

# FAIR

## Farmer Access to Innovation Resources

*“Exploring with farmers alternative ways of stimulating local innovation and participatory research and development (R&D)”*

### Piloting Local Innovation Support Funds (LISFs)

**PROLINNOVA** is piloting LISFs to:

- Establish sustainable area-based funding mechanisms to promote stakeholder-led R&D processes
- Evaluate, document and share experiences with these mechanisms
- Enhance livelihood security and environmental management by local people
- Build replicable models for local control of research and development.

Presently Local Innovation Support Funds are piloted in five countries. Each pilot has its own institutional arrangements, creating local opportunities for farmer participation and management of the LISFs, and demand driven research in general. In each country distinction is made between community level, LISFs sharing and managing resources to accelerate innovation at the local level and a sustainable, institution-based LISF, co-managed by farmers, that catalyzes and funds community based initiatives.



Involvement of farmers in community based LISFs and in co-managing an institutional LISF builds their capacities in R&D issues and thus empowers them to be partners with formal R&D institutes in agenda setting and R&D implementation. This may enable also regional and global level involvement, as promoted by the Global Forum for Agricultural Research (GFAR).

Typically an LISF makes funds available to farmers for innovation related activities such as:

- Farmer-to-farmer exchanges to stimulate learning and innovation
- Joint experimentation based on an individual or group of farmers' initiative, including:
  - documentation of farmer innovation and adaptations
  - payment for involvement of development agents, e.g. travel, accommodation
  - assistance in design and monitoring of experiments

In the present pilots the spectrum of experimentation and innovation includes:

- efforts in livestock range management, and crop development,
- pest and disease control
- development of the natural resource base
- the development of farmer-based institutions



*LISF Screening Committee assessing applications in South Africa*





All initiatives are designed to develop local people's capacities to strengthen or expand their livelihood options as well as withstand threats such as HIV/AIDS.

To date results have been very encouraging, with LISFs enjoying strong farmer representation and ownership across gender and social groupings. The pilots and the LISF arrangements are being closely monitored by the partners to assess the viability of this approach to research and development. A detailed monitoring tool is being used by all countries to this end.

For long, farmers have been only marginally involved in multi-stakeholder R&D processes. As R&D resources have been and are largely controlled by others, the farmer's role in defining research and development activities has been very limited. At the same time it is increasingly clear that they are innovators and free-lance researchers in their own way. The LISF approach now has the potential to alter the landscape of agricultural research, give farmers the lead in defining and implementing activities and thus generate many benefits to resource-poor farmers.

**FAIR** is an ambitious, long-term initiative that has the potential to yield rich and far-reaching rewards for farmers. **PROLINNOVA** is keen to share its experiences and encourage others to join in these efforts to refocus resources into farmer-driven research. For some time, further donor support is needed to deepen and expand the footprint of **FAIR**.

PROLINNOVA PROMOTING RURAL INNOVATION		Andico Farmers Aid (Project ACT) Tanzania		LISF Registry - Grant Application	
Application #	5	Thandanani Mazizi Cooperative	Requested Amount	4,450.00	
Application Date	2007/02/02		Approved Amount	2,456.00	
Current Status	Approved		Fund Disbursement Date	2007/02/25	
Applicant	Thandanani Mazizi Cooperative	Notes on Applicant		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add New Applicant...</li> <li>• Edit Current Applicant...</li> <li>• Edit Any Applicant...</li> <li>• Show/Hide Quick Notes</li> </ul>	
Applicant Type	Private	Please use an application to visit a project in the field to learn about product development & marketing and institutionalization.			
Gender	Male				
Age	45				
Female members	0				
Male members	0				
Co-applicants (if desired)					
Co-applicant Name		Co-applicant Type			
ZSC		NGO			
Application #	6	Thandanani Mazizi Cooperative	Requested Amount	0.00	
Application Date	2007/02/02		Approved Amount	0.00	
Current Status	Pending Screening		Fund Disbursement Date		

## Details of present 5 pilot countries:

Country and Location	Coordinating NGO
<b>Cambodia</b> <i>Battambang Province</i>	Centre d'Études et de Développement Agricole Cambodgien (CEDAC)
<b>Ethiopia</b> <i>Amhara &amp; Tigray Regions</i>	AgriService Ethiopia (ASE)
<b>Nepal</b> <i>Western Development Region</i>	Local Initiatives for Bio-diversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD)
<b>South Africa</b> <i>Amazizi, Okhahlamba District, KwaZulu-Natal</i>	Farmer Support Group (FSG)
<b>Uganda</b> <i>Central Region</i>	Environmental Alert (EA)

## Further Information and Contact Details:

*More information on the FAIR project and LISFs may be found*

*on*

**<http://www.prolinnova.net/pilotinglisf.php>**

*Should you be interested to learn more about LISFs or wish to contribute to this effort, please contact the Prolinnova Secretariat at **prolinnova@etcnl.nl** or **FSG@ukzn.ac.za***

**FAIR** is supported by:

**Directorate-General for International Cooperation (DGIS)**, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Netherlands

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Buitenlandse Zaken  
**Ontwikkelings  
samenwerking**

