PARTICIPATORY RANGELAND MANAGEMENT

FARM AFRICA'S APPROACH
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Investing in smallholder farming is key to combating poverty in rural Africa. Prosperity depends on making agriculture work better, using natural resources well, creating strong markets for what farmers produce and facilitating access to finance to grow agri-businesses.

Almost half the world’s extreme poor live in sub-Saharan Africa. The vast majority work in agriculture in rural areas. But agricultural yields and profits are a fraction of their potential.

The region is full of opportunities for growth, including much fertile land and water, and millions of smallholder farmers who are eager for change.

Farm Africa works with smallholders to develop practical solutions that work locally and can be replicated elsewhere. Our approach papers set what we aim to deliver, and how, in support of our vision of a prosperous rural Africa.
Farm Africa’s approach papers set out what we aim to deliver, and how, in relation to:

**Agriculture**
- technology
- climate-smart agriculture
- land, water and environment

**Environment**
- forests
- rangelands
- landscapes

**Business**
- business development
- trade
- finance
Eastern Africa is covered by extensive areas of rangelands where rainfall is either insufficient or too erratic to support farming. Pastoralists and agro-pastoralists have developed sophisticated approaches to guaranteeing a resilient livelihood from livestock rearing or mixed livestock/crop farming.

These systems are under increasing pressure from a number of demographic and economic factors. Farm Africa’s approach paper on participatory rangelands management outlines how we assist local communities in responding to the new opportunities and threats they are facing.

The paper derives from Farm Africa’s longstanding experience in pasture and livestock development in Kenya and Ethiopia. More details about ways to enhance livestock production and health can be found in our approach paper on technology.
Rainfall in large parts of eastern Africa is too erratic for reliable crop production. In those areas, natural and/or managed landscapes covered by mixed grasses, shrubs and trees are occupied by pastoralists and agro-pastoralists who practise livestock and/or mixed livestock-crop farming for a living.

Most rangelands are managed as commons, where herds are moved regularly according to where fodder and water can be found. Local communities have evolved rangelands management institutions to regulate the use of the land in ways that benefit all and minimise rangelands degradation.
Africa’s rangelands are changing rapidly in response to demographic pressures, evolving economic needs and weakening indigenous institutions. In many places, the changes have triggered a “tragedy of the commons”, where the interests of individual herders are not balanced any more by the over-arching needs of sustaining the commons. In many places, the influx of other land users has caused conflict.

Perceptions of irreversible desertification caused by overgrazing have motivated policymakers to destock and introduce private cattle ranching. The assumptions about irreversible desertification, however, have in many places not been substantiated by facts, and the conversion of communal rangeland management systems into private cattle ranching have not brought about the desired benefits to local communities.
There are **new animal breeds** and new ways to make a living from rangelands, such as eco-tourism.

The growing density of water points worsens over-grazing and rangelands degradation. Remotely sensed information about the state of pastures and availability of water provides **new tools** for pastoralists to better manage their resources.

**Resilience** to climatic, social and economic shocks and trends is a major concern in eastern Africa’s rangelands. New financial products, weather-indexed livestock insurance and mobile banking will strengthen the ability of pastoralists to buffer themselves against some threats. Growing urbanisation provides new livelihood opportunities to pastoralists who wish to ‘step out’ of livestock production.
To ensure that the management of rangelands is economically, socially and environmentally sustainable for pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities.

**Enhanced rangeland productivity, sustainability and resilience**

**Strengthened community and inter-community arrangements for rangelands utilisation**

**Improved pastoralist and agro-pastoralist livelihoods**

**Agro-pastoralists**

**Pastoralist communities**

**Private sector**

**Government**

**Effective stakeholder cooperation for sustainable and resilient rangelands management**

**Rangeland based business enterprises developed**

**Innovative management techniques**

**Strengthened community institutions**

**Value chains developed**

**Business development capacity**

**Finance and livestock insurance**
We work with pastoralist and agro-pastoralist communities to develop collaborative rangelands management agreements that optimise resource use and link them more effectively with markets.
FARM AFRICA’S APPROACH

We develop a shared understanding of the natural, socio-economic and political-ecological complexities of rangelands and the drivers of rangeland degradation.

We build and strengthen the management capacity of rangeland institutions.

We elaborate rangeland resource use and monitoring agreements, including on livestock grazing density, grazing and cropping management, siting of water points and rangelands degradation.

We enhance the productivity and resilience of rangelands through improved herd selection and management, water points, seasonal range condition updates and alternative sources of livelihood.

We identify opportunities for market engagement, access to finance, business capacity of key actors in the value-chain (producers, traders, input providers, etc) and identify and address weaknesses in the value chains.
## METHODOLOGY

| Phase 1. Investigation and mobilisation | A(1). Identifying rangeland resources and stakeholders  
I. Define rangeland area and identify main resources  
II. Identify rangeland users, their stakes and affiliations (community and local government) |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                        | A(2). **Identify rangeland products and market conditions**  
I. Identify livestock and non-livestock products  
II. Assess the value chain(s) and market access potential |
|                                        | B(1). **Participatory rangeland resource assessment**  
I. Agree and set up community-based organisations  
II. Conduct participatory resource assessment and land use plan  
III. Agree key problems and opportunities |
|                                        | B(2). **Selection and establishment of enterprise structure**  
I. Identify essential links in the value chain(s)  
II. Agree key problems and opportunities  
III. Choose, agree and set up enterprise |
### METHODOLOGY

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<th>Phase 2. Planning and negotiations</th>
<th>A(1). Rangeland management plan preparation</th>
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<td>I. Agree the local land use plan</td>
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<td>II. Agree actions to optimise rangelands productivity, sustainability and resilience</td>
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<td>III. Assess organisational capacity and agree capacity building plan</td>
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<td>IV. Agree arrangements for rangelands monitoring</td>
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<th>A(2). Business planning</th>
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<td>I. Carry out detailed value chain analyses and agree value chain development plans</td>
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<td>II. Carry out a business capacity assessment and develop a business capacity development plan for the key actors in the value chain</td>
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<td>III. Consider finance needs of key actors in the value chain and agree actions to enhance access to finance</td>
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|                                    | B. Consolidating the rangeland management agreement: |
|                                    | I. Organise multi-stakeholder meetings to agree (multi-layer) institutional arrangements, main elements of the rangeland management, business plans and stakeholder roles and responsibilities |
|                                    | II. Set up or strengthen multi-stakeholder forums in line with local custom and government guidelines |
|                                    | III. Formalise agreements |
### METHODOLOGY

| Phase 3. Implementation | A(1). Rangeland management capacity building  
I. Improve management capacity of local community organisations  
II. Improve the management capacity of the multi-stakeholder rangeland management forum |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                          | A(2). Enterprise development capacity building  
I. Strengthen capacity in business management, trade and access to finance |
|                          | B. Testing and innovation  
I. Develop and test new approaches to rangeland management  
II. Develop and test innovative financial products and enterprise development approaches |
## METHODOLOGY

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<th>Phase 4. Learning and adapting</th>
<th>A. Agree indicators of successful adoption and progress review process</th>
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<td>B. Collect and analyse data</td>
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<td>C. Collate feedback to and from local community and adjust technologies as required</td>
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<td>D. Consolidate learning and share with public and private sector</td>
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HOW TO USE FARM AFRICA’S APPROACH PAPERS

What the approach papers are for:

- Provide clarity to the communities we work with and those who support us about what we do, and how
- Build coherence across our operations
- Ensure each project is based on our experiences, lessons learnt and consolidated knowledge

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The structure of our approach does not mirror the organisation of our individual interventions. The latter are constructed by combining elements from the approach papers – as illustrated in the diagram to the left.

While the approach papers give detailed guidance about how to do things, this will not always be followed to the letter in all projects. Local context and needs will continue to guide Farm Africa’s project design and implementation.

We continuously learn and adjust our approach. The approach papers are regularly updated to reflect the dynamic nature of our experience.