

PROLINNOVA SOUTH AFRICA

PROMOTING LOCAL INNOVATION IN ECOLOGICALLY-ORIENTED AGRICULTURE AND NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

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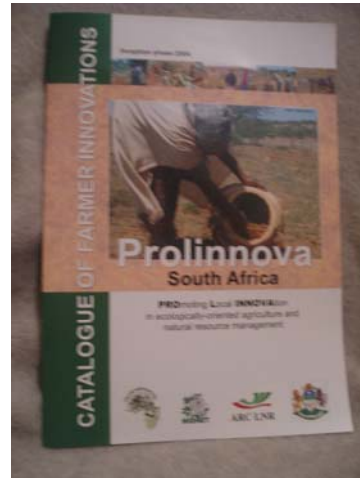
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PARTNERING FOR FARMER-LED R&D

PROLINNOVA is a NGO-led global learning and advocacy network to promote local innovation in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resources management. The programme seeks to scale up farmer-based Research & Development (R&D) integrating local, indigenous and formal scientific knowledge.

Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, South Africa, Sudan, Cambodia, Nepal, and Tanzania are involved, supported by ETC Ecoculture, IIRR, and Swiss Centre for Agricultural extension. The programme is funded by DGIS, CTA and IFAD.

PROLINNOVA South Africa was launched in 2004, and is managed by a partnership of NGO's, research institutes, Government extension, and Universities.



INCEPTION PHASE 2004

- Mar** International workshop Ethiopia
- Apr-May** Formation of Core team
Establish Secretariat
Select candidates for ToT
- Jun** Training of trainers Philippines
- Jul-Aug** Prep & impl training in PID
- Sep-Oct** Inventory of local innovations
- Nov** Feedback workshop
Core team meeting
- On-going** Meetings Secretariat
Fundraising



ACHIEVEMENTS

- Two staff from NGO and Government research led a capacity building process of multi-stakeholders. They questioned notions of local innovation, reflected on the role of farmers in R&D, and how to institutionalize participatory and farmer-led approaches in working with farmers.
- Stakeholders jointly designed a format for an inventory and then used this to identify and document farmer innovations. Thus, a multi-stakeholder partnership was built on the ground.
- A catalogue was produced showcasing these farmer innovations. This boosted confidence of participants and made PROLINNOVA aims visible and tangible.
- The Northern partners play a key role in promoting South-South partnerships, facilitating joint learning, and keep partners updated about opportunities and trends.

CHALLENGES

- To bring leadership to a national programme with limited resources, and with coordinating team members geographically far apart
- To maintain contact with and process increasing flows of information from international partners and other country programmes
- To respond to international funding opportunities while trying to mobilize in-country support for a new paradigm in R&D
- To effectively lobby institutions to commit staff and other resources to the programme, without compensation
- To allocate roles and responsibilities within the coordinating team, and enter into formal agreements between member institutes
- To move beyond an inventory of innovations and focus on enhancing farmers' innovative capacity
- To protect farmers' intellectual property rights and maintain their competitive advantage while encouraging them to share innovations

