

Development outcomes of local innovation (DOLI)

Research study involving

International Development Innovation Network (IDIN), D-Lab,
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

PROLINNOVA

International Development Innovation Network

- Is based at the D-Lab of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), USA
- 5-year cooperative agreement from USAID to establish IDIN headquartered at MIT
- A global consortium of universities and community-based partners
- Objective is to build a global network of change-makers that enables the design, development and dissemination of innovations that address key development challenges associated with poverty, while building capacity in communities for local innovation and creative problem solving.

International Development Innovation Network

- IDIN established research programme in early 2014 to better understand the merits of an approach that invests in fostering local innovation and *design by and with* rather than *design for*.
- Through a portfolio of research projects and studies, this programme seeks to:
 - Increase understanding of local innovation processes and ecosystems (e.g. PID, FFS, CCB (Creative Capacity Building))
 - Increase understanding of the ways in which local innovation contributes to achieving development objectives
 - Increase understanding of ways in which global networks and institutions (such as universities and donors) can engage effectively to support and amplify the impact of local innovation processes.

International Development Innovation Network

- Survey of literature undertaken in May–August 2014 by IDIN
- Main finding: Lack of solid base of evidence regarding development outcomes of efforts to build local innovation capacity.
- Further research on the subject led to identification of researchers from ProInnova (a multi-stakeholder network) who were pursuing closely-related research agenda: conducting a desk study examining the impacts of farmer-led innovation in ARD and affiliated researchers from CRPs (CGIAR Research Programs) developing frameworks for assessing the capacity of local people to innovate (C2I).

Desk study: Impacts of farmer-led approaches to agricultural research and development (FL-ARD) approaches

- Prolinnova commissioned in 2013 by AAS (CRP hosted by WorldFish) and CCAFS (CRP hosted by CIAT) to undertake study on farmer-led approaches to ARD by CSOs
- Study group consisting of five members of Prolinnova International Secretariat team at ETC Foundation
- More than 100 cases screened, 30 shortlisted and 11 selected for the desk study.
- Study findings published as AAS/CCAFS/Prolinnova paper in 2014
- Study recommended deeper field research studies to consolidate findings of desk study

Study implementation timeline

- Research design phase : November 2015 to January 2016
- Planning for data gathering and secondary research: February to March 2016
- Field data collection: April–July 2016
- Data analysis: July–August 2016
- Developing results: September–November 2016
- Publishing and sharing results: November 2016 onwards

Research design and approach:

- Need to develop a body of data from which to generate testable hypotheses
- Exploratory study – limited budget and short timeframe
- Seeks to document the types of development outcomes that result from strengthening local capacity to innovate using particular approaches and within particular settings
- Limited number (2–3) in-depth cases
- Develop systematic approach to explore these questions
- Focus on rural or semi-rural communities engaged in various forms of small-scale agriculture
- Conscious effort on cases where people from “within” as well as “outside” the local context have made efforts to strengthen capacity to innovate in that locality

Methodology related

- Primarily qualitative research
- Use of in-depth case-study research as primary approach
- 2–3 cases
- Not comparative study
- Based on “realist evaluation” – seeking to understand each case as fully as possible within its own context
- Purpose is to develop hypotheses that could be later tested with more controlled research designs
- Using variety of methods to collect data – quantitative and qualitative; primary and secondary

Progress update

- Three cases selected – Vietnam (PTD), Sri Lanka (PTD) and Tanzania (CCB)
- Study group has been set up:
 - Elizabeth Hoffecker (IDIN, MIT)
 - Chesha Wettasinha, Laurens van Veldhuizen and Ann Waters-Bayer (Prolinnova/KIT)
 - Boru Douthwaite (formerly AAS, now independent)
 - Bernard Triomphe (CIRAD)
- Advisory Group has been set up:
 - Cosmas Ochieng (African Centre for Technology Studies, Kenya)
 - Elske van der Fliert (University of Queensland, Australia)
 - Patti Kristjanson (World Agroforestry Centre, based in USA)
 - Sally Humphries (University of Guelph, Canada)
 - John Mayne (Independent, Thailand)
 - Priyanthi Fernando (Secure livelihoods research consortium, now in Malaysia)

Progress update

- Learning group being set up consisting currently of 15 interested individuals with expertise in the study topic.
- Local researchers in each country identified and contracted.
- Context studies being compiled in each country.
- First phase of field research started in Vietnam (Laurens, Elizabeth, Ann and Trung as local researcher).
- First phase of field research in Sri Lanka to start on 21 May (Chesha, Boru, Elizabeth and Mallika as local researcher).
- First phase of field research to start in Tanzania in mid-June (Elizabeth and Laurens).