

STRATEGY: TOWARDS 2015

Innovative Solutions for Africa's Rural Livelihoods



“FARM-Africa’s goal is to reduce poverty by enabling marginal African farmers and herders to make sustainable improvements to their well-being through more effective management of their renewable natural resources.”

FARM-Africa

Africa is rich in resources and diverse in landscape, biodiversity and culture. It is also home to many of the world’s most impoverished people – the poorest of the poor. It is a continent facing a myriad of deep-rooted challenges.

FARM-Africa’s response is to reduce poverty through developing innovative approaches to natural resource management. Working in solidarity with those in most need – marginalised rural communities – FARM-Africa believes that, with even a little assistance, they can dramatically improve their own well-being.

Lessons from FARM-Africa's Experience

FARM-Africa ...

...Uses evidence from its projects to advocate change

Such as exploring new approaches to the delivery of basic veterinary services to farmers in remote areas of Kenya and securing acceptance of such by the Kenyan Government's Kenya Veterinary Board.

....Works with different ethnic groups to resolve conflict over shared natural resources

Such as bringing together the Borana, Arbore and Hamar pastoralist groups in southern Ethiopia to make agreements on the use and joint management of communal grazing areas.

....Implements projects in partnership with governments, other non-governmental organisations and communities

Such as supporting the process of Land Reform in South Africa, working directly with the South African Government and the communities of the Northern Cape Province.

....Builds the capacity of local organisations to manage the development of their communities

Such as supporting the Toggenburg Breeders' Association to manage the dairy goat breeding programme in Babati District, Tanzania.

.....Offers short- and long-term relief strategies when emergencies occur in remote areas where FARM-Africa is often the only NGO present

Such as helping the drought-threatened Afar people in Eastern Ethiopia to protect their livestock and rebuild their lives.

.....Promotes farmer-led research
Such as encouraging farmers to develop appropriate agricultural technologies through on-farm trials in the Southern Region of Ethiopia.

.....Disseminates good practice
Such as managing the Maendeleo Agricultural Technology Fund, which provides grants for the transfer of new agricultural technologies to farmers in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

A Changing World — The Context for FARM-Africa's Work

FARM-Africa's work is ever more relevant in a continent where rapid population growth coupled with acute poverty, extreme vulnerability to climate change and HIV/AIDS impact directly upon food security. Other issues such as limited access to markets and services, unequal access to the benefits offered by globalisation and the slow process of decentralisation throughout Africa leaves rural communities isolated, voiceless and consistently poor. Hope comes in the form of the information age, dramatically increasing access to useful interventions for African agriculture from far and wide. Biotechnology also has the potential to provide novel solutions to recurring problems (such as developing drought tolerant crops), but with the caveat that the development of such technology takes into full account the voices and priorities of smallholder farmers.

Shifts in the International Community — Contributing to the Global Debate

Over the last decade the international community has become increasingly concerned about African development, with international commitments and partnerships focusing on agriculture as a priority for increased investment and policy reform. Despite this, little progress has been made and development assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa has declined. Yet the growing recognition of smallholder agriculture as the driving force of development indicates that the tide may be turning.

FARM-Africa's Future Programme

FARM-Africa has established a five-year framework, presenting new ways of working, focusing on key countries and priority areas, and addressing specific processes of rural change and cross-cutting issues.

Programme Priorities

FARM-Africa has identified three priority areas for its work.

Pastoral Development

To improve the livelihoods of pastoral peoples and demonstrate the viability of a diversified pastoralist way of life in order to improve government and donor policy and practice.

Community Forest Management

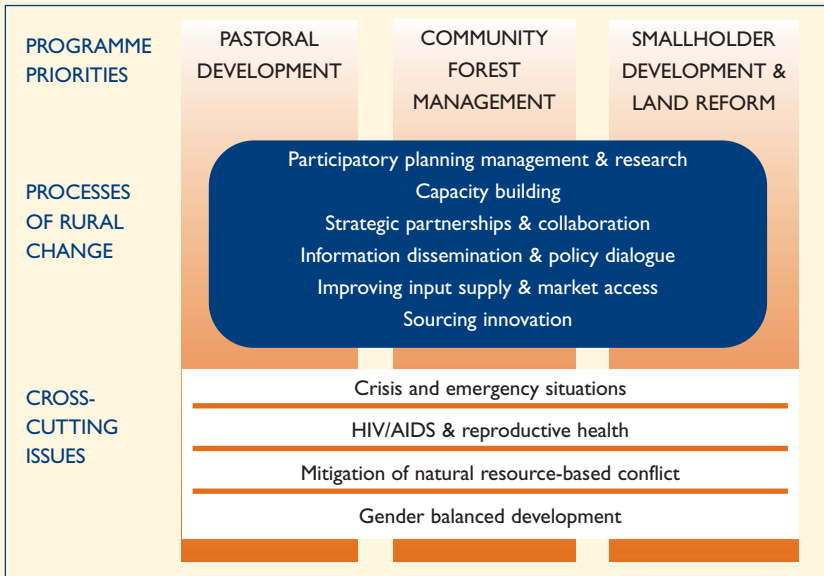
To enhance the livelihoods of forest-users and conserve forests through developing and implementing sustainable forest management plans, thereby demonstrating the effectiveness of the approach and advocating for its incorporation into forestry policy.

Smallholder Development and Land Reform

To improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers through the intensification of production, improved access to markets and better services (including credit) and to advocate for government and private sector support for marginalised and newly-emerging farmers.



Overview of FARM-Africa's Key Themes and Ways of Working



“Helping communities improve their livelihoods and management of natural resources”

“Increasing impact by wider dissemination of the lessons learned from grassroots programmes”

FARM-Africa will concentrate on a number of widely applicable processes that promote rural change because:

- *Participatory Planning, Management and Research* involves people in planning their own future – the basis for successful community development
- *Capacity Building* develops the skills and expertise of communities, local institutions and government
- *Strategic Partnerships and Collaboration* help form positive partnerships where skills can be shared and opportunities for advocacy increased
- *Information Dissemination & Policy Dialogue* enhance the impact of agricultural innovation and support policy change
- *Input Supply and Market Access* provide access to information and inputs for marginalised farmers to increase productivity
- *Sourcing Innovation* introduces innovative natural resource management techniques to promote productivity and increase living standards.

FARM-Africa also recognises the profound impact of various cross-cutting issues – such as HIV/AIDS, gender, the resolution of conflict based on natural resources and emergencies – on rural development and will incorporate them into our plans when appropriate.

FARM-Africa's Approach

To complement grassroots development programmes with the dissemination of successful rural processes for change, capacity building and policy influence.

FARM-Africa's **Grassroots Programmes** will continue to test innovative approaches to natural resource management to improve human welfare, building on the skills and knowledge of the people in Africa.

The **Outreach Programmes** will focus on communicating the results of the grassroots programmes to different audiences, primarily through the work of Natural Resource Groups – core teams of experts drawn from programmes – to:

- Offer short-term practical **Training**
- Provide **Technical Advice** to other organisations to disseminate FARM-Africa's experiences
- Play an active part in relevant national, regional and international **Networks**
- Use the latest **Communication Methods** (publications, websites, video and radio) to share FARM-Africa's experiences
- Communicate lessons from practical experience to **Influence Policy**.



“To maintain diversity in grassroots programmes in countries representing a range of physical, political and socio-economic environments of wider relevance to Eastern and Southern Africa”

Photo: Alexandra van Nieuwenhuyzen 2002



Consolidating our work in Ethiopia, Kenya, Tanzania and South Africa, FARM-Africa will start working in other countries throughout Eastern and Southern Africa by way of specialist outreach programmes such as the Dairy Goat and Animal Health Project in Mbale, Uganda.

Mobilising New Resources

To increase annual income to £8 million by 2008 with two thirds from stable voluntary sources

FARM-Africa plans to increase its income from voluntary supporters through greater investment in public fundraising. Access to unrestricted funding will enable FARM-Africa to plan strategically and strengthen its programmes in the long term. FARM-Africa aims to raise two thirds of this income from voluntary sources by 2008, achieving this through:

- Establishing strategic alliances with like-minded institutions not subject to the political constraints of governmental/multilateral donors
- Building up voluntary income from a wider base of individuals, trusts and the corporate sector.

An International Organisation

We continue our commitment to decentralisation throughout the organisation so policies and management decisions can be made as close as possible to programmes in Africa. To support this, various management and financial functions will be devolved from the International Office to the Country Offices. Continual development of partnerships with communities, NGOs, governments and the private sector in Africa and Europe will remain a key aspect of FARM-Africa's work.

Achieving the Vision

Too many people in sub-Saharan Africa experience excessive levels of poverty, many on the very edge of existence. We know that our experience, expertise and enthusiasm can make a huge difference and hold high our vision of a prosperous rural Africa. FARM-Africa believes that this *Strategy: Towards 2015* presents pathways that will bring this vision to reality – identifying and implementing innovative solutions for Africa's rural livelihoods.



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