

MSPs review- Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda

A synthesis outcome

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Background to the action research

Research questions :

- There is an emerging dwindling in the ownership of Prolinova why?
- Why was there a loss of interest and drop out among some members?
- Why were some members failing to fulfil their commitments to the partnership?
- Some members expressed dissatisfaction with how the coordination function in the network was fulfilled. Why?
- There were contestations over resource allocation in the network? Why?



Methodology

Participatory process which included.

- Consultations with the national secretariats, face to face interviews, E-consultations and a national workshop at which draft findings were shared and validated with additional insights.
- The country specific studies involved the engagement of local consultants



General findings- Successes of the MSP

Networking.

1. Prolinnova has served as a platform for networking within countries and with the broader global Prolinnova network.
2. Within countries, stronger collaborations have emerged such as the ones between research centres and NGOs and innovators.
3. At the international level networking opportunities provided partner organisations with exposure to “new horizons” and global linkages and “friendships”.



Successes contd”

Capacity development

1. PROLINNOVA was appreciated by the members as a platform for partners to acquire a better understanding of the value of action learning, reflection and analysis.
2. By providing its members with opportunities to attend international and national workshops and conferences, and by participating in exposure visits the PROLINNOVA provided excellent capacity enhancing opportunities.
3. Scholarship when/where offered, were also highly appreciated and enhanced member engagement and commitment in PROLINNOVA activities.



Successes

Mainstreaming Agricultural Innovation System

1. Integration of PID into government programmes such as mainstreaming the Agricultural Innovation System (AIS) into national agricultural research and development programmes in which PROLINNOVA partners are playing an important role.
2. It has also managed to enhance successful implementation of existing national laws and policies to support PID and its institutionalization into Agricultural Research and development.
3. Some countries (e.g. Kenya) reported that PROLINNOVA has influenced how local research establishment conduct research. They have become more open to the participation of farmers.
4. PROLINNOVA has helped bring to the fore alternative ways of generating new technologies.



Successes contd

Mainstreaming

5. Farmers were trained on how to access LISF and local innovation inventory was established. LISF was introduced and it paved the way for farmer innovations to gain recognition at both grassroots and further through POG visits, global recognition.



Successes

Implementing activities together- LISF

1. LISF served as a galvanizing mechanism for PROLINNOVA members to operationalise PID on the ground.
2. LISF nurtured outreach activities of members and links with local communities.
3. LISF provided practical ways to link with local communities.
4. LISF being a global initiative enabled network- wide sharing of lessons.
5. LISF, while promoting local innovation development, is viewed as empowering to farmers .It provides farmer groups the responsibility for managing local funds, encouraging and fostering financial accountability and providing necessary training contributed substantially to local empowerment.



Successes contd'

Information sharing and policy

1. PROLINNOVA is a dynamic source of information which is widely shared through both electronic and print forms.
2. Prolinnova provided policy training for members. It offered opportunity for policy influencing – directed towards governments and research institutions.
3. On Policy Influencing, the PROLINNOVA Approach, has influenced Research organisations, like KARI in Kenya, to change their research policy to now recognise farmers as innovators.
4. Prolinova members too have conducted formal research and made the scientific case merit for propagation of innovations.



Successes contd'

Visibility and ownership

1. Participation in Prolinnova has increased visibility of the Prolinnova members, the farmer innovators and of innovations within and outside the country. This was especially the case when innovations were published and widely shared in PROLINNOVA publications.
2. Ownership- the extent to which one was committed to Prolinnova, grew with time and was strengthened by ones passion and through roles taken up in committees such as (NSC/CT).



Successes contd'

Coordination and management

1. The nature of coordination and management in the network reflects the depth of participatory practice within PROLINNOVA.
2. In all three countries, for instance, a Secretariat led the coordination, a national steering committee, with open and flexible membership, provided stewardship while management and accounting for financial resources was surrendered to IPs. Joint planning at the national level which spreads ownership of programs.
3. Host organisations too play a role in the management and coordination function of the network by committing human and financial resources beyond the commitments in the activity budget.



General findings - Challenges of getting the MSP to function

1. Existing without registration

- *PROLINNOVA was not yet registered in all three countries thus limiting its ambition and forcing it to mainly depend on the benevolence of its members to implement its programmes.*

2. Absence of formal structures and regulations.

- *Not registering and Legalising Prolinnova meant in turn that roles, obligations and responsibilities of the different stakeholders were not clearly defined. It also meant that the necessary structures, rules and regulations which would in turn define and strengthen members' commitment. Were not sufficiently in place.*



Challenges contd'

3. Documentation of PROLINNOVA CP evolution and growth and findings.

- *Overall, in all three study countries, documentation of the process and evolution of the partnership has been weak. In spite of significant increase in recognition of local innovation development, there is limited public awareness*
- *PROLINNOVA publications, field days and agency-level briefings have not yet been sufficiently used to support the popularising and dissemination of farmer innovations and associated processes.*

4. Resource mobilisation:

- *Funds from the international Secretariat on which all programmes depend are often earmarked, surrendered to a few IPs for specific projects such as JOLISA and LISF and therefore not sufficient to keep all members actively involved. This sometimes creates tensions and contestations between those who take on a lead in implementation and those that do not.*
- *There is insufficient formation of alliances among PROLINNOVA stakeholders, there is also scanty partners' involvement in joint proposals drafting and resource mobilisation.*



Challenges contd'

5. Membership interests and motivation is varied

- *Prolinnova partnership is composed of CBOs, NGOs, Government departments, with varied interests and expectations from the partnership. This affects how members perceive and respond to their roles and obligations to the partnership.*

6. Prolinnova and Policy Advocacy and Lobbying

- *Proactive internal advocacy targeted at its member organisations has not been fully taken up to enhance wider ownership of Prolinnova.*

Challenges contd'

7. Monitoring and evaluation.

- M&E in all three study countries is still weak in spite of the M and E training offered by Prolinnova.
- This probably due to either absence of or weak performance indicators.

8. The Secretariats- a one- person challenge

- In all three study countries the secretariat is hosted by a member organisation and is managed by one person alone who some times works just a few hours per week.

Recommendations – strengthening the network

1. Explore practical measures that strengthen synergies in the partnership e.g. having more inter partner interaction without having to rely on the Secretariat to organise such events.
2. Strengthen the Institutionalization and incorporation of PROLINNOVA approaches into the core business of the member organizations. E.g. transforming local innovation into major cross cutting themes.
3. Provide Prolinnova country programs legal stature.



Strengthening the network contd'

4. Institutionalise MSPs and participatory practices by undertaking initiatives that take farmer innovations to the next generation of farmers, the students.
5. Design an induction programme in which roles and responsibilities of all parties are clarified on the onset.



Recommendations – Communication

1. Make innovative use of IT such as the website, e magazines or newsletter, and other media and encouraging members to join recommended blogs.
2. Facilitate regular stakeholder meetings and retreats. They will improve stakeholder ownership.
3. Involve members in hands on learning.
4. Provide platforms for publishing members' case studies especially by proactively looking for ideas that work, provide cutting edge innovation, and cause change.



Recommendations- IS- strategic leadership

1. Increase the visibility of the IS through more formal/regular interaction. E.g a monthly Skype conference.
2. The International Secretariat is well positioned to support country chapters to think and plan strategically. This role needs to be played more actively through encouraging participation in concept development, joint strategy setting and fundraising. This will build capacity and transform members from being passive recipients of funds to active strategists.
3. Take the conversation between the IS and the country programmes away from only funds into strategic engagements such as strategic planning and network building.



Recommendations – Strengthening participation !

1. Representation by more than one person at Prolinova events and meetings should be adopted and promoted to respond to the challenge of staff turnover. In member organisations where PROLINNOVA has been fully mainstreamed, representation and participation at meetings and activities has been for more than one staff.
2. Although senior leaders in an organisation would be the most ideal participants in Prolinnova, due to their ability to influence decisions, drive and mainstream the PROLINNOVA agenda in their organisations, their unavailability and or intermittent participation often become a liability for the partnership. Hence making the case for a second representative ideally a middle level staff.



Recommendations - Building ownership '

1. Enhance member organisations' ownership of Prolinnova by visiting, more frequently, partner organizations and making presentations to the leadership to strengthen their link with Prolinova and to enlist their opinions and contributions.
2. Strengthen participation by inviting all partners to contribute to the drafting of proposals and mobilisation of resources.
3. Apply Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation to both the programs implemented and to assess member participation .



Next steps

- The outcome of this study is being refined to build on the earlier PROLINNOVA booklet on Facilitating Multi-stakeholder partnerships.
- This work will hopefully be done in the coming week or so, with a hope of publishing the outcomes into a new PROLINNOVA booklet.

Thank you for your kind attention!!



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in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management