

Annual report January–December 2015

Introduction

This report presents highlights from implementation of the PROLINNOVA–Uganda Country Platform for the period January–December 2015. PROLINNOVA Uganda is an NGO-led multistakeholder initiative to build a national learning network on promoting local innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resource management (NRM). PROLINNOVA–Uganda’s main objective is to mainstream community-led approaches to agriculture and NRM.

1.0 Identification and promotion of Innovations

In 2015, four local innovations were identified.

These were:

- Dried mango peels as supplementary feed for bees
- Herbal concoctions to control pests and diseases in field crops such as cowpeas
- Control of termites
- Soil fertility management – use of vermiculate clay in the gardens to enhance soil fertility for vegetables.



Figure 1. Dried mango peels as supplementary feed for bees, an innovation by Fred Matalocu in Metu, Moyo (Photo: Noel Alabi)

Besides identification, the innovation in soil fertility management, i.e. the use of vermiculate clay in the gardens to enhance soil fertility for vegetables, was selected for joint experimentation. The innovation was assessed using the TEES (Technical effectiveness, Economic validity, Environmental friendliness and Social acceptability) test to qualify for joint experimentation. The objective of the joint experimentation was/is to determine the nutrient composition of the vermicular soils. The joint experimentation is undertaken in collaboration with Moyo District Local Government extension staff in the Department of Production. The soils are being tested in different conditions for verification. The emerging issue is that scientific evidence is required as part of the process for validation of the local innovations, but a partner institution has to co-fund the joint experimentation to reduce the costs, as local governments have no specific funds to support farmer-led research.

2.0 Learning and information exchange on local innovations and effective PID processes

PROLINNOVA–Uganda through Kulika Uganda organised celebration of the International Farmer Innovation Day on 18 December 2015 in collaboration with Nakasongola District Local Government. The objectives of the celebration were to: create awareness about farmers’ ability to innovate; demonstrate the benefits of farmer innovations; disseminate farmer innovations to the wider farming community; enable the farmers to link and network with other stakeholders; and lobby for support for the farmers’ work from stakeholders within and beyond their communities. The function was attended by 70 (45F, 25M) farmers innovators, mainly from Nakasongola District but also a few from other neighbouring districts including Luweero and Mityana.

PROLINNOVA–Uganda partners such as Environmental Alert (EA) and PELUM Uganda are using their websites to disseminate information about farmer innovation in Uganda. In addition, the network disseminates information about local innovations and network activities in brochures, farmer forums, house and print media, and articles written and published in national newspapers, i.e. in the Monitor Publications.

Through EA, PROLINNOVA–Uganda uses the Voice of the Nile radio programme Lemu Goli Ba Ra (farmers' forum) in Moyo District to disseminate and share information on local innovation and raise awareness about this. For example, during the Honey Week, Mr Matalocu Fred and Mr Eusebia Drichi were hosted on the radio. The radio programme covers the neighbouring districts of Adjumani, Yumbe and parts of South Sudan that border on Uganda. This is confirmed by the calls made by farmers from those areas to participate in the radio interactive discussions.

Opportunity

- The radio programme offers opportunity to identify advocacy policy issues in agriculture and NRM.

Challenge

- Network failure sometimes is a challenge to connect to the radio through mobile phones.

Lesson learnt

- The programme builds the capacity of host innovators in presentation of issues, individual personal organisation and confidence.

PROLINNOVA–Uganda was represented by Harriet Ndagire from Kulika in the PROLINNOVA International Partners Workshop (IPW), which was held in Axum, Ethiopia, on 27–30th April 2015. The purpose was to bring together the Country Platforms (CPs), the PROLINNOVA Oversight Group, the International Secretariat and other members of the International Support Team, plus invited colleagues to review progress made during the past year and to share experiences and learn from each other. The meeting also offered an opportunity to reflect on the PROLINNOVA network achievements over the past ten years.

On behalf of PROLINNOVA Uganda, Harriet Ndagire from Kulika also attended a meeting in Axum on 26 April to share experiences from Uganda and to learn from other CPs in Eastern Africa that are implementing the Combining Local Innovative Capacity with Scientific Research (CLIC–SR) project supported by the Rockefeller Foundation. The meeting reviewed the programme and work plan for CLIC–SR for 2015–16. During this workshop and the IPW, PROLINNOVA Uganda exhibited documentary materials on Ugandan farmer innovation and the CP's activities. In addition, it shared information with partners from other African and Asian CPs that are implementing similar projects related to strengthening local resilience to change, including climate change.

3.0 Capacity building for staff in PID and in basics of climate-change adaptation (CCA)

On behalf of Nuffic (Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education), EA organised a follow-up assessment that targeted 21 trainees (12M, 9 F) based on the following categories: Local Government, Civil Society and Farmer Innovators. However, only 15 of these participated in the assessment because they submitted updates and reports about their PID-related activities after the training.

The objective of the exercise was to determine whether the expectations were attained during the training on PID and climate-change adaptation, constraints faced and achievements made. The assessment was conducted using a questionnaire developed by Nuffic. The responses revealed that the trainees are now implementing and integrating PID as an approach to CCA in their daily activities. It also became clear that PID and promoting local innovation, being complex subjects, require continuous follow-up training for staff of organisations so that they have a clear knowledge of PID, local innovation and climate change.

Emerging issue

- Organise an intensive training on PID, local innovation and CCA for the service providers in agriculture and NRM in West Nile Region so that more farmers can be supported in this.

4.0 Mainstreaming PROLINNOVA approaches within local, national and regional institutions and programmes

Through EA, PROLINNOVA Uganda supported two innovative farmers, Mr Fred Matalocu and Mr Eusebio Drichi from Moyo District, to exhibit their innovations in beekeeping during the annual Honey Week event on 27–29th August in Lugogo. The innovations exhibited included: dried mango peels as supplementary feed for bees; transitional beehive; body jelly; propolis ointment; candles and wax cake. Farmers created new market linkages with buyers like Harvest Honey in Kampala and Etope Apiculture in Arua. Fred Matalocu's innovation in using dried mango peels as bee feed was documented by a journalist from the *New Vision* paper in Uganda for publication and sharing.

Lessons learnt

- Farmer innovators need to improve packaging, branding and labelling of their products.
- Support farmer innovators to acquire certificate from the Uganda National Bureau of Standards (UNBS) to increase public acceptance of their products.

Through EA, PROLINNOVA–Uganda organised an exhibition on 16 October in Moyo District during World Food Day celebration in order to allow local innovators to show their innovations in agriculture and NRM. Innovations exhibited were in crop management, beekeeping and animal husbandry. Seven farmer innovators took part (4 women and 3 men). The main objective was to disseminate the innovations to a wider community.

Opportunity

- The locally developed technologies for improving food security that were exhibited attracted the interest of stakeholders; as a result, the Moyo District Farmer Institute committed to provide land, host demonstrations and provide support in joint experimentation and learning.

One of the PROLINNOVA–Uganda partners, the community-based organisation Kikandwa Environmental Association (KEA), implemented a climate-change resilience project funded by the Global Environment Facility (United Nations Development Programme / UNDP), for a period of two years from December 2013 to December 2015. The KEA management appreciated the role of PROLINNOVA–Uganda in building the capacity of KEA to be able to access the UNDP funding. In addition, KEA in collaboration with the Uganda Coalition for Sustainable Development documented local innovations in CCA. These included seed selection (Mr Kakembo Ziboyimu) and processing of amaranthus into different products (Ms Nabatanzi Margret). The documentary was broadcasted on Bukedde Television for wider dissemination among stakeholders and the general public.

5.0 Effectively facilitating the PROLINNOVA Network in Uganda

The PROLINNOVA–Uganda Secretariat in EA organised a core-team meeting on 25 March, which was attended by seven persons from five of the ten PROLINNOVA–Uganda member organisations, i.e. from PELUM Uganda, Kulika Uganda, KEA (as farmer representative), EA, NARO/MUZARDI, plus the PROLINNOVA–Uganda coordinator. The objectives of the meeting were to share information on PROLINNOVA–Uganda activities including the CLIC–SR project, to review the progress of the CP and the project, to discuss and build consensus on the work plan of PROLINNOVA–Uganda including CLIC–SR activities in 2015, and to share roles and responsibilities among partners. The Secretariat also organised a meeting of the National Steering Committee on 22nd April, attended by people from the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO/ MUZARDI), the Ministry of Agricultural, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), EA, the Africa 2000 Network (A2N) and the PROLINNOVA–Uganda Coordinator.

Emerging issue

- The absence of some members and thus lack of continuity were noted. Follow-up is needed on the status of core-team members who are not attending meetings.

Observations

- Produced information, education and communication materials on PID and local innovation to be disseminated during all partner- and government-organised events.
- Core partners to advance PID approach to institutions and programmes in which they are members.
- Core team to participate in resource mobilisation for promoting local innovation/PID.
- Core partners to promote PROLINNOVA activities on their website and brochures and other publications.
- Experiences of partners in PID application to be documented.

In 2016, the PROLINNOVA–Uganda Secretariat will vigorously continue to respond to calls for funding, strengthen the multistakeholder partnership, identify local innovations, and document and disseminate publications on local innovation and PID.

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