Food Systems & Agriculture Framework: Regenerative Farming Guide

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The *Regenerative Farming Guide* is a practical tool to help stakeholders—farmers, indigenous communities, youth, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and local governments—adopt regenerative farming practices under the *Food Systems & Agriculture Framework*. Designed to promote sustainable, equitable, and resilient food systems, this guide provides simple steps to implement techniques that improve soil health, boost biodiversity, and fight climate change. Aligned with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), it supports the framework's goal of achieving 30% regenerative farmland by 2035. This guide is part of the Start with the Seed Kit and complements the framework's Implementation Mechanisms.

Overview

Regenerative farming is a way of growing food that restores the environment, supports communities, and strengthens farms against challenges like drought or floods. This guide explains key practices, offers steps to start, and shares examples from different regions. It's designed for beginners and experienced farmers alike, with a focus on including Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and local wisdom.

Accessible explanation: This guide shows you how to farm in a way that helps the soil, plants, animals, and people, making your farm stronger and the planet healthier.

Alignment: Supports SDG 2 (Zero Hunger), SDG 13 (Climate Action), and SDG 15 (Life on Land).

What Is Regenerative Farming?

Regenerative farming grows food while improving the land, unlike traditional methods that may harm soil or rely heavily on chemicals. It focuses on:

- **Soil Health**: Building rich, fertile soil to grow better crops and store carbon.
- **Biodiversity**: Supporting plants, animals, and insects for a balanced ecosystem.
- **Water Management**: Saving water and preventing runoff to protect rivers and lakes.
- **Community Benefits**: Creating jobs, sharing knowledge, and respecting indigenous practices.

Benefits:

- Higher crop yields over time (e.g., 10–20% increase after 3 years).
- Lower costs by reducing fertilizers and pesticides (e.g., 30% savings).
- Climate action by storing carbon (e.g., 1–2 tonnes per hectare annually).
- Stronger farms that survive droughts or floods better.

Accessible explanation: Regenerative farming makes soil and nature healthier, saves money, fights climate change, and helps farms last longer.

Alignment: Supports Core Principles.

Key Practices

Purpose: Introduce simple regenerative farming techniques anyone can try.

1. **Cover Cropping**:
   - Plant crops like clover or beans between main crops to protect soil, add nutrients, and prevent erosion.
   - Example: Sow clover after harvesting maize to keep soil healthy.
2. **Crop Rotation**:
   - Change crops each season (e.g., maize, then beans, then sorghum) to improve soil and reduce pests.
   - Example: Rotate crops yearly to avoid soil exhaustion.
3. **No-Till or Low-Till Farming**:
   - Avoid plowing to keep soil structure intact, retain moisture, and store carbon.
   - Example: Use hand tools to plant seeds directly into undisturbed soil.
4. **Agroforestry**:
   - Grow trees with crops or livestock to provide shade, enrich soil, and protect against wind.
   - Example: Plant fruit trees among vegetable fields for shade and extra income.
5. **Composting**:
   - Turn food scraps, crop waste, or manure into natural fertilizer to feed soil.
   - Example: Build a compost pile with kitchen waste to use on your farm.
6. **Integrating TEK**:
   - Use indigenous practices, like traditional seed saving or intercropping, to enhance resilience.
   - Example: Learn from local elders to plant crops that thrive in your climate.

Accessible explanation: Try planting extra crops, switching crops each year, avoiding digging, adding trees, making compost, or using local traditional methods to make your farm better.

Alignment: Supports Integration of TEK.

Steps to Get Started

Purpose: Provide a clear path to begin regenerative farming.

1. **Assess Your Farm**:
   - Look at your land, water, and crops to see what regenerative practices fit best.
   - Use the Pilot Readiness Self-Assessment Tool to check readiness.
   - Time: [e.g., 1–2 hours].
2. **Learn Local Practices**:
   - Talk to indigenous farmers or elders about TEK, like drought-resistant crops.
   - Use the TEK Integration Template to plan respectfully.
   - Time: [e.g., 1–2 weeks].
3. **Choose One or Two Practices**:
   - Start small with practices like cover cropping or composting.
   - Example: Try cover cropping on [e.g., 1 hectare] for one season.

4. **Build a Team**:
   - Work with neighbors, youth, or local groups using the Stakeholder Engagement Charter Template.
   - Example: Form a group of 5 farmers to share tools and knowledge.
5. **Find Resources**:
   - Check costs and benefits with the Cost-Benefit Analysis Model to secure funding (e.g., local grants, NGOs).
   - Example: Apply for a $1,000 grant for seeds and compost materials.
6. **Track Progress**:
   - Measure results, like better soil or more crops, with the Monitoring & Evaluation Rubric Template.
   - Example: Count how much your yields increase after one season.
7. **Share Your Success**:
   - Tell others about your farm using the Advocacy Playbook to inspire more farmers.
   - Example: Post a photo of your healthy crops on social media with #FoodSystemsFuture.

Accessible explanation: Check your farm, learn local ways, try one or two new methods, team up, find money, measure results, and share your story.

Alignment: Supports Regional Customization.

Regional Examples

Purpose: Show how regenerative farming works in different places.

- **Sub-Saharan Africa (Kenya)**:
  - Practice: Cover cropping with legumes to improve soil in drought-prone areas.
  - Impact: Increased maize yields by 15% for 100 farmers in 2 years.
  - Tool: Used TEK Integration Template to learn local planting methods.
- **South Asia (India)**:
  - Practice: Agroforestry with mango trees and vegetables to protect against monsoons.
  - Impact: Provided shade and extra income for 50 families.
  - Tool: Used Cost-Benefit Analysis Model to justify investment.
- **Latin America (Peru)**:
  - Practice: No-till farming with TEK-based seed saving to preserve potato varieties.
  - Impact: Protected 200 native crops and improved soil health on 10 hectares.
  - Tool: Used Stakeholder Engagement Charter Template to involve indigenous communities.
- **Island Nations (Maldives)**:
  - Practice: Composting with fish waste to enrich sandy soils.
  - Impact: Grew vegetables for 20 households on small plots.
  - Tool: Used Monitoring & Evaluation Rubric Template to track food output.

Accessible explanation: See how farmers in places like Kenya or Peru use these methods to grow more food and help their land, using the kit's tools.

Alignment: Supports Regional Customization.

Resources and Tools

Purpose: Connect you to tools and support for regenerative farming.

- **Framework Tools**:
  - Pilot Readiness Self-Assessment Tool: Check if you're ready to start farming.
  - Stakeholder Engagement Charter Template: Team up with others fairly.
  - TEK Integration Template: Use indigenous knowledge respectfully.
  - Monitoring & Evaluation Rubric Template: Track your farm's progress.
  - Cost-Benefit Analysis Model: See if your farm plan makes financial sense.
  - Advocacy Playbook: Share your success to inspire others.
  - Policy Harmonization Toolkit: Push for rules that support regenerative farming.
- **Additional Resources**:
  - Visit [globalgovernanceframework.org] for videos, case studies, and community forums.
  - Email [globalgovernanceframeworks@gmail.com] for help or to share your story.
  - Connect with local NGOs or farmers' groups for training and seeds.

Find all tools at the Tools Library.

Accessible explanation: Use these guides to plan, work together, learn, check results, save money, share your story, and get support from others.

Alignment: Supports Tools Library.

Cross-Reference Note: This guide supports Implementation Mechanisms and aligns with Food Systems Framework Lite Guide. Explore the Index for navigation or access additional tools at the Tools Library.