

PROLINNOVA–GHANA ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Introduction

Prolinnova–Ghana continued being very active in 2016, engaged in Country Platform (CP) activities such as sharing and learning from field activities of network institutions and NGOs to promote local innovation and Participatory Innovation Development (PID), joint planning and providing technical support to Promoting local innovation in Food and Nutrition Security (Proli-FANS) implementation, preparing to host the International Partners Workshop (IPW) 2017, and holding strategic meetings of the National Steering Committee (NSC) and the Working Group on fundraising and expanding membership to sustain the CP. Key activities carried out and achievements in 2016 were as follows.

1. Meetings of the National Steering Committee

The NSC (interim) and the Working Group met in September and was briefed on the Misereor-funded Proli-FANS project and the decision of ACDEP (Association of Church-based Development Projects and host NGO of the CP in Ghana) to host the project on behalf of the Prolinnova network. A feedback report on the IPW 2016 held in Thiès, Senegal, including major decisions e.g. about Prolinnova regionalisation in Africa, was presented by Joe Nchor (CP coordinator). The participants discussed and approved two proposed action-learning sites for Proli-FaNS and respective local NGO implementing partners. A second meeting was held in December to approve the CP's annual work plan and budget for the Proli-FANS project, as required of the NSCs of all CPs involved. After the CP has expanded in 2017, the current 7-member interim NSC will give way to a fully reconstituted governance body.

2. Activities to promote local innovation and PID

Although local NGOs have mainstreamed many aspects of Prolinnova's approach and continue to use this approach in the food security and livelihoods programming, the starting up of the Proli-FANS project in August added more impetus and doubled our activity in PID. Participating in Proli-FANS has provided opportunity and a rallying point bringing the NSC, the Working Group and national platform members to engage more frequently and vigorously in Prolinnova activities in Ghana with respect to PID, advocacy and institutionalisation of the approach. Major activities carried out under Proli-FANS by Prolinnova–Ghana were:

- Community sensitisation and planning meetings on Prolinnova concepts and Proli-FANS
- Identifying 53 innovations in women's domain in the Bongo and Yendi action-learning sites
- Establishing two local multi-stakeholder platforms (MSPs) at the project sites to support project implementation (learning, capacity support, policy influence and institutionalisation)
- 7-member (2 f/5 m) interim NSC established for governance and policy direction of the CP
- Hosting project inception workshop in Accra in November for international partners, leading to development of key project-management tools
- PID training held at the two project sites for NGO field staff, local MSPs and Working Group
- Launch of Proli-FANS project in the Yendi and Bongo sites involving project stakeholders, farmers/women and local decision-makers, as a part of a policy-advocacy drive.

3. Preparing backstopping support to Prolinnova–Cameroon

In order to strengthen capacities of younger and less experienced CPs for effective coordination and governance and for Proli-FaNS implementation, Prolinnova–Ghana coordinator Joe Nchor partnered with Prolinnova–Senegal coordinator Djibril Thiam to prepare their visit for mentoring Prolinnova–Cameroon during a 5-day mission to take place in February 2017.

4. Prolinnova–Ghana website

Besides the CP’s activity report for 2014–15, a news item was posted on the Prolinnova–Ghana webpage about the recognition given by CTA to an innovation by the Ghanaian farmer, John Akugre, who developed one of the “Top 20 innovations that benefit smallholder farmers”. John uses a locally available plant to protect stored onion seed (see brochure [Barakuk: a natural protector for onion seed](#) documented by the CP member organisation Navrongo-Bolgatanga Catholic Diocesan Development Office). The items about the CP’s Proli-FaNS activities in late 2016 were posted in early 2017.

5. Participating in IPW 2016 in Senegal and preparing for IPW 2017

Joe Nchor, Prolinnova–Ghana coordinator, took part in IPW 2016, held in Thiès, Senegal. Misereor covered his participation costs. The Proli-FaNS proposal was discussed as well as the regionalisation of Prolinnova in Africa. Prolinnova–Ghana also volunteered to host the next IPW in Tamale, where ACDEP is based. Preparations for this event, planned for May 2017, began already in 2016.

Challenges faced

Because of limited funds, it is challenging to expand the Prolinnova work in the country beyond northern Ghana, where the CP has operated strongly since it started there in 2004. The NSC is currently exploring fundraising strategies including submitting solicited and unsolicited proposals to local government and to international NGOs. The CP is also constrained with limited technical capacity. Many of the experienced members have taken up higher positions and relocated from Tamale or have retired from service. The current team is, however, being exposed to Prolinnova work through training and regular involvement in field monitoring and backstopping activities, to the extent that the limited funds under Proli-FANS now allow this.