

Farmer-led Documentation

Learning from PROLINNOVA Experiences

compiled and edited by

Laurens van Veldhuizen, Ann Waters-Bayer,
Chesha Wettasinha and Wim Hiemstra

A publication in the series on
Promoting Local INNOVATION (PROLINNOVA)

with contributions from partners in the PROLINNOVA Global
Partnership Programme

PROLINNOVA International Secretariat
December 2011

First published December 2011 by
International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR)

Citation: Veldhuizen, Laurens; Waters-Bayer, Ann; Wettasinha, Chesha & Hiemstra, Wim (eds). Farmer-led documentation: Learning from PROLINNOVA experiences. A booklet in the series on Promoting Local Innovation (PROLINNOVA). Silang, Cavite, Philippines: IIRR / Leusden: PROLINNOVA International Secretariat, ETC AgriCulture. December 2011.

ISBN: 1-930261-30-6

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PROLINNOVA International Secretariat
ETC AgriCulture
POB 64, 3830 AB Leusden
The Netherlands
☎ +31 33 4326000
✉ prolinnova@etcnl.nl

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Design and layout by: Lilibeth T. Sulit - Villela, IIRR

Cover photo: Million, community photographer from Tigray, discussing some of her photos with Fetien Abay, researcher from Mekelle University and member of the FLD facilitating team in PROLINNOVA-Ethiopia, during a follow-up visit (photo: Beyene Tedla)

Printed in the Philippines by JARM Printing Press, Laguna, Philippines

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List of acronyms

ARC	Agricultural Research Council
ARD	Agricultural Research and Development
ASE	Agriservice Ethiopia
BoARD	Bureau of Agriculture and Rural Development
CRESA	Centre Régional d'Enseignement Spécialisé en Agriculture (University of Niamey)
DDRDR	Departmental Direction of Rural Development
DoA	Department of Agriculture
ERSHA	Ethiopian Rural Self-Help Association
ETV	Ethiopian Television
FIG	Farmer Innovator Group
FFS	Farmer Field School
FLD	Farmer-led Documentation
FSG	Farmer Support Group
GenARDIS	Gender, Agriculture and Rural Development in the Information Society
ICT	Information and Communication Technologies
IIRR	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction
INRAN	Institut National de la Recherche Agronomique du Niger
IST	International Support Team
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LISF	Local Innovation Support Fund
MoFA	Ministry of Food and Agriculture
NGO	non-governmental organisation
NRM	natural resource management
NSC	National Steering Committee
NWP	North-West Province
PELUM	Participatory Ecological Land Use Management
PID	Participatory Innovation Development
POG	PROLINNOVA Oversight Group
PROFEIS	Promoting Farmer Experimentation and Innovation in the Sahel
PROLINNOVA	Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and NRM
PV	Participatory Video
SA	South Africa
USD	United States Dollar
WLW	Women Learning Women

Acknowledgements

This booklet is based on the experiences and enthusiasm of women and men farmers who took the lead in documenting their innovations and experimentation in agriculture. We thank these rural community members, as well as the development practitioners in various PROLINNOVA country platforms who invested their time and thought in supporting the farmer-led documentation (FLD) process. Their keen interest in FLD and their willingness to reflect on, analyse and document their experiences made it possible for lessons from their work to be shared more widely through this booklet. We thank also the "backstoppers" (external advisors) to the country platforms who encouraged and assisted the authors in documenting their experiences.

The FLD approach has been promoted by PELUM-Uganda (Participatory Ecological Land Use Management Uganda Chapter), PROLINNOVA and Oxfam Novib since 2006. We acknowledge the important role played by the participants of the first FLD workshop co-organised by these three organisations in 2006 in Uganda, as this laid the foundation for all further FLD work. We appreciate the support to this important event given by the chair and members of the FLD Steering Committee, Emebet Wuhib Mutungi (Africa 2000), Grace Lutalo (PELUM-Uganda Country Desk), Nicole Metz (Oxfam Novib) and Dorine Ruter (PROLINNOVA), and by Emily Drani as a very capable facilitator.

Our thanks go also to the staff of the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) in the Philippines for their inputs in designing and printing the booklet.

Shaping FLD through the pilot activities (2006-10) would not have been possible without the generous financial support of Oxfam Novib and the Directorate General for Development Cooperation (DGIS) of the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs, through its support to the PROLINNOVA network, as well as contributions in cash and/or kind from all those involved in the FLD process. We thank them for their support.

The editors

Summary

PROLINNOVA is an international learning and advocacy network that seeks to promote local innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resource management. Partners of the network give high importance to the study and documentation of local innovators, their innovative practices and the process of innovation. These local ideas and practices are used as the basis for farmer-led joint research – a process in which men and women farmers further develop and improve on them by working together with scientists, extensionists, development agents and other actors.

This booklet on farmer-led documentation is the fourth in a series by PROLINNOVA and captures the experiences of network partners in giving farmers a key role in documenting their own experiences and innovations. It starts with a short introduction to farmer-led documentation and summarises how the approach has been developed within the network thus far. More details on hands-on implementation of the approach are described in five cases based on pilot activities undertaken in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Niger, South Africa and Sudan. The booklet concludes with some key lessons drawn from these experiences and highlights some points for consideration in pursuing the approach.

Resumen

El "Desarrollo Participativo de Innovaciones" (DPI) consiste en una investigación dirigida por campesinos, implementada en conjunto con otros actores sociales. Este concepto forma parte integral de la red global de aprendizaje PROLINNOVA (Promoviendo la Innovación Local en la Agricultura Ecológica y en el Manejo de Recursos Naturales). Esta red procura fortalecer y ampliar el abordaje al desarrollo, el cual comienza cuando estos agricultores idean nuevas y diferentes formas para usar los recursos naturales para mejorar sus condiciones de vida. El objetivo final de esta red es que el DPI sea comprendido, aceptado e integrado como parte de las actividades normales de la investigación y el desarrollo en la agricultura. La documentación de las prácticas innovadoras de los agricultores y de los procesos de innovación es muy importante para PROLINNOVA. Las ideas y prácticas de los agricultores forman la base para la investigación informal realizada por estos agricultores – un proceso en que hombres y mujeres mejoran sus prácticas ya que estos agricultores trabajan junto con científicos, extensionistas, agentes de desarrollo y otros actores.

Este es el cuarto folleto de una serie que recoge las experiencias de los socios de PROLINNOVA en diversos países, para darle un papel preponderante a los agricultores en la documentación de sus experiencias e innovaciones. El mismo empieza con una introducción sobre documentación hecha por los agricultores y describe la metodología desarrollada por PROLINNOVA hasta este momento. La implementación de esta metodología se describe en mayor detalle a través de cinco estudios de caso, realizados en Burkina Faso, Etiopía, Níger, Sudáfrica y Sudán. El folleto termina con un capítulo que describe las lecciones aprendidas y los puntos a tomar en cuenta durante la documentación realizada directamente por los agricultores.

Résumé

PROLINNOVA ('Promotion de l'Innovation Locale en Agriculture Ecologique et Gestion des Ressources Naturelles') est un réseau international d'apprentissage et de plaidoyer ayant pour but la promotion de l'innovation locale dans le domaine de l'agriculture écologique et de la gestion des ressources naturelles. Les partenaires du réseau donnent beaucoup d'importance à l'étude et à la documentation des paysans innovateurs, leurs pratiques innovatrices et le processus de l'innovation. Les idées et les pratiques locales sont utilisées comme la base de la recherche action participative dirigée par les paysans – un processus dans lequel les paysans et paysannes développent et améliorent davantage leurs idées et pratiques locales en travaillant ensemble avec des scientifiques, des vulgarisateurs, des formateurs, des agents de développement et autres acteurs.

Cette brochure portant sur la documentation paysanne conjointe est la quatrième dans une série écrite par PROLINNOVA. Elle traite les expériences des partenaires du réseau international en donnant aux paysans le rôle clé de documenter leurs propres expériences et innovations. La brochure débute par une courte introduction à la documentation paysanne conjointe et résume la façon dont l'approche a été développée au sein du réseau. Les détails de l'exécution de l'approche sont décrits dans les cinq cas basés sur les activités pilotes conduites au Burkina Faso, en Ethiopie, au Niger, en Afrique du Sud et au Soudan. La brochure se termine par quelques leçons clés tirées de ces expériences et fait quelques recommandations à considérer en poursuivant l'approche.