (NICE) Project (by Marnie Pannatier/Rocio Escobar, Syngenta)

The SDC-funded NICE Project aims to improve health and nutrition and to reduce poverty for populations of city regions, especially women, youth & vulnerable groups in 6 cities in Rwanda, Bangladesh and Kenya. It is implemented by a consortium of 4 organisations (TPH, Sight & Life, Syngenta Foundation and ETH). Link: <https://nice.ethz.ch/>

The presentation was a 1st snapshot of the project as the full implementation is just about to start. Therefore, it focused on outlining the process of how the most appropriate value chains and the most effective interventions were selected and how this has been linked to agroecology. One of the goals of the project is to increase the knowledge about farming system and value chains through agroecological projects.

Selection the value chains:

- Inclusive process of value chain (VC) selection based on a list of selection criteria (one criteria being agroecological potential) → Conducting an in-depth VC analysis →

All potential interventions addressing key VC challenges were then evaluated against 4 set of criteria:

1. Alignment with agroecological FAO elements
- Impact on resilience scores from Farmer's survey (SHARP) (Adapting and applying the SHARP tool <https://www.fao.org/in-action/sharp/sharp-tool/en/> - adding a set of questions on agroecological practices)
2. Impact on nutrition (Quantity of Calories, Nutritional quality, Diet diversity)

3. Feasibility

In a 1st step the individual scores from criteria 1-3 would be summed up and the total score of each intervention would then be matched against criteria 4. The final outcome was then the elaboration of a list which was finally discussed with key stakeholders in participatory workshops.

In case you would like to know more about the process please contact the presenters.

Closing

The moderator thanked all participants for joining in person or online and thereby closed the meeting.

Annex 1 Detailed membership list

Row Labels	Count of Category
Civil society	18
Biovision	1
Caritas Switzerland	3
Fastenaktion	1
HEKS	2
HELNETAS	4
iDE	1
Swissaid	1
Swisscontact	3
Vivamos Mejor	1
Worldvision	1
Consulting	10
Acade	2
Agridea	3
CRC4change	1
Independent Consulting	3
SKAT	1
Network	3
GFRAS	2
IALB /EUFAS	1

Private Sector	13
BIO SUISSE	1
Jacobs Foundation	1
Max Havelaar	2
Potash Institute	1
Prime Agri	1
Syngenta Foundation	7
Research	19
Agridea	1
bfh	5
Cabi	2
ETH Zürich	1
FIBL	4
Uni Bern	4
ZHAW	2
State Administration	8
BLW	1
SDC	7
Freelancer	1
Grand Total	72