

Module 2: How Can We Overcome Challenges and Barriers?

Learning Objective

In this module, we explore the common barriers and challenges affecting livelihoods, examining both internal and external factors, with a particular focus on the struggles encountered by women and youth.

We'll look at how different communities have responded to multiple challenges, drawing inspiration to foster action in our own territories. Additionally, you will identify and categorize key human and infrastructure assets in your territory that are essential for supporting livelihood development.

Case Study: Indigenous Zenú Turn To Ancestral Seeds, Agroecology To Climate-Proof Their Farming.

[From the article:](#)

The climate crisis has given new meaning to the traditional food system. “For us, recovering our ancestral system is an urgency right now,” says Daniela Miranda, 25, a resident and an agricultural engineering student. Her family is involved in an agroforestry project that will plant 18 hectares (44 acres) of land with native species to regenerate La Mojana’s soil.

The challenges they are facing:

- lack of land and water resources
- narcotrafficking
- the presence of armed groups
- extensive grazing

- contamination
- monoculture plantations
- flood and other climate impacts

Despite these challenges their community is developing important projects to protect their traditional food systems. Farmers and seed custodians are working with the Association of Organic Agriculture and Livestock Producers (ASPROAL) and their Communitarian Seed House (Casa Comunitaria de Semillas Criollas y Nativas). Today, 25 families are involved in sharing, storing and commercializing the seeds of 32 rare or almost-extinct varieties.

“Working together helps us to save, share more seeds, and sell at fair price [while] avoiding intermediaries and increasing families’ incomes...Last year, we sold 8 million seeds to organic restaurants in Bogotá and Medellín.” Remberto Gil (Indigenous Zenú farmer).

“Due to the climate crisis, there are **more floods** in La Mojana,” says Carlos Gonzalez, a biologist at the University of Córdoba University in Montería, who works on agroecology in La Mojana’s wetland area. “We are losing crops because they rot and we always have a delay in sowing times,” says farmer Marta Primera Acevedo. Residents can’t sow other crops like corn and beans until the water recedes.

Despite the challenges, Miranda says the farmers will always find ways to adapt to climate change: “Using ancestral seeds means adaptation to our specific land or weather condition. Coming back to them is an urgent need.”

Case Study: Women in Brazil Overcoming Threats, Forced Evictions And Land Grabbing

The women collectors and breakers of babassu nuts were locked out of their harvesting territories by violent landowners. To fight back for the right to access the babassu trees, they came together to form an inter-state movement of the “Quebradeiras de Babaçu” (babassu breakers). Their efforts resulted in the “Free Babassu Law” that guarantees free access to the babassu trees by the women that collect the nuts. The law allowed them to do long-term planning within women

associations, buying equipment and commercializing the babassu products. Brazil has more than 400,000 babassu breakers who together protect 18 million hectares of forests in Brazil.

Video (7:32): [Brazil's Warrior Women - A Women's Grassroots Movement for Access to Babassu Oil - Brazil](#)

Case Study: Rural Youth In Indonesia Migrate And Return To Their Communities

Indigenous Indonesian youth tell their compelling story of how they had to leave their rural communities in search of education and employment opportunities in urban areas. The story focuses on the challenges these youths face in the city, such as cultural disconnection, employment difficulties, and a longing for their traditional way of life.

The short film captures the transformative journey these young people undergo as they decide to return to their communities. Upon returning, they bring new skills, ideas, and a renewed commitment to their cultural heritage and local ecosystems. The film highlights the positive impact of their return on local development, including initiatives in sustainable agriculture, education, and cultural preservation.

These returning youth are not only beneficiaries of their communities' rich traditions but also pivotal contributors to their community's resilience and adaptation in the face of modern challenges

Video (8:19): [Indonesian Indigenous Youth Return to the Community – If Not Us Then Who?](#)

More on this video [from If not us than who?](#)

Principles For Engaging With Youth

When engaging with youth, it is important to distinguish between different places youth are at and how this makes their contributions and needs unique, as described in [*Prosperity in place: meaningful work for mobile youth that enhances forest landscapes*](#).

- **Remaining Youth:** Youth that remain in the community and territory.
- **Moving Youth:** Youth who move away, whether temporarily or permanently.
- **Returning Youth:** Youth who return to their territories and communities after having left, whether temporarily or permanently.

Last year, youth in Asia shared some guiding principles they consider important when building youth leadership. These principles are an invitation to reflect on and take into consideration for livelihood initiatives in different regions of the world.

1. **Youth Organizing is Intergenerational:** This principle emphasizes the sacred and crucial relationship between elders and youth in leadership and decision-making processes, fostering effective intergenerational governance.
2. **Leaders Create More Leaders:** It stresses the importance of youth leaders nurturing future generations to ensure knowledge retention and continuity within their communities.
3. **Youth Learn by Leading:** The role of experiential learning in leadership development for youth is crucial, where taking initiatives and risks is encouraged, supported by trust and space provided by their mentors and allies.
4. **Youth Safety is a Shared Responsibility:** Protect youth from discrimination, exploitation, and violence, protecting them from harm while supporting their mental and legal well-being.
5. **Solidarity is Sacred:** This emphasizes the importance of solidarity with youth for systemic change. There is power in building strong and supportive networks across diverse backgrounds that support youth, and thus, enhances collective action.

 Read pages 25 to 31: Part 3 Youth in Leadership [for the full report: [Learning and Living our Elders Wisdom: Youth Power for Land, Forests and Territories in Asia](#)]

Homework

Activities to complete after the second live session. Approximate time: 1 hour and 30 minutes

Individual Homework (30min)

Guiding questions and prompts that encourage discussions on sustainable livelihoods with youth from the community.

Group Homework (60min)

A mapping exercise to identify natural and human assets in your territory and consider how they align with community aspirations.