

PROLINNOVA Guidelines 7:

Profile and responsibilities of Country Platform Coordinators

The strength of PROLINNOVA as an international network depends greatly on the performance of the multi-stakeholder Country Platforms (CPs) and this, in turn, depends greatly on the networking ability, enthusiasm and creativity of the CP coordinators. It is therefore critical that the National Steering Committee (NSC) of a CP carefully identifies and selects an appropriate coordinator. This set of guidelines is meant to enable an NSC to outline clearly the expected profile (qualifications and experience), the roles and responsibilities, and the performance expectations of a CP coordinator.

In addition to these guidelines, the NSC should outline a *clear statement of responsibility/accountability* (job description) of the CP coordinator to the NSC, to the management of the CP host organisation, to the CP member organisations, to the (sub)regional coordinator and to the International Secretariat.

The CP coordinator is accountable to the NSC and takes part in NSC meetings as an *ex officio* (non-voting) member. S/he may play her/his role in a full- or part-time position or as a volunteer, normally based in the host organisation but possibly within another member organisation of the CP.

In the temporary absence of a CP coordinator, the NSC is expected to assign one of its members to assume this role until a new coordinator has been appointed, so that there will be no communication gaps within the CP and with the wider network.

The NSC and the CP coordinator should, at the very least, meet the minimum commitments of all CPs as outlined in Guidelines No. 8.

Qualifications and experience required

- Minimum of a first degree (equivalent to what is called a bachelor's degree in some countries) in a relevant field, preferably in agriculture, natural resource management, economics or social sciences; a higher degree would be an added advantage
- Good understanding of the concept of local innovation and a positive attitude towards recognising the creativity and experimentation capacity of small-scale farmers
- Basic knowledge on gender issues in agriculture, on climate change and on sustainable development
- Working experience with small-scale farmers
- 3–4 years' working experience in a multistakeholder setting
- Ability to network with a wide range of stakeholders at local and global level
- Experience in mobilising resources (writing proposals, fundraising, interacting with potential donors)
- Good skills in information management and sharing
- Excellent communication skills, with the ability to speak and write in the international language of the country: if this is not English, then a working knowledge of English would also be required
- Ability to write clear reports and meet deadlines
- Ability to work with minimum supervision
- Computer literate – good skills in MS Office, MS Excel, Internet, email and social media

Key responsibilities

1. Coordination, communication and networking

- Facilitate planning by the NSC and CP members and coordinate the agreed activities, ensuring that they are implemented according to the workplan
- Communicate at least once monthly with members of the CP Working Group (implementation team)

- Organise periodic meetings of the NSC, either face-to-face or virtual
- Prepare and circulate periodic updates on activities of the network to the CP members
- Respond to demands for information about PROLINNOVA from within and beyond the CP
- Support documentation of CP experiences, outputs, outcomes and impacts
- Share CP reports with the regional PROLINNOVA platforms and International Support Team
- Share information and documents on CP activities via the PROLINNOVA Yahoo group and website
- Arrange representation of the CP in relevant meetings and ensure that back-to-office reports on the meetings are made available to all CP members
- Continuously update a PowerPoint presentation on the CP activities for presentation by the CP coordinator, NSC members or other members of the CP in relevant meetings and institutions
- Ensure proper organisation of training events, policy-dialogue activities and innovation markets/fairs, as agreed in the CP's workplan
- Work closely with the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) focal person in the CP and co-organise periodic M&E trips to the field
- Assist visitors to the CP in terms of travel arrangements, hotel bookings, meeting arrangements etc

2. Administration

- Submit periodic workplans, budgets and reports to the NSC for approval and then to the PROLINNOVA International Secretariat or multi-CP project coordinator and to donors in a timely manner
- Ensure that reports meet the donors' requirements
- Circulate meeting minutes and workshop reports within 2 weeks and 4 weeks, respectively
- Communicate key network-management information to NSC and Working Group members
- Maintain CP and other PROLINNOVA documents in good order
- Carry out other activities as assigned by the NSC

3. Coordination of proposal development / fundraising

- Encourage and coordinate the development of proposals by CP members for internal or external funding
- Develop proposals for host organisation to support CP coordination
- Maintain strategic linkages with potential donors and other partner organisations in the country
- Monitor and track funding opportunities and inform NSC and Working Group about opportunities and deadlines
- Communicate with NSC, Working Group and other CP partners about funding opportunities, development of concept notes/ proposals and donor follow-up
- Ensure timely information gathering, data collection and compilation for concept note / proposal development

4. Financial management

- Compile annual and project budgets in consultation with NSC and Working Group members
- Obtain agreement of NSC on budget before the budget year begins
- Use funds according to activities in workplan and justify any deviation to the NSC
- Ensure that budgets are not exceeded and that funds are fully utilised within planned period and make regular, timely reports to the NSC on the state of expenditure to allow for increasing / decreasing platform expenditure

5. Linkage with (sub)regional coordinators

- Work in collaboration with the (sub)regional coordinator (SRC) in (sub)regional proposal development, activity implementation and report compilation
- Send copies of the CP's quarterly and annual plans and reports to the SRC
- Respond to requests for information made by the SRC
- The NSC of a CP should ask the SRC for comments during regular assessment of the CP coordinator (e.g. half-yearly, yearly) and when the NSC is in the process of hiring or firing a CP coordinator.