

Prolinnova Oversight Group appointments

Three new members have been appointed to the Prolinnova Oversight Group (POG); Ibrahima Seck from Senegal, TJ James from India, and Violet Kirigua from Kenya.

Ibrahima Seck is the new representative for farmer organisations, having studied agriculture and being a pioneer in organic farming in Africa. He manages an organic farm for groundnuts and several other crops in collaboration with three other farmers. He co-founded the first Senegalese organic farming association ASPAB (Association Sénégalaise pour la Promotion de l'Agriculture Biologique), which unites 1500 small-scale farmers. With its "Biosain" label, ASPAB entered local and regional markets already more than



Ibrahima Seck.

Credit: Prolinnova

30 years ago.

Ibrahima also co-founded and coordinates FENAB (Fédération Nationale pour l'Agriculture Biologique), a national organisation of 22,000 organic farmers advocating for recognition of organic agriculture in agricultural policy and research in Senegal. He also founded CIRPED (Centre for Farmers' Initiatives and Research for Environment and Development). He is President of PANGOC, a pan-African NGO consortium on agriculture.

In addition, he is a member of the National Steering Committee of Prolinnova–Senegal and is greatly involved in promoting local innovation in agroecology. He knows West African agriculture well, as he has taken part in several meetings in the region on family farming issues.

TJ James is an anthropologist, having worked on grassroots innovation for over two decades. He is Founder and Director of Creativiti Council in Kerala and Director of the Innovation – Science & Technology-based Entrepreneurship Development project of India's Department of Science and Technology, implemented by Peermade Development Society for incubating local innovations.

He has experience in scouting, documenting, developing, incubating, disseminating and commercialising



TJ James.

Credit: Prolinnova

local innovations and setting up innovation-based micro-enterprises, with the support of donors such as UNDP, FAO, National Science & Technology Entrepreneurship Development Board and National Innovation Fund of the Government of India.

TJ was also a team member in the USAID-supported South-to-South HIV/AIDS Resource Exchange project for sharing best practices between India and Africa. He was awarded the Chevening Scholarship in 2011 and nominated for a Fulbright Humphrey Fellowship in 2017.

In addition, he coordinated the National Innovation Foundation Government of India (2005–07) and the Honey Bee Network in Kerala (2000–13) and was Senior Honorary Fellow of the Kerala Start-up Mission in Rural Innovation (2018–20).

Violet Kirigua holds an MSc and is currently pursuing a PhD in Agribusiness. She has over 20 years' experience in agricultural research with a focus on horticulture and agricultural marketing. She has expertise in programme and project management, strategic management, and capacity development.

Violet is senior research officer in the Crops Systems Unit of the Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organization (KALRO). She has major



Violet Kirigua.

Credit: Prolinnova

responsibilities in research planning and management, financial resource planning, acquisition and management, monitoring and evaluation, communication and organisational marketing. She was previously Programme Officer in the Horticulture and Industrial Crops Programme in the former Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI).

She has been involved in designing and implementing various development and research projects and facilitated strategic planning processes for many national and regional organisations. She has also facilitated workshops and meetings and made external evaluations of organisations and projects. She has designed and conducted tailor-made training on various technical and management aspects, has written numerous research reports and papers and co-edited proceedings of many national, regional and international workshops and conferences. She has also published in refereed scientific journals and conference proceedings.

Violet has been a member of Prolinnova–Kenya since it started in 2007 and continues to be a very active champion of its principles. She represents KALRO in the Prolinnova–Kenya National Steering Committee and represents Kenya on the Prolinnova taskforce for Eastern & Southern Africa.

www.prolinnova.net / www.agrecol.de