A Report on the Electronic Evaluation for 2007

The E-Evaluation for the past year (2007) was conducted in the months of January and February. The first round was conducted from January 9-10, the second round from January 23-24. The following are the results of the first and second rounds of the E-Evaluation:

I. First Round

There were 16 participants to the first round: from Asia: 1) Cambodia, 2) Nepal; from Latin America: 3) Bolivia, 4) Peru; from Africa: 5) Senegal (PROFEIS), 6) Niger, 7) Ghana North, 8) Ghana South, 9) Niger, 10) Tanzania, 11) South Africa, 12) Sudan, 13) Uganda; from the IST: 14) CISVUA, 15) IIRR, 16) Secretariat (ETC).

PROFEIS did not provide a response to the questions on the e-evaluation because it is new to PROLINNOVA and therefore cannot make a comparison of previous years' performance, but it gave its own comments and recommendations. IST-CISVUA despite its busy schedule still wanted to participate in the e-evaluation but it sent its annual report where it highlighted a much better and enhanced performance on capacity building for the CPs it supports. Apologies to Ghana South because I can't open the document it sent and there is no more time to ask Ghana South to resend its response, but please continue to participate on the second round.

Not everyone responded to every question, so the total responses do not tally with the total number of participants. The following are the results of the first round:

1. **Governance**. Do you feel that PROLINNOVA is an effectively governed, democratic network? Seven (7) answered "As in previous year", and six (6) "Better than previous years"

    Summary of Comments: PROLINNOVA is functioning democratically, with a more balanced and representative POG whose election is transparent, and it is functioning well with competent members. Decisions are more participatory from bottom up, listening to the opinions of countries. IST supports the CPs but the CPs are given the leeway to decide on their own. Fund management is more participative. Communication is quicker.

    Recommendations:

    a) On POG: POG to follow-up the not so active members; more visibility on ground by regional POG members; rotation of regional representatives to the POG by nomination.

    b) On Annual Partners' Meetings: More room for sharing among CP/RP programs; background papers needed to simplify discussions; follow-up process to update matters discussed especially the action plan; if possible phone conferences could be held.

    c) On Participation: Bigger opportunities for the participants in the region in the planning of actions; participation by the CP/RP coordinators in the POG decision-making particularly those related to methodologies and approaches; more participation by partners and communities in decision-making (CP); to facilitate execution of projects prioritized by PROLINNOVA (Andes); there is a need to adapt some variations in management to suit country culture and level of development – stringent procedures are causing management stress.

d) On Funds management/ accessing: Funds not commensurate with action plans, more understanding and flexibility needed; collaboration between ETC and the CPs or IST in funds accessing; improve community control of funds.

2. **Learning, sharing of information among partners and countries**. Do you feel that PROLINNOVA is an effective platform to learn about relevant issues for your work and improve your work?

   There is an obvious improvement in this area: 12 answers for "Better than previous years" and One (1) for "As in previous year".

   Summary of comments: While one participant noted that there is still a problem experiences in the technology (internet), most have expressed that due to the mail exchanges in the e-group and the website, a lot of opportunities have been created for sharing of experiences, learning, documents as well as linking with research institutions and other development organizations; the annual partners' meeting is very much appreciated for discussion of critical issues and sharing of information, experiences and lessons, especially in taking the country level issues to higher level of discussion especially for policy engagement; the M&E framework, while still continuously being developed and some M&E focal points are not yet active, is a big help and has provided some structures for learning and follow-up of activities.

   Recommendations:

   a) On the website/Internet technology: IIRR to create back-up capacity/person for periods when web master is not available; need to improve further on the website, e.g. delay in uploading information from CPs, some documents cannot be opened after downloading); need to provide information to non-English readers, e.g. webpage in Spanish, French, etc.; promote the use of SKYPE tool in communications.

   b) On information sharing/country exchanges: continue sending updates to CP members, use of yahoomail and indicating what documents have been sent in the website; information should be shared only with those concerned; increased participation of host country CP during international meetings; more TOTs; need for more sharing from pioneer CPs on LISF operationalisation; information and discussion on particular topics be addressed directly to key CPs for a more directed exchanges using the e-group; promote virtual meetings; adequate sessions for sharing and learning, including field visits; Can we have regional meetings?

   c) On the M&E Framework: need to check CPs and M&E focal points on its usefulness; need further training on M&E.

3. **Capacity-Building**. Do you feel that PROLINNOVA provides adequate opportunities to build capacities in relevant fields? Seven (7) responses for "Better than previous years", and four (4) for "As in previous year". One (1) answered "worse than previous years" (Ethiopia), while three (3) did not exactly say worse but the comments in some areas were actually not better than previous years (Secretariat, Nepal and Uganda).

   Comments for "worse" on not so better than previous years: Number of capacity building activities in 2007 compared to 2004, 2005, 2006.

Summary of comments: New countries have been able to join the international meeting in Senegal (PROFEIS countries); Enhanced backstopping activities well appreciated by all CPs and have improved CPs and their partners' capacities; TOT on PID in Ethiopia is well appreciated, also by new countries; workshops as effective means for better understanding PID.

Recommendations:

a) On Participation in workshops and other capacity activities: capacity-building on various issues, but focus on the CPs; prioritize more active CPs, and focusing on training staff and extensionists; more international capacity-building activities; capacities related to linking local innovation and poverty; online courses for broader participation; thematic permanent discussion be promoted; strategy/tool to assess impact of training on CPs; funding support for active CPs for MSc and PhD studies.

b) On Backstopping: increase backstopping activities, i.e. two (2) backstopping per year; explore possibility for other PROLINNOVA members in backstopping PROFEIS countries.

4. **Functioning of the IST and secretariat**. Do you feel that adequate support is provided by the IST and secretariat? Many feel that IST and secretariat support was better than previous years (9 responses), while three (3) feel that it was the same as in the previous year.

Summary of comments: IST and secretariat support is very much appreciated by all CPs especially the sharing of information, timely responses to mails, backstopping, and timely management of funds as well as supporting initiatives to funds raising and organizing partners' meetings; proactive and new initiatives by the IST and secretariat such as HIV/AIDs, Climate Changes, Gender); unbiased support by the secretariat to all CPs; IST and secretariat facilitation of the International Meeting in Senegal was well appreciated. From the secretariat itself – 2007 work was very challenging and demanding that resources to cover its time was already spent in July; support to CPs was very time consuming, but it also feels that it has overloaded the CPs with requests for documentation of experiences.

Recommendations:

a) On the secretariat support: Regular updating of the network members by the secretariat on new initatives (HIV/AIDS, MDGs, etc.); Further sharpening of priorities for secretariat: What do CPs feel that the secretariat could do less?

b) Sharing of tasks with CPs: Stronger sharing of tasks among country partners, e.g. writing of proposals (South Africa, Ethiopia); tighter formats for CPs for planning, reporting, other additional activities.

c) Funds: Enhance fund raising to suit limited activities (CPs), or to cover time spent by secretariat.

d) Backstopping: Despite limited funds, backstopping activities still need to be prioritized to quickly and strongly strengthen CPs understanding on PID, LISF approaches and operationalization as well as lobby strategy for institutionalization capacities of the processes into local institutions.

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in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management

e) Logistics: more efficient logistical support in international trainings/meetings, i.e. tickets and reimbursements.

5. **International Publication/Documentation**. Do people get to know well what we do as an international network through our publications? Seven (7) responses for "Better than previous years, and four (4) for "As in previous years.

Summary of Comments: The website continuous to receive good feedbacks from users; informative, up to date and lots of materials available; publications are good and quality of materials have improved; Spread and awareness are limited – only to the PROLINNOVA network and those close to it, although some invitations for partnership have been noted (Tanzania); Limitations in Language for non-English readers.

Recommendations:

a) CPs contribution to publication: Encourage more CP contribution to the publication.

b) Publication of materials in other languages: Publication in French, Spanish, Arab, and popularization in local languages for spread, including the young.

c) Distribution Policy: need for a clear distribution policy, even beyond the network.

6. **Increased international awareness on PID/ PROLINNOVA**. Do actors at international level recognize the importance of Local Innovation and PID for ecologically-friendly agriculture and natural resource management?

Many feel that this has been better than previous years (9 responses), while two (2) feel that this was the same as in previous year.

Summary of comments: There is an increasing awareness and recognition of PID/PROLINNOVA among international and local organizations: reference to PROLINNOVA Nepal in ID21 by IDS; continuous increase in PID hits in google searches; PROLINNOVA collaboration with FAO in SARD policy brief on scaling up of good practices; continuation of LI pages in AT magazine; reference to PROLINNOVA in document for new EU Thematic Programme for Food Security in Africa; increase in local donor interest (Niger, Uganda, Ethiopia); expression of interests for partnership by some international research organizations (Niger, Uganda); in Niger, IFAD funds two projects on Local Innovation with government (PPILDA and IDAR); In South Africa, Ford is financing FAIR and RIU funded PROLINNOVA involvement in the FARA event; gaining momentum, increasing requests for information on PROLINNOVA (Sudan, Tanzania, Uganda)

Recommendations:

a) Partnership with international research organizations: more involvement of international R&D organizations with a non-threatening or non confronting approach.

b) On Policy dialogue: to engage more effectively with bilateral and multilateral organizations, NGOs and government for information and policy dialogue (PROFEIS).

c) Farmer-to-farmer sharing: promote encounters among peasants on PID.

d) PID Cases: need for more PID cases, for purposes of marketing innovation, capturing donor support (particularly IFAD)

7. Other feedbacks: Some other concerns that were raised pertain mainly on the following issues: further understanding of PID vis-à-vis local innovations with emphasis on the "S"; the evolving nature of PROLINNOVA as a network that involve multi-stakeholder participation, and consequently the need for skills on network management; how to continue to enhance country sharing activities including country visits and sub-programme activities as well as on-line discussions; more PID cases to support advocacy work with policy makers and research organizations; advocacy work on how to enhance existing initiatives by the people not only innovations should also be considered; and how to further enhance funding support to partners.

II. Second Round

In the second round only five respondents came back for a follow-up: Uganda, Niger, Ethiopia, South Africa and the IST-Secretariat (ETC). However the five participants provided interesting insights that may indicate what the others too are thinking. The following is the result of the second round e-evaluation.

1. The functioning of the POG seems to be more effective than the NSC/forums that exist at a CP level? True? Why is that?

   The answer to this question is both yes and no with interesting qualifications. Not true (Uganda and Ethiopia), because these are two distinct functions. At the local level, the NSC is more functional, looking at governance issues at the country level, while the POG looks at the overall issues. True (Niger and South Africa), because while some NSC members are very active, some others are tied up with other activities and are very busy to attend or call for meetings or to be interested in the results of the PROLINNOVA activities; while the POG members are generally active because they feel more responsible and they would like to give good example to the CPs. The Secretariat looks at the POG as functioning well because of the proactive support by the POG secretariat, while at the NSC level it has noted that some members of the NSC are not functioning well because of the lack of communication from the NSC Secretariat.

2. Content understanding in the network: Not clear on PID and its institutionalization; too much a focus on LI. Is this true?

   Again there are two answers to this question: True (Ethiopia, South Africa and Secretariat), because oftentimes the focus is on LI and there is difficulty in looking at LI as entry point to PID; and the challenge is how to go about PID in terms of methodology.

   Not true (Uganda and Niger), LI is entry point to PID, leads to joint research and PID. PID and its institutionalization is clear enough (Niger), however there is still a need to clarify better these concepts (Uganda) although overtime a clearer understanding of PID has developed.

3. Several suggested the need for a second backstopping visit per year? And/or organize more frequent skype or telephone with IST, between countries, conferences? True? Why? How?

   While one seems to find one backstopping activity as fine (Ethiopia), there's seems to be a trend to favor more than one backstopping activity per year (Uganda, Niger, South Africa) so that there is more opportunity for sharing, reflection, planning and

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institutionalization. There's also a suggestion to utilize skype between the CPs and the IST where cost is low.

4. Overload (of requests/work) by IST to countries?

    Except for Ethiopia which does not see an overload on the CP by the IST, the rest (Uganda, Niger, South Africa)do not exactly look at it as overload but a necessary part of the work to learn more; challenging but should not be a reason to discourage sharing; also part of the challenge is to meet deadlines.

5. Usefulness of M&E guidelines? (but seems confirmed by at least 3 countries without having been asked). While there's a suggestion for more M&E training.

    All the responses to this questions affirms the usefulness of the M&E guidelines as a tool for collecting data and ensuring progress as planned. There is concern though that the learning mechanism is not highlighted while it is viewed as equally important than merely "policing". There is a consensus on the need for training on M&E especially in terms of its learning aspect. The secretariat's recommendation is for the IST to reflect with the CPs on the constraints and obstacles in order to establish the rationale for an M&E Training.

III. Some Insights/Conclusions

1. PROLINNOVA as a network is becoming more democratically governed, with the expansion of the Programme Oversight Group (POG) which has now a regional representation, and with a bottom-up participatory approach to governance.
2. There is a lot of opportunity for sharing of experiences, materials and learning from each other through the improved use of communications (skype, e-mail), and the internet/website. The international partners' meeting also served as a venue for learning exchanges. The M&E framework is helpful in documenting progress as well as lessons.
3. While the ToF on PID have provided another opportunity for partners to improve their skills, and the backstopping activities have been improved to enhance capacities of CPs and country partners, it was also noted that the number of capacity-building activities in 2007 decreased as compared with the past years.
4. Secretariat and IST support have improved and is much appreciated by the CPs especially in providing timely information and enhanced backstopping, as well as in undertaking new initiatives.
5. The website has improved and there's a lot of useful materials and publications, however the spread is very limited (i.e. only to those who know PROLINNOVA).
6. There is an increasing awareness on PROLINNOVA among international and local organizations, through the efforts of both the Secretariat and the CPs.
7. POG members could be very active. This is a positive indication of commitment to the whole PROLINNOVA network. The NSC members are as equally active but sometimes some members are too busy that they are not able to participate in local PROLINNOVA activities, and sometimes the NSC secretariat fails to coordinate proper communication.
8. Understanding PID is a continuing challenge. While PID is clear to some with LI as the entry point, to others there is too much focus on LI (local innovations).
9. While backstopping activities by the IST have improved, some CPs felt that there should be more than one backstopping activity during the year to provide more opportunities for learning.
10. While the M&E Framework helped in documenting and generating lessons, there is a need for training on this aspect especially on the more qualitative aspect of generating lessons.

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III. Summary of Recommendations, and strategic issues for discussion at the Ghana International Partners' Meeting in April 2008

Areas	Recommendations	Comments/ Action to be taken
1. Governance	**a) On POG**: POG to follow-up the not so active members; more visibility on ground by regional POG members; rotation of regional representatives to the POG by nomination.	for discussion within the POG
	b) On Annual Partners' Meetings: More room for sharing among CP/RP programs; background papers needed to simplify discussions; follow-up process to update matters discussed especially the action plan; if possible phone conferences could be held.	The PROLINNOVA Secretariat already provided a guiding structure for CP sharing during the Ghana IPM in April 2008
	c) On Participation: 1. Bigger opportunities for the participants in the region in the planning of actions; 2. participation by the CP/RP coordinators in the POG decision-making particularly those related to methodologies and approaches; more participation by partners and communities in decision-making (CP); 3. to facilitate execution of projects prioritized by PROLINNOVA (Andes); 4. there is a need to adapt some variations in management to suit country culture and level of development – stringent procedures are causing management stress.	For discussion in the Ghana IPM: 1. Structure for planning in the region, or should this take place during the IPM? 2. Mechanisms for CP/RP coordinators participation or input in the POG decision-making particularly on methodologies and approaches – also to represent partners and communities. 3. c/o POG 4. for clarification
	d) On Funds management/ accessing: Funds not commensurate with action plans, more understanding and flexibility needed; collaboration between ETC and the CPs or IST in funds accessing; improve community control of funds	For discussion within POG with input from ETC; collaboration in funds accessing can be discussed between the CPs and the IST
2. Learning, sharing of information among partners and countries	**a) On the website/Internet technology**: 1. IIRR to create back-up capacity/person for periods when web master is not available; need to improve further on the website, e.g. delay in uploading information from CPs, some	c/o IIRR, being done already Webpages in Spanish and French – no capacity at IIRR, for decision within the network

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in ecologically-oriented agriculture and natural resource management

	documents cannot be opened after downloading); need to provide information to non-English readers, e.g. webpage in Spanish, French, etc.; promote the use of SKYPE tool in communications.	(e.g. volunteers to develop webpages in Spanish and in French) Skype is downloadable at the internet, everyone is encouraged to use it for easy communication.
	b) On information sharing/country exchanges: 1. continue sending updates to CP members, use of yahoomail and indicating what documents have been sent in the website;	1. Reminder to everyone
	2. information should be shared only with those concerned;	2. Reminder to everyone
	3. increased participation of host country CP during international meetings;	3. c/o host country and ETC
	4. more TOTs;	4. consult POG and secretariat re: budget implications
	5. need for more sharing from pioneer CPs on LISF operationalisation;	5. c/o pioneer CPs on LISF
	6.. information and discussion on particular topics be addressed directly to key CPs for a more directed exchanges using the e-group;	6. Reminder to everyone
	7. promote virtual meetings; adequate sessions for sharing and learning, including field visits;	7. c/o CPs
	8. Can we have regional meetings?	8. for discussion during the IPM
	c) On the M&E Framework: need to check CPs and M&E focal points on its usefulness; need further training on M&E.	IST focal point to discuss with CP M&E focal points
3. Capacity-Building	*a) On Participation in workshops and other capacity activities*: 1. capacity-building on various issues, but focus on the CPs;	1. For discussion - suggestions on what issues; may need a committee to handle.
	2. prioritize more active CPs, and focusing on training staff and extensionists;	2. Policy from the POG, also depending on the kind of capacity-building activity

	3. more international capacity-building activities;	3. For discussion – suggestions on what activities and how
	4. capacities related to linking local innovation and poverty;	4. Maybe the next phase of PROLINNOVA, start delveloping concept and proposal now
	5. online courses for broader participation;	5. Maybe related to item #1, what courses? Moderator?
	6. thematic permanent discussion be promoted;	6. For discussion, what themes? How? Online?
	7. strategy/tool to assess impact of training on CPs;	7. CPs could be creative in assessing impact of their training, but IST could help develop tool
	8. funding support for active CPs for MSc and PhD studies.	8. For discussion within POG
	b) On Backstopping:	
	1. increase backstopping activities, i.e. two (2) backstopping per year;	1. For discussion, but case-to-case depending on the need of the CP
	2. explore possibility for other PROLINNOVA members in backstopping PROFEIS countries.	2. For discussion
4. Secretariat and IST Support	**a) On the secretariat support:**	
	1. Regular updating of the network members by the secretariat on new initatives (HIV/AIDS, MDGs, etc.);	1. c/o ETC
	2. Further sharpening of priorities for secretariat: What do CPs feel that the secretariat could do less?	2. Suggestions from CPs
	b) Sharing of tasks with CPs:	
	1. Stronger sharing of tasks among country partners, e.g. writing of proposals (South Africa, Ethiopia);	1. attention CPs
	2. tighter formats for CPs for planning, reporting, other additional activities.	2. attention CPs
	c) Funds: Enhance fund raising to suit limited activities (CPs), or to cover time spent by secretariat.	c/o CPs and ETC
	d) Backstopping: Despite limited funds, backstopping activities still need to be prioritized to quickly and strongly strengthen CPs understanding on PID, LISF approaches and operationalization as well as lobby strategy for institutionalization capacities of the	c/o IST

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	processes into local institutions.	
	e) Logistics: more efficient logistical support in international trainings/meetings, i.e. tickets and reimbursements.	Reminder to all concerned
5. Publications and Documentation	a) CPs contribution to publication: Encourage more CP contribution to the publication.	Attention CPs
	b) Publication of materials in other languages: Publication in French, Spanish, Arab, and popularization in local languages for spread, including the young.	Attention concerned CPs
	c) Distribution Policy: need for a clear distribution policy, even beyond the network.	c/o IIRR
6. International Awareness on PID/PROLINNOVA	a) Partnership with international research organizations: more involvement of international R&D organizations with a non-threatening or non confronting approach.	c/o CPs at the country level, and the POG and Secretariat at the international level
	b) On Policy dialogue: to engage more effectively with bilateral and multilateral organizations, NGOs and government for information and policy dialogue (PROFEIS).	c/o CPs at the country level, and the POG and Secretariat at the international level
	c) Farmer-to-farmer sharing: promote encounters among peasants on PID.	c/o CPs
	d) PID Cases: need for more PID cases, for purposes of marketing innovation, capturing donor support (particularly IFAD)	Coming form the CPs, but consolidated for publication by the secretariat
7. Others	a) further understanding of PID vis-à-vis local innovations with emphasis on the "S";	For discussion/clarification
	b) the evolving nature of PROLINNOVA as a network that involve multi-stakeholder participation, and consequently the need for skills on network management;	For POG and Secretariat
	c) how to continue to enhance country sharing activities including country visits and sub-programme activities as well as on-line discussions;	Already covered in #3 Capacity-Building
	d) more PID cases to support advocacy work with policy makers and research organizations; advocacy work on how to enhance existing initiatives by the people not only innovations should also be considered; and how to further enhance funding support to partners.	c/o CPs

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