Impacts of farmer-led approaches to agricultural research and development:

Lessons learnt

PROLINNOVA International Secretariat, ETC Foundation, Leusden, The Netherlands

in partnership with the CGIAR Research Programs on Aquatic Agricultural Systems (AAS) and Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS)
Background and approach

- Formal ARD institutions looking for ways to make research more relevant for smallholders
- AAS & CCAFS approached PROLINNOVA to explore approaches, outcomes, impacts of ‘informal’ ARD
- 6-month desk study
  - >100 case studies, long list of 41, short list of 13
- Main criteria
  - farmer-led, ‘informal’, support of CSOs, structured interaction with others, documented evidence of impact, several years ago or going on for couple of years
## Case studies

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Zaï in Burkina Faso</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td><em>Campesino a Campesino</em> in Central America</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td><strong>MASIPAG in the Philippines</strong></td>
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<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Farmer experimenters in Honduras</strong></td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Farmer participatory research in Tanzania</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Smallholder action research in Burkina Faso</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Participatory innovation development in Mali</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Local agricultural research committees in Honduras</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td><strong>The participatory extension approach in Zimbabwe</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Institutionalisation of participatory technology development in Vietnam</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Institutionalisation of farmer participatory research in Ethiopia</td>
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Outcomes & impact

Impact on ARD institutions
- Formal (government)
- Informal (CSOs)

FL-ARD findings and dissemination
- Types innovations and experiments
- Documentation and dissemination of process and results
  - Record farmers trials
  - Process & approach
  - Ways of sharing
  - Extent of spread
  - Limits

Innovation capacity
- Individual capacity
- Organisational capacity
- Links to support org. and sources of info.
- Involvement of women
- Spaces for experimentation and learning

Dimensions

Impact on livelihoods
- food and nutrition security
- resilience to risk
- household income
- saving and economic assets
- labour productivity
- community level impacts
- gender and equity
Lessons learnt

- Process of FL-ARD and support
- Sharing and spreading results
- Role formal ARD, CSOs and funding
- Gender and equity
- Scaling out and up
Process of FL-ARD

Innovation

? vs

Endogenous & Introduced

Critical reflection

NOW for LATER
Sharing and spreading results

Site and household specific

Relevant innovations spread spontaneously

Disseminating RESULTS
But also PROCESS

IPR!
Scaling out and up

Process!

START

Small

Stimulate curiosity

CSOs
Gender and equity

“Participatory”

Observation and continuous adjustment
Role formal ARD, CSOs, funding

Scientists
Share, document, make credible, systemise

CSOs
Capacity building
Support para-professionals
Facilitate collective action
Policy dialogue and advocacy

Extension
link and broker

Small, but long term
**Group assignment**  
(mixed groups)

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<tr>
<th>Group 1 and 2</th>
<th>Group 3 and 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>Q1. How do these lessons resonate with your own experiences?</td>
<td>Q1. What are the surprises, issues you did not expect, or aha moments for you?</td>
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<td>Q2. What would be the implications for your work?</td>
<td>Q2. What would be the implications of that for your work?</td>
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- Reflect on both questions (30 min)
- Write max 5 cards for each question to express some key issues (write big, 3-5 words, one issue per card)