

Support to existing projects



Apart from the support to projects by way of training courses, FMD also provides consultants for the execution of short- and long-term missions on project formulation and evaluation. Our consultants are specialised in social forestry, training methodologies, environment, and participatory technology development. Also relatively new issues like rain forest management do have our interest and we are able to execute studies on such matters.

For FMD as a development group the work is not restricted to forestry projects only. We also have experience in adding a woody biomass component to existing rural development projects. It is a big challenge to train non-foresters so that they are able to assist farmers in establishment and use of trees and shrubs.

FMD offers the following services:

Implementation of participatory research projects and participatory technology development.

Module development for long diploma courses on social forestry and environment.

A 6 weeks course on "Enhancing local initiatives: participatory tools for social forestry".

Development of 3 and 6 weeks training courses in developing countries.

Desk studies or literature reviews on specific subjects like indigenous knowledge, rain forest management, labelling of sustainably produced timber etc.

Execution of long- and short-term consultancies and missions on project formulation and evaluations.

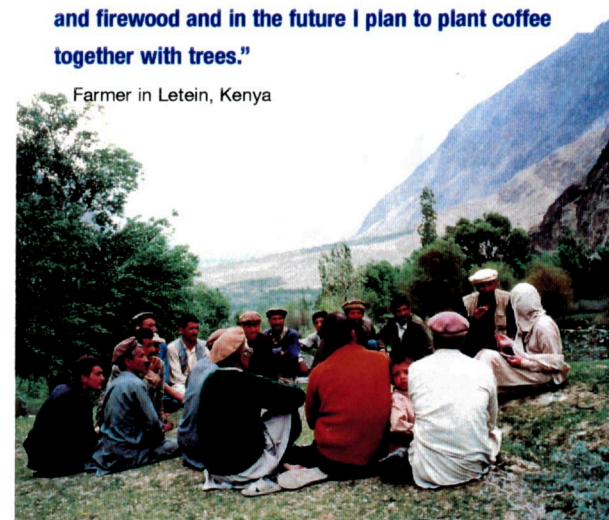


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"Disappearance of trees was caused by population increase and after people realized that environment is affected, some started planting trees... Some farmers started planting after seeing that their neighbours are succeeding and even nowadays they are collecting seeds and raise themselves... I planted trees around my farm and I obtained building poles, fencing poles, and firewood and in the future I plan to plant coffee together with trees."

Farmer in Letein, Kenya



Forestry Manpower Development Consultants B.V. (FMD) is a consultancy group with long-term experience in forestry for rural development, and training methodologies for rural development officers in general and foresters in particular. FMD is not simply a forestry group - it is a development group. The following issues are important for FMD:

existing, indigenous knowledge as a basis for possible intervention;

the development of participatory training methodologies;

the relation between people and trees or other natural resources;

support to existing projects.

The importance of local knowledge

When the forest disappears, and forest products like fuel-wood and fruits become scarce, people will start planting trees again. In many cases people will start to build new landscapes. It is important to use this regularly occurring phenomenon as a basis for intervention.

Training methodology

FMD's starting point is to take account of the social reality, working context and experience of the participants. The contradiction between what participants would like to develop and what they are actually doing is an essential input in the process of analyzing their experiences. Emphasis is put on the development of an open atmosphere of mutual respect and trust among the participants.

Another part of FMD's approach consists of training in the art of seeing. Essential in the art of seeing is the appreciation by foresters of the indigenous knowledge of farmers and the importance of this knowledge for intervention. Also new social forestry methods and techniques are taught to enhance the process of combining local knowledge and institutional knowledge. A step-by-step participatory model for social forestry is developed. Attention is paid to applying this model in reality. Participants develop a personal social forestry intervention plan for their own working situation.

The relation between people and trees

The prime focus in forestry for rural development, and in rural development in general, should be on

people and not on forests or another natural resource. Only by taking as a starting point for action the needs of people who live near or in the forest and the place of trees in their livelihood, forestry interventions can be effective. Also for good management of other natural resources, the interest should be focused on people instead of the specific resource. Participation is indispensable in all phases of a possible project intervention. Project staff should act as *facilitators* who support local communities, so that they themselves can identify their problems and constraints, diagnose causes, links and consequences of important problems, select possible solutions and execute necessary experiments to test these solutions on a small scale.

Already existing, but scattered knowledge and solutions invented by individual farmers can be shared by the whole community. By doing this, self-consciousness will be strengthened within the community. No doubt, knowledge and techniques from outside still can play a role, but only if farmers consider them to be useful for experimentation. A multidisciplinary approach is preferable and contacts with other organisations active in rural development are very important. Interlinking, networking and promotion of cooperation, both at the institutional and farmer level, are essential.