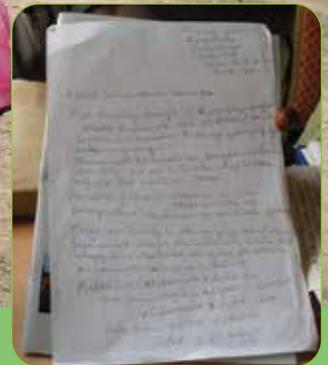


PROLINNOVA
Uganda
PROMoting Local INNOVation
in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management.



Local Innovation Support Fund (LISF) An Implementers' guide, Uganda



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August 2013

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

| | |
|-------|--|
| ARD | Agriculture research and development |
| CBO | Community based organisation |
| DGIS | Dutch Ministry of Development Cooperation |
| DURAS | Promoting sustainable Development in Agricultural Research Systems |
| FMC | Fund management committee |
| LISF | Local support funds |
| MAAIF | Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industries and Fisheries |
| MoU | Memorandum of Understanding |
| NAADS | National Agricultural Advisory Services |
| NARO | National Agricultural Research Organisation |
| NGO | Non – Government Organisation |
| NRM | Natural resource management |
| PID | Participatory innovation development |

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Moses Sekate

1.0 Introduction

This LISF implementers guide targets stakeholders who are interested in promoting farmer innovation in agriculture and natural resources management through local innovation support funds. The aim is to provide information to facilitate smooth and effective implementation of new ideas to advance farmer innovation. The implementers' guide is based on experiences and lessons learnt through piloting local innovation support funds in Uganda (2007-2011).

1.1 Background

PROLINNOVA - Uganda is a learning network on promoting local innovation in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management. The agency's main objective is to scale up and mainstream community-led approaches to agriculture and natural resource management. PROLINNOVA beefs up existing practices mainly pioneered by NGOs in research and development focused on promoting local innovations. PROLINNOVA activities are implemented by involving various stakeholders like farmers, researchers, development and extension workers, government institutions, NGOs/CBOs and related networks.

PROLINNOVA focuses on components like piloting and sharing results, capacity building in Participatory Innovation Development (PID) and mainstreaming PID in government institutions. PROLINNOVA - Uganda seeks collaboration with existing programmes. Such a partnership would create lasting mechanisms for linkages and initiatives for analysis and learning from experiences and for mutual support. The program also seeks to synthesize lessons from these initiatives and similar experiences and disseminate them. It also works to encourage wider application and institutionalization of PROLINNOVA approaches within formal research, development and education.

PROLINNOVA is an international learning network that initiates systematic action research to find practical ways to set up financing mechanisms. These mechanisms help farmers and farmer innovators to access resources for improving and accelerating their innovative activities related to natural resources management. These were code named "Local Innovation Support Funds (LISFs)". The main principles of LISFs were:-

What is PID?

This is a process in which innovative solutions to farmers' problems are identified, developed and/or improved. It involves a triangulation of local knowledge of the farmers, scientific knowledge of the researchers, and field experience-based knowledge of the extension workers through joint experimentation

Source: FAO (2011) and PROLINNOVA (2009)

What is farmer Innovation?

Local (farmer) innovation refers to the dynamics of indigenous knowledge i.e., knowledge that grows within a social group, incorporating learning from own experience over generations. It also involves external knowledge internalized within the local ways of thinking and doing. Promotion of farmer innovation fosters individuals or groups to discover and develop better ways of managing resources, by building on and expanding the boundaries of their indigenous knowledge through interactions. Innovations can occur both in technical and socio-institutional spheres.

Source: PROLINNOVA (2004) and the World Bank (2004),

- Farmers or farmers' groups directly accessed funds rather than through development agencies.
- Grants used for innovation, experimentation and learning by farmers' organisations play a strong role in decision-making on fund allocation.
- Farmers and their organizations play a major role in deciding how money is allocated.

In Uganda, the action research on LISF funds (2007-2011) was funded by DURAS (Promoting Sustainable Development in Agricultural Research Systems) project, the Rockefeller Foundation and the Netherlands Government (DGIS). DURAS is supported by the French government.

1.2 The Local Innovation Support Funds (LISFs)

Farmer innovation is an increasingly-important part of Agricultural Research and Development (ARD). LISF was born out of PROLINNOVA partners' belief that a fundamental change in mechanisms for allocating agricultural research funding is crucial. This will build the capacities of small-scale farmers/pastoralists to play a more central role in agricultural research and development (ARD).

The overall goal of the LISF pilot was to find practical ways to set up financing mechanisms that allow local land user groups and communities for improving and accelerating their innovative activities in agriculture and NRM. The focus was on building sustainable financing mechanisms from local to national level. These mechanisms would be co-owned and managed by smallholder farmers/land-users and/or their organizations.

LISF was piloted in eight PROLINNOVA partner countries to explore mechanisms that allow farmers to access and manage agricultural research funds. The challenge faced by the partners was whether such an alternative was cost-effective and sustainable. It also sought to determine whether farmer-led funding mechanisms for experimentation and innovation could indeed be developed and sustained.

Through PROLINNOVA - Uganda, LISFs were initially piloted with four community-based organisations (CBOs) and later expanded to involve 12 CBOs in eight districts. The districts where LISFs were piloted are Wakiso, Nakasongola, Mukono, Mityana, Masaka, Mubende, Rakai and Kayunga. Table 3 presents the CBOs which were involved in the LISF pilot.

Key results of LISF pilot at community/farmer level

- Lower expenditure on external inputs especially fertiliser and pesticides, due to LISF support, innovators have expanded their innovations and they are able to use their own innovations (organic manure/fertiliser and pesticides) without buying inputs to improve on soil fertility and to control pests in crop production;
- Storing crops for longer periods as a result of local innovations that control pests thereby enabling farmers to sell the crops later in the year and earn a higher price and thus higher profits.
- Increase the innovativeness of farmers thus the fund stimulated the beneficiaries to think of other innovations;
- Greater ability to cope with prolonged droughts. This was through experimentation organic (especially liquid) manure with crops that resulted in better conservation of soil moisture for a longer period. Some innovators have also come up with innovations in water conservation to reduce the effects of drought.
- Improved family health. Innovators pointed out that use of their local organic innovations have improved their health by avoiding the toxins in inorganic products, especially fertilisers and pesticides. This also contributed to reduction in expenditure on medical bills and to greater food safety.

Source: Nasirumbi et al., (2011)

Table 1, CBOs involved in the LISF pilot in Uganda

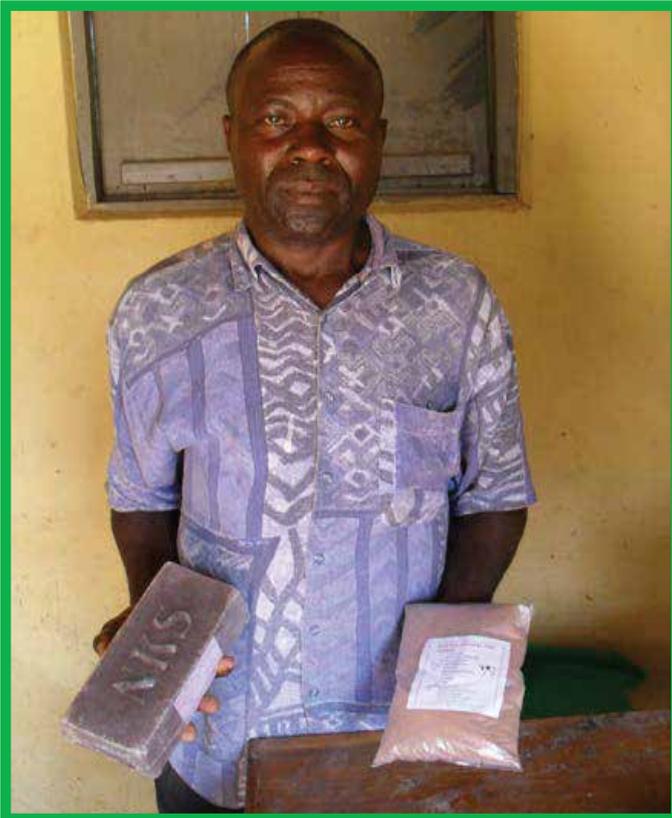
| Name of Area | Partner | Name of local partner | Contact Person |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| Wakiso | Environmental Alert | 2 Lukwanga Farmers Associations (Agaliawamu Farmers Development Association and Alinyikira Farmers Development Association) | M/s. Zimbe Daisy - 0774318002 |
| Mubende | Environmental Alert | Musamba Environmental Protection Group | Mr. Sebakiije Joel Araali - 0774600424 |
| Kikandwa / Mityana | Environmental Alert | Kikandwa Environmental Association(KEA) | Mr. Kaganga John 0772494697 / 0772674647 |
| Nakasongola | Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries | Nalukonge Community Initiatives Association (NACIA) | Mr. Mugume Paul- 0772615048 Mr. Sebwato Godfrey - 0782401329 |
| Mukono | Centre for Integrated Development | Nagojje Community Biodiversity Association | Mr. Ngondwe Lubega 0753002046 |
| Kayunga | Centre for Integrated Development | Wabwooko Farmers Association | Mr. Buyondo Sulait Mpagi - 0754624677/ 0782624677 |
| Mukono | Africa 2000 Network | 2 Farmers groups (Maziba Akwata empola Farmers Group and Mimulwa Farmers group) | Mr. Kanamuwangi John - 0774613868 |
| Masaka | Africa 2000 Network | Kawule Disabled Persons and Family Association | Mr. Luyombo David Busagwa 0772601138 |
| Masaka | KULIKA | Action for Development | M/s. Namyalo Rehema 0702493186 |
| Masaka | KULIKA | Bakyala Tweekembe Women's Group | M/s. Nanyonga Winnie 0774989890 |
| Masaka | KULIKA | Kalunduka Coffee Farmers' Group | Mr. Kalibbala Samuel 0752385366 |
| Rakai | Development Network for Indigenous Voluntary Association | Rural Community Strategy for Development (RUCOSDE) | Mr. Musooka Kiwanuka Achillies -0772581178 Musooke Israel - 0782264942 |

The approach used during pilot was strengthening farmer organisations /CBOs to control resources for experimentation and learning in agriculture and natural resource management. Thus, the LISFs pilot focused on building funding mechanisms that are co-owned and managed by land-users and or their organisations (farmer organisations/Community based organisations).

The overall strategy of the pilot was to increase depth and impact of the LISFs, thorough documentation of key findings. The dissemination of these findings in areas of operation was one of the means to achieve this. The intention was to upscale, out scale and consolidate good practices thereby increasing the impact of the LISFs.

Key achievements of the LISFs pilot:

- Using the funds, farmers were able to innovate.
- The capacity of farmers in managing community-owned money was enhanced.
- A revolving fund system was established in three beneficiary groups. However, members need more training in group dynamics and record keeping;
- Farmers received more exposure and knowledge from extension staff and fellow agriculturalists through exchange visits.



Farmer innovator of mineral lick (Moses Ssekate)



Contents of the mineral lick block & powder (Sekate Moses)

2.0 LISF key guiding principles

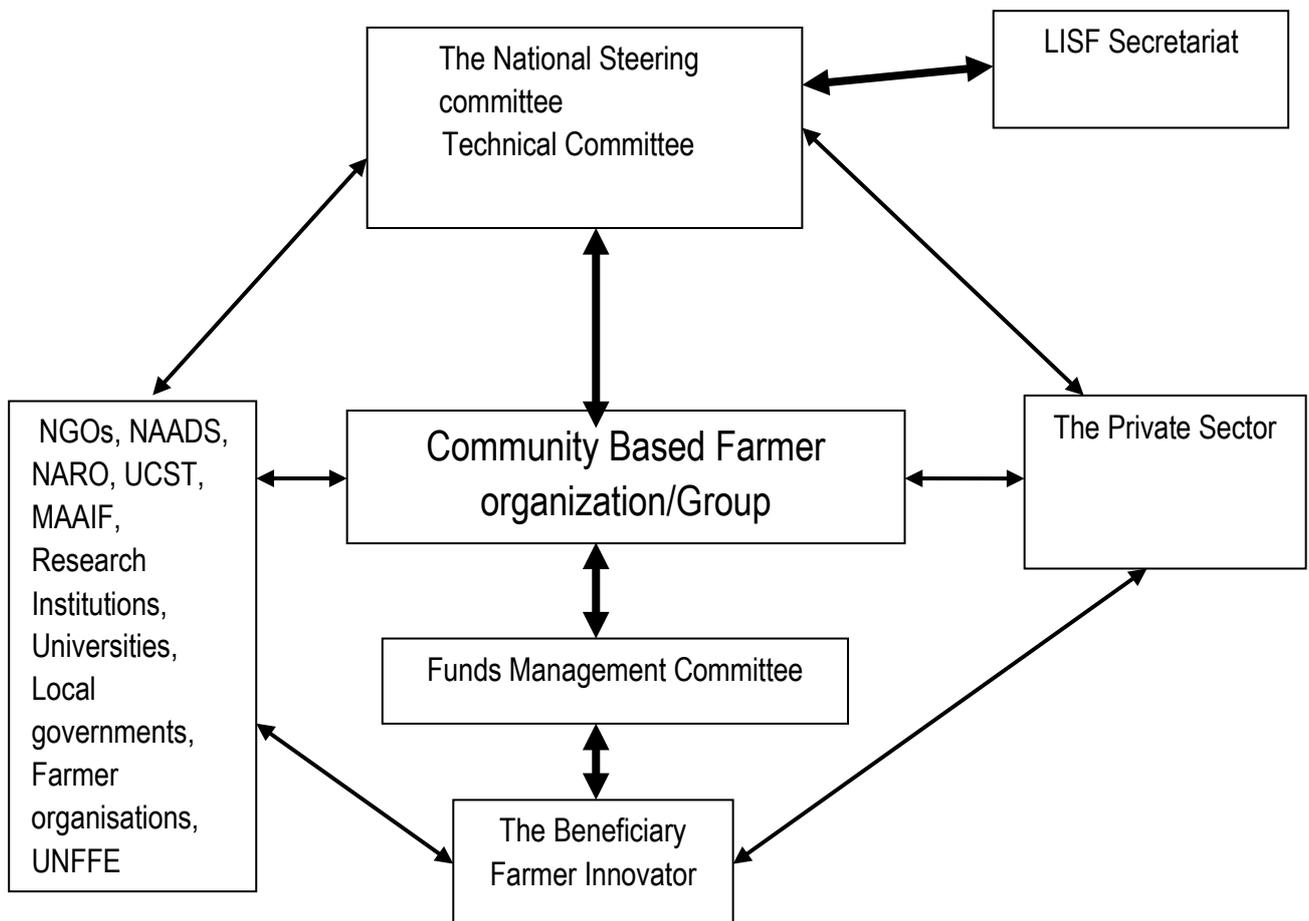
The implementation of a Local Innovation Support Fund (LISF) needs to be based on the following principles:

- Farmers and/or their organizations play a crucial role in decision making in management and allocation of funds. However, they should be supported by relevant and interested research and development institutions at local and national level. Such support would include technical skills enhancement in management of local innovation funds and institutional building.
- The funds granted are used for innovation, experimentation and learning by and with farmers.
- The management of local innovation support funds is transparent to avoid misinterpretation of the decisions made.
- There should be mechanisms for relaying feedback and information to stakeholders involved in the management and implementation of local innovation support funds at levels.
- The local innovation support fund is supported by a partnership among the development players at local, national and international levels.
- Making sure that innovations are not duplicated (protecting their intellectual property rights). Protecting patent rights is still sticky and in most cases, innovators are at a risk of losing their innovations to copycats.
- Adding value to innovations through improvement, development and validation process involving relevant stakeholders given the nature of the innovations.
- LISF builds on relevant existing initiatives that are already being promoted and supported by development partners at different levels. For instance, initiatives by various development players such as NGOs, National Agricultural Research Organization, Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, Uganda Industrial Research Institute among others. The involvement of expertise from such agencies improves access to funding and support to farmer innovation.

3.0 The LISF structure

LISF requires a formal structure to effectively steer the management and implementation at the secretariat. The structure will also ease the coordination, communication and continuous resource mobilization for LISF. The structure allows separation and division of responsibilities and duties. However the LISF structure should not stand alone but mainstreamed in the host organization structure.

Figure 1. Organisational LISF structure



The LISF structure as illustrated in Figure 1 is composed of various structures. Each has specific roles/responsibilities for effective management of LISF at both national and local levels. The double arrows show the relationship between different structures in the organizational set up. The relationship is two way. The thick double arrows show strong and direct relationship between the structures. The small double arrows show the supportive relationship between structures in the management of LISF. The roles and responsibilities of these structures are described in the following section.

The LISF Secretariat

This is the coordination unit charged with grants management and ensuring overall effective management of the LISF. The secretariat is hosted by a development institution promoting LISF. It should have a coordinator and support staff to implement various LISF activities.

National Steering Committee

The National Steering Committee (NSC) provides strategic and policy guidance for the implementation of LISF. It should comprise key stakeholders involved in research and development in agriculture, environment and natural resources management at the national level. It should have between 5-7 members including representatives of different institutions. The institutions in question are: the Uganda National Farmers Federation (UNFFE), the National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAADS) and the National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO).

Others are the academia and non – governmental organisations.

The term of service for the national steering committee could be 3 years and renewable depending on performance and interest of members to continue serving. The committee could meet at least 3 times per year (virtually or physically). The meetings are organized by the LISF secretariat.

The terms of reference for National Steering committee

- Create/ facilitate platforms for information sharing and dialogue
- Organise learning visits for different stakeholders
- Lobby and advocate for funding to support farmer innovations at national and local levels.
- Resource mobilisation for LISF at national level
- Quality control, monitoring and evaluation of LISF activities.

The Technical Committee

This would comprise at least 5 people including farmers' representatives, research, academia, private sector and NGOs that support farmers. The term of service for this committee could be 3 years which is renewable depending on the performance of members. The committee could meet at least 3 times every year (virtually or physically). The meetings are organized by the LISF secretariat. The technical committee performs the key function of reviewing and screening applications by community-based organizations/farmer groups. The committee is mandated to take decisions through identification of winners based on stipulated guidelines. Resource mobilise for LISF at national level, monitoring and evaluation of LISF activities.

Support NGOs and other multi stakeholder partners

These include local governments and institutions like MAAIF, the private sector, NAADS, NARO, universities, UNCST among others. These build the capacity of CBOs and innovators in LISF management. They also identify CBOs and innovators to be supported, backing innovative farmers in joint experimentation and linking farmer innovators and CBOs to agencies like UNFFE for support.

Community Based Farmer Organization (CBO)/Farmer Groups

These are the farmers' organizations or groups that express interest and are selected to participate in the LISF program.

These farmers' groups/CBOs should have an active bank account and legally recognized i.e. registered with local governments. CBOs/farmer organisations develop grant applications, work plans and submit to the LISF Secretariat for consideration. CBOs receive and manage the grant on behalf of the innovators. In addition, publicise and advertise the grants received.

Funds Management Committee (FMC)

These committees are constituted at the CBO level. The committees should comprise 3-7 members (including men and women). The committees be elected through a democratic process in which all members of the CBO/farmers' group must be involved. The key roles of the FMC is: Identifying potential innovators, attracting applicants to the LISF facility and receiving applications .In addition,the FMC verifies, selects/screens and informs successful applicants. The FMC is also involved monitoring the successful applicants' activities.

The Beneficiary Farmer Innovator

This is the farmer innovator, a member of the CBO/farmers' group who directly benefits from the funds to develop their innovations. They are at the fore front in the development of innovation as indicated in the application. The farmer innovators develop work plan and cost the activities. Submit the work plans and budget to the CBOs/farmer organizations.



Fund management committee members screen applications at Kamenyamiggo, Lwengo District. Photo by Moses Sekate.

4.0 LISF implementation

The implementation of LISF involves undertaking various tasks/activities by different development institutions at national and local levels. The tasks at the national level can be categorised as institutional, preparatory and capacity building. The tasks at local level are categorised as the LISF cycle. However, these tasks could be discussed further by the organization intending to take up the local innovation support initiative.

A) Institutional, preparatory and capacity building tasks by development institution at the national level

Step 1 – Popularising the LISF

This targets key stakeholders and partners at different levels. The activities could include inception where the idea is introduced and meetings. The content includes awareness of LISF objectives, results and outcomes; clarify roles, responsibilities and managing expectations. The different stakeholders could be targeted and engaged separately as and when appropriate.

Step 2 – Announcement of the call for applications for supporting farmer innovations

This makes eligible CBOs/farmers' groups to know about the opportunity to participate by submitting their applications. The medium used to announce the call could include radio, community knowledge centres or notice boards among others as appropriate. The language best understood by the target group will be used for effective communication. The call could include a simple format/application form clearly indicating the key requirements for applicants. In addition, indicate deadlines for submission of applications to avoid delay in implementation of activities.

Step 3 – Screening/checking of Farmer Group applications for quality control.

Reviewing applications by CBOs should be performed by the technical committee which would decide winners based on stipulated guidelines (see annex 1 for more details about the guide). The duration for the development of innovations and experiments by farmers is not the same.

Committee should make decisions on the following issues:

- Identification of real farmer innovation. This can be achieved by using a working definition for farmer innovation that is acceptable to key stakeholders;
- Location of selected CBOs/farmer's groups to be supported under LISF would only be in a few districts (2 or 3) that are close to each other or in one region. When the selected CBOs are close to each other or located in the same area, it makes monitoring and backstopping easier and effective.
- The CBOs/farmer groups have to be registered, have a bank account, and demonstrated ability to manage the grant.
- Identified CBOs/farmer groups beneficiaries have to be supported to build institutional capacity.

Some experiments require a lot of time and support from researchers, especially for further development and validation. In this respect, the maximum time for experimentation should be 12 months. Adequate funds would be budgeted to facilitate researchers to support further development and validation of their innovations. Alternatively, LISF could be linked to universities through collaborations - with post graduate research students (Msc and PhDs). The students and their supervisors work closely with the farmer innovators to develop and validate the innovations.

Step 4 – Feedback to all CBOs/Farmer Group applicants

The LISF secretariat should give written feedback to both successful and unsuccessful applicants clearly indicating why they were selected or not. Terms of reference should be developed and contracts signed with selected CBOs/farmers' groups before funds are disbursed. The money should be sent to the account of the selected CBOs/Farmers' groups. Alternatively, beneficiaries could collect signed cheques from the LISF secretariat. An example of such a contract is presented in annex 2.

Step 5 – Capacity skills enhancement for effective LISF implementation.

Knowledge and skills enhancement is very important for effective LISF implementation.

This would be achieved through targeted training. In this training, emphasis should be placed on LISF, farmer innovations and participatory innovation development. The first training could target key staff of support organizations. The trained staff would subsequently support CBOs/farmer groups to implement LISF.

The second training should target the selected CBOs/-farmers' groups and would subsequently provide backstopping to farmer innovators. The training should also provide opportunity to clarify various LISF implementation requirements which include:

- To organise a meeting with their members to disseminate information about LISF grants.
- To establish a committee to manage the LISF grant. That committee should have equal gender representation.
- The need for signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the development institution promoting LISF and CBO/farmer group
- Technical and financial reporting system.
- LISF monitoring and evaluation
- The role of the CBOs/farmer organisations and beneficiary innovators.

Step 6 - Disbursement of funds to selected/winning CBOs/farmers' group

Funds should be disbursed in time to selected CBOs/-farmer groups for efficient and effective implementation of activities. However, observations should be made for appropriate decisions before releasing funds to the CBOs/farmers' groups. The following should be observed.

- *CBOs/farmers groups should not get the same amount of money*

CBOs/farmer groups have different needs and hence; do not require the same amount of money. The disbursement of money should be based on applications and workplans submitted by CBOs and the innovators.



Backstopping of CBO in LISF Implementation Wakiso District (Noah Bamulabire)

- *Money should be directly channeled to beneficiary CBOs/farmers' groups*

This reduces administrative bureaucracies and costs of dealing with intermediary organizations. However, an assessment of the capacity of CBOs/farmers' groups in the management of the funds should be done before disbursement. Otherwise, underlying capacity needs should be strengthened before the disbursement of funds.

- *Sending all the funds to the CBOs/farmers' groups*

Much as this reduces administrative costs associated with transferring money, it's not a good practice especially when the funds are not used as expected. Checks and balances should be put in place to avoid diversion of funds. The transfer of funds should be made in installments of 2 or 3 based on performance reports submitted by CBOs/farmers' groups.

Step 7 – Technical backstopping

The selected farmer innovators should be provided with regular support based on the needs of the innovations. Such support is provided by the LISF Secretariat, members of the technical committee, a support NGO or trained facilitators through visits and mentoring.



Providing technical support to a farmer innovator in Kayunga District (Moses Sekate).

Step 8 – Monitoring and evaluation of implementation

A simple computer-based system for generating information on the progress of LISF progress should be developed. The tool can be used as part of the monitoring and evaluation of LISF implementation. Monitoring and evaluation of the activities could particularly involve all key stakeholders at local and national levels to ensure smooth implementation. This could be done through organising regular monitoring visits. Monitoring reports should be submitted to the LISF secretariat for a follow up by addressing any emerging issues. Administrative and other related costs to facilitate the stakeholders in monitoring (e.g. meals, accommodation etc) should be integrated in the overall LISF operational budget. This should at least range from 10 - 15% of the money disbursed to CBOs/farmers' groups.

(B) LISF cycle tasks implemented by the community based organisation/farmers group

Step 1 – Call for applications - made by the CBO/farmer group LISF executive committees

This could be done through the CBO/farmers' groups during their regular meetings and using other avenues like local radio, sub-county and community notice boards, religious events/meetings and other community events. The objective is to sensitise all farmer innovators to know about the LISF grants and process of participation. Applications could be submitted by individual farmer innovator or joint applications by a few farmer innovators (2 or 3) or by a group in case of group innovation.

Example of activities that can be supported by LISF;

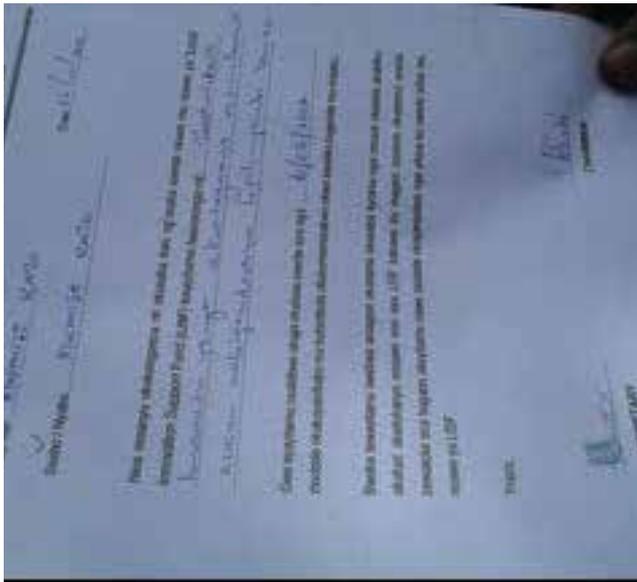
- Own experimentation by individual innovator
- Joint experimentation by a small group of innovators who wish to collaborate/work together
- Exchange and exposure visits at local, national and regional levels for peer learning among innovators
- Paying costs for laboratory analyses
- Payment of costs of accessing specialized training to enhance knowledge and skills that would add value to the innovation.

Step 2 - Collection, filling and submission of application forms by prospective applicants/innovators

Farmer innovators could collect application forms and use them to introduce their innovation. Where necessary, support could be given to them by the LISF management committees before the applicants make the final submission. The applicants should be informed about deadlines for submission to avoid delay in approving the application. See annex 3 for an example of LISF application forms. There should be flexibility to allow applicants make requests in their local languages. Therefore, application forms should be made in English and local languages.



Monitoring LISF implementation (Godfrey Walugembe)

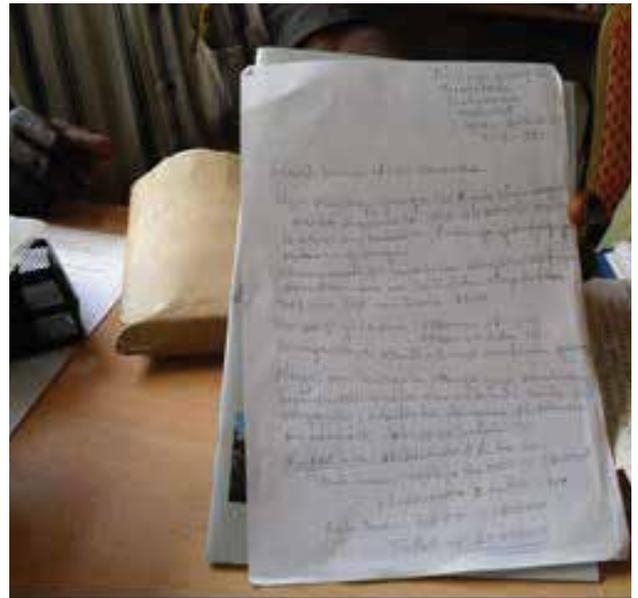


An application form of a farmer innovator. Photo by Moses Sekate

Step 3 - Screening/vetting of submitted application by farmer innovators

The LISF management committee vets all the submitted applications by farmer innovators. The criteria of vetting applications has to be developed and accepted by stakeholders (see in annex 1 for an example of such criteria). Also see text box page 17 for activities which could be supported by LISF grants. However, the following issues should be observed and decisions made as appropriate.

- Misinterpretation of the purpose of the LISF with funds for inputs to production projects. LISFs are meant for development of innovations. Clarifications in this respect should be made regularly through sensitisation of LISF management committees and other stakeholders at community level.
- Management of conflict of interest. In some cases members of LISF management committees may submit applications for support of their innovations and experiments. The general principle of dealing with this is for respective members to excuse themselves when their applications are being considered.
- Enhance the capacity (i.e. knowledge and skills) of LISF management committee to vet applications. LISF secretariat and support NGOs provide continuous guidance and mentoring to LISF management committees.



Another application form of a farmer innovator. Photo by Moses Sekate

The LISF management committee should submit a vetting report with recommendations for final screening and approval by the technical committee. This would help in ensuring that applications selected by the LISF management committee meet the minimum requirements for LISF criteria and guidelines.

Step 4 - Communication of feedback on the fate of applications to applicants (farmer innovators)

The LISF management committee should communicate to all applicants about the fate of their applications to appreciate whether they were successful or not. The reason(s) for approval or rejection should be clearly communicated.

Step 5 – Disbursement of funds to selected innovators by the CBOs/farmers' organisation.

Funds should be disbursed to selected innovators as stipulated in the contracts/agreements between the innovators and the CBOs/farmers' organisation. However, it's important that the funds per innovation supported should be sufficient for anticipated results to be achieved. It's better to support a few innovations that can be adequately funded and supported. For instance, depending on the type and requirements for a supporting an innovation, the amount of funding could range from Shs500, 000 – Shs2, 000,000. However, innovators should be allowed to apply for less amount of money if they feel the amounts could adequately support their innovations.

Step 6 - Implementation of approved innovative ideas

The selected innovators implement activities based on an approved work plan and signed agreements after receiving the funds.



A LISF beneficiary monitoring her innovation Masaka District (Moses Sekate)

Step 7 – Monitoring and evaluation of project implementation

The CBOs leadership and LISF management committee should play an active role in the monitoring and evaluation of the activities being implemented by the beneficiaries (farmer innovators) as stipulated in the agreements. This could be through conducting regular visits and interviews with the farmer innovators (grantees), discussion and reviews during CBO meetings. A small budget provision should be available to facilitate this initiative. This should be part of the own contribution by the CBOs to the overall LISF grant.

Step 8 - Reporting

Regular reporting should be done to track progress in implementation and the extent to which activities have been implemented, targets and outputs are being achieved. The reports should include lessons learnt, innovators' experiences, emerging challenges and opportunities to inform subsequent implementation. Besides, the technical aspects, the reports should reflect the utilisation and accountability for funds accessed by the farmer innovators and the CBOs/farmer groups.

5.0 Planning tasks of the LISF cycle

The development institution develops an annual work plan for effective implementation of the LISF cycle. This work plan should be developed based on the farming season. Applications have to be processed before one month to the farming season to ensure timely disbursement of funds for implementation of activities.

Table 4 presents an example of such a work plan for regions in Uganda which receive 2 rainfall seasons and 2 dry seasons for instance the central, eastern and western Uganda. Despite this, the planning process should be informed by variations in the local climate patterns.

Table 2. Recommended work plan for LISF activities throughout the year

| Key activities | When | How | Who |
|---|--------------------|--|---|
| Announcement and call for applications | June – July | Radio, community knowledge centres or notice boards. | LISF secretariat at Development Institution at national level |
| Sending applications and administration | August – September | Farmers organisation bring the filled application to development institution | LISF secretariat at Development Institution at national level |
| Selection of CBOs/ Farmers groups applications | October | Screening/checking for quality control using agreed criteria | Technical Committee |
| Training of selected CBOs/ Farmer group leaders | October- November | Training workshop | LISF secretariat at Development Institution at national level |
| Disbursement of funds to selected CBOs/ Farmers groups | November | Farmers informed to collect grants | LISF secretariat at Development Institution at national level |
| Screening and selection of farmer innovators | November- December | Vetting using agreed criteria | CBOs/Farmer groups Fund |
| Disbursement of funds to selected farmer innovators | January - February | Selected farmer innovators informed to collect grants | CBOs/Farmer groups Fund management committee |
| Implementation of innovative ideas by selected innovators | March- December | Selected farmer innovators conduct activities based on approved work plan and budget | Farmer Innovators |
| Regular technical backstopping for selected farmer innovators | January – December | Regular visits, interviews and mentoring sessions | LISF secretariat at Development Institution at national level, Support NGOs |
| Monitoring and evaluation of activities | January – December | Regular visits, interviews | CBOs Fund management committee, Development Institution at national level, Support NGOs |
| Reporting and sharing of results | Quarterly | Workshops, exchange visits and publications | Farmer Innovators, CBOs/Farmer Group |

6.0 Conclusion

The LISF approach as piloted in Uganda since 2007 demonstrated that when given the opportunity and support, farmers and their organisations can manage resources at the local level. Overall, the local innovation support funds increased farmers' access to resources. This significantly influenced their ability to innovate or stimulate more innovation. In the long run, it increased farmers' contribution to agricultural research and development. Farmers are supported to carry out informal experimentation. This can lead to generation of site specific technologies, learning and practices. The innovation pilots illustrated that giving farmer incentives in the form of grants and even a loan can enable them become more innovative. Farmers have ideas and can solve problems related to agriculture even with limited technical and financial support. However, more time is needed to establish the long-term viability of these LISFs.

Furthermore, the process of up-scaling should tap into existing opportunities to consolidate the achievements realised during the pilot phase of local innovation support funds. The LISF implementers guide provides information in form of experiences and steps to take by key stakeholders in research and development. This will be beneficial to all those interested in promoting and supporting farmer innovation in agriculture and natural resources management through the local innovation support funds.

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Annex

Annex 1 – Criteria for selection and approval of innovative ideas

The criteria used by the fund management committee of CBOs for selecting the initiatives are explained below. The first draft of these criteria was developed by the PROLINNOVA-Uganda Secretariat and then shared with farmers' group executives. They were then reviewed after giving a feedback. Copies of the final criteria were then availed to the groups in the local languages. Initiatives supported by the LISFs include both technical developments as well as ways and means of improving the process of innovation, for example:

- Crop production
- Livestock production/ improvement
- Soil fertility management
- Learning visits to other areas for institutional / technical assistance
- Generating innovative ways for collectively marketing their produce
- Developing creative ways to finance initiatives (e.g. group savings).

Selection criteria The CBOs worked with the local innovators to identify the innovations to be supported with the funds, using the following criteria:

- The innovation must pass the "TEES test" (Technically feasible, economically viable, environmental friendly, socially acceptable).
- The applicant for the funds must prove to the FMC the existence of the innovation to be supported.
- The applicant must be willing to share his/her results to the community.
- The idea should be original.
- The innovation should be replicable.
- The innovation should be simple to understand.
- The applicant must be prepared to use the resources according to the work plan in the application;
- The applicant must be prepared to contribute 20% of the total cost of the experiment or activity, to be paid in kind.

Annex 2 – Example/format for MoU with community based organizations

1.0 PREAMBLE

THIS memorandum of understanding signed this..... day ofyear.....

BETWEEN

ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT (hereinafter referred to as EA of one part) of P.O BOX 11259, Kampala, Uganda as the
Coordinating organization for PROLINNOVA,
AND

..... here in after referred to as the

..... of the other part.

WHERE AS Environmental Alert’s overall goal is to improved livelihoods of vulnerable communities by enhancing agriculture productivity and sustainable Natural Resource Management. Environmental Alert is partnering with other organizations to implement PROLINNOVA Uganda programme. PROLINNOVA Uganda is an NGO- led initiative to build a global learning network on promoting local innovation in ecologically – oriented agriculture and Natural Resource Management. EA is extending a grant received from Rockefeller Foundation to facilitate Farmers Access to Innovation Resources (FAIR) 2, has accepted to collaborate as a grant recipient in this initiative.

2.0 OBLIGATIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT

1. To support the grantee in developing modalities for implementing the Farmers Access to Innovation Resources (FAIR) 2.
2. To support the grantee in their other institutional capacity needs necessary for project implementation and group strengthening.

3.0 OBLIGATIONS OF THE RECIPIENT ORGANISATION/GROUP

1. Commit resource to designated purpose in applying the funds to the local innovators within their groups and work in line with PROLINNOVA beneficiaries.
2. To uphold their governance mechanism and participatory methodology of decision making.
3. Participate in joint activities organized by PROLINNOVA members.
4. Execute implementation of the Farmer Access to Innovation Resources (FAIR) 2, Project objectives in timely manner.

4.0 IT IS FURTHER AGREED UPON THAT,

1. Environmental Alert is a non – political, non – denominational organization and will therefore have no affiliation/discrimination during the execution of its programs; the recipient organization shall therefore shield Environmental Alert from any unnecessary political or other interference in its operation.
2. Environmental Alert may utilize the recipient organizations’ Executive/committee members where their skills shall be deemed beneficial in furthering the project and where such an arrangement shall have no, or be deemed to have no negative effects on the normal operations of such members.
3. The recipient organisation shall furnish Environmental Alert with quarterly reports on its activities towards Farmers Access to Innovation Resources.

4. The recipient organization has received.....

5.0 DURATION OF MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

1. This Memorandum of understanding will hold for a period of

6.0 TERMINATION OF THE MEMORANDUM

1. The collaboration may expire any time upon Environmental Alert’s completion of its duties or upon withdrawal of funding by the Donor or upon the recipient organisation expression that it no longer requires the services of Environmental Alert.

2. In the likely event that need arises to settle differences concerning this Memorandum or any undertaking relating to this Memorandum, all parties agree to accept resolution of the differences by an independent arbitration committee appointed through mutual agreement by all parties. The committee’s decision will be final.

SIGNED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF MUSAMBA ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION GROUP

Name.....

Signature.....

SIGNED FOR AND ON BEHALF OF ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT.

Name.....

Signature.....

Annex 3 – Example/format of an application form for local innovation support funds by a farmer innovator

1. Name of the applicant/group.....

2. Gender Male Female Group Age

If group is it registered

3. Have you received support from anywhere else? If so explain.

4. What are you planning to do with the support requested?

a) Support to develop the innovation (inputs, tools, etc.)

b) Support to continue with research on the innovation

c) Support for exchange visit

5. Explain the kind of support that is needed and how long will the activity take?

6. Explain why the support is needed

7. How much support is needed? The total amount Uganda shillings.

8. How did you get to know about Local innovation support fund (LISF)

Date of submission.....

Sign.....

NB Attach the form with your application and detailed budget