

Group photo

PROLINNOVA NIGER CROSS VISIT TO GHANA NORTH

Report by:

PROLINNOVA Niger and Ghana North teams

December 2008

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Background and methodology

PROLINNOVA Niger and Ghana North, reflecting their interest in enhancing partnerships, mutual learning and sharing experiences decided to hold a cross visit. PROLINNOVA Niger wrote a proposal in 2007 to visit Ghana North. In the proposal, the motivations/reasons, objectives, modalities of the cross visit, work plan, time frame, itinerary, learning agenda and budget comprising PROLINNOVA/ETC and the 2 countries contributions/responsibilities were clearly developed. The proposal was approved by a committee of International Support Team (IST) members for satisfying the requirements. The two countries discussed consensually the cross visit time schedule and an invitation letter was sent to PROLINNOVA Niger by Ghana North.

The 2 countries have developed and documented a lot of Local Innovation (LI) and participatory methods and approaches such as Farmer-Led Documentation (FLD) and Local Innovation Support Funds (LISFs) pilots and climate change adaptation study. They have documented outcomes and lessons of joint experimentations of local innovations. In terms of management and governance, the 2 country programs have structure and governance similarities (NSC, core team, national coordination, zones and poles) that are functioning differently. In terms of geographical situation, the two countries are situated in West Africa with similar cultural and farming context. They are both members of a regional organization ECOWAS/CEDEAO.

Prior to the cross visit, a gender-balanced team of five (5) members (2 women and 3 men) members of institutions partners' of PROLINNOVA Niger visited PROLINNOVA Ghana North from 06 to 15 October 2008. The team traveled by road through Burkina Faso. Activities carried out were: mutual sharing and learning workshop, visits to institutions, field visits to rural communities and debriefing meetings.

✓ PROLINNOVA Niger visiting team composition

MAGAGI Saidou: INRAN; Team leader

MAILAMBA Lokotoro: Faculty of Agronomy; University of Niamey

Mme ABDOU Zeinabou Tondo: Non Formal Education, Gaya

Mme MAMANE Hamsatou: Farmer innovator; Community-Based organizations

YAHAYA Sayadi: Driver

The process of this cross visit was coordinated and facilitated by the two countries focal points: MAGAGI SAIDOU: PROLINNOVA Niger deputy coordinator and FRANK ADONGO: PROLINNOVA

Ghana North coordinator. At international level, the process was facilitated by Chesha Wettasinha, PROLINNOVA/ETC and a former IIRR staff.

II. Objectives of the visit

1. Strengthen partnerships between the 2 PROLINNOVA countries
2. Build partners' capacities through mutual learning and experiences sharing
3. Share outcomes and lessons at national, regional and international levels

III. Activities carried out

Niger participants arrived in Tamale in the evening on Wednesday 07/10/2008 after 2 days travelling by road. They were welcomed by PROLINNOVA Ghana North coordinating staffs and accommodated in GILT Guest House.

Session 1: Introductory sharing and learning activities

1. Welcome speech

Mr Malex Alebikiya, ACDEP executive director made a brief and interesting welcome speech. He expressed his happiness seeing the cross visit becoming a reality and thanked Niger facilitators and participants visiting Ghana North. He mentioned that Niger team is well gender balanced (2 women and 2 men) and institutions well represented. He pointed out that Ghana North and Niger have same geographic position, cultural and marketing background, climate conditions and farming practices. It is a good opportunity for the two countries teams to strengthen their partnerships, learn and share experiences. He thanked PROLINNOVA/ETC for providing support to the 2 countries and wished success and peaceful visit in Ghana North.

In a short response, Mr MAGAGI Saidou, Niger team leader made a brief review of the cross visit process. He ended his speech by thanking PROLINNOVA Ghana North leaders and members and addressing his acknowledgements to PROLINNOVA/ETC facilitators. Mrs HAMSATOU Mamane, Niger woman innovator said to be already satisfied of the visit as she has discovered so many innovations on the way to Tamale. She has never had a dream of traveling in 2 West African countries Burkina Faso and Ghana. She is impressed by the forest and rice cultivated on upper land she wished to get samples to try out in Niger.

2. Itinerary and learning agenda review

A brief meeting was held between Niger team and PROLINNOVA Ghana North coordination team at ACDEP office early morning. The meeting started by a guiding prayer said by Mme Mariam Salifu, ACDEP. Participants were reminded of the context and objectives of the cross visit by Prolinnova Niger team leader and Ghana North coordinator. After a self introduction of all members, we discussed the itinerary and learning agenda. A final version is then adopted by participants.

3. Briefing on ACDEP and PROLINNOVA Ghana North

Presented by Mr Joe Nchor, ACDEP project officer

✓ ACDEP (Association of Church Development Projects)

He explained that ACDEP is a network of 40 Northern Ghana NGOs and is also the coordinating agency of PROLINNOVA Ghana North. ACDEP goal is to promote and support sustainable rural and agric development of the rural resource poor farmers. ACDEP Agric program operates on the principles of LEISA and active farmers' participation with other stakeholders in solving farming problems for increased productivity-PTD approach. PTD approach received boost under the ACDEP-ILEIA project in late 90.

ILEIA project with ACDEP using approach in soil fertility trials with farmers and researchers led to PTD institutionalization in ACDEP programming and the birth of the NGLWG in 1995. The NGLWG is

a technical support team of professionals from research, Universities, MOFA and NGOs to promote, support and advocate PTD/PID & LEISA approach with farmers and agric stakeholders. From 2000-2006, ACDEP Agric program sponsored training of farmers, partners and collaborators on PTD and its application for improving household food security in northern Ghana. This project led to the development of best practices in farming, more appreciation for IK and stronger stakeholder collaboration, improvement in productivity, among others.

✓ **PROLINNOVA Ghana North**

PROLINNOVA was introduced in Ghana in 2003, motivated by achievements under PTD and farmer-led participatory agric in northern Ghana. The National program is coordinated by ECASARD but separated in 2006 into two zonal programs due to coordination and communication problems, but remains under one governing body- the NSC. PROLINNOVA Ghana-North program is coordinated by ACDEP with technical and management support of NGLWG and local partners: ACDEP NGOs, SARI, MoFA, UDS, ARI and Cecik.

✓ **Objectives**

- To develop and share farmer-led innovations and approaches in agriculture;
- To build farmers and partners capacities in PTD/PID to enhance sustainable agric & NRM;
- To mainstream PID/PTD approach in program of partners & collaborators.

✓ **Activities**

Documentation and sharing local innovations: identification, joint experimentation, documentation, sharing through workshops, video and publications; training of farmers, researchers, development workers in PID/PTD approaches and techniques and strengthening partnership & networking through joint workshops, policy conferences, exchange visits.

✓ **Achievements**

- Documented and shared innovations in salt lick, neem oil extraction, ethno veterinary medicine;
- Institutionalized PTD/PID in research, University and extension program;
- More recognition and support for farmers' knowledge and innovation given by researchers and development workers;
- Very strong partnership established among agric stakeholders and farmers for promoting and supporting small scale farmers in northern Ghana;
- LISF program established to promote PID and action research to enhance sustainable Agric and NRM in northern Ghana.

Session 2: Visits to institutions partners' of Prolinnova Ghana North

1. Presbyterian Church NGO

This NGO created in 1967 par missionaries is in charge of Farmers Training and Child Development Programme without sex and religions discrimination. It covered 27 communities, 4 districts, 29 groups, 1048 producers among them 465 women.

The approaches used are PTD and Sustainable Livelihood Approach (SLA) to attain its objectives. The main program components are: Farmers Based Organisations; community advocacy, food production and markets, production and marketing of small ruminants. The program and the community are conducting joint experimentations on improving soil fertility and animals curing using orthodox veterinary medicine and traditional medicine in Golinga village, district of KUMUNGU.

2. University for Development Studies (UDS)

We discussed with the Dean of the Faculty of Agronomy, Pr. Gabriel Teyl and Dr Francis Obeng head of department. Ghana has 10 Universities among them 6 public universities. Only UDS is located in the North and the 3 Faculties are located in 3 Northern regions. The Faculty of agronomy or Tamale Campus is composed of 6 departments: Agronomy, Horticulture, Animal Production, Biotechnology, Mechanization and Irrigation and Extension economics.

PTD approach is used in curricula. Undergraduate students spent 1-2 months in rural communities studying innovations. The University intervention in PROLINNOVA Ghana North is mainly in Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation of activities and documentation.

3. Farmers groups of Golinga village

Orthodox and modern curing animal diseases methods are jointly experimented with the support of Presbyterian Church NGO. One member of the community was trained in modern animal medicine. The herbalist explained the main animal diseases treated anthrax, intestine worms, wounds, pest etc. Government vet doctors gave to the trainees some urgent medicines and equips for fast and non complicated treatments. Farmers' are using both traditional and modern animal treatment methods and medicines either separately or combined. They demonstrated the role and importance of some herbs and plants in curing above animal diseases. The community agent is working in synergy with traditional farmer healers. Many questions were asked and suitable given by both orthodox and modern animal diseases healers. Niger women innovator was given some herbs and plants to try out in Niger.



4. Savannah Agricultural Research Institute (SARI)

We arrived late evening and had a small discussion with the institute director. He explained the research areas dealt by the institute. He showed his happiness to share his experiences with PROLINNOVA Niger colleagues. Due to lack of time we stopped the discussion to next appointment and we travelled in the night back to Tamale.

Session 3: Mutual sharing and learning workshop

Part 1: Presentations by PROLINNOVA Ghana North participants

1. NGLWG- a strategy for promoting sustainable agric approaches and technologies in North Ghana Presented by Mr Joe Nchor

The Northern Ghana LEISA Working Group –NGLWG is a like-minded technical support & learning group of professionals from University (UDS), Research (SARI, ARI), MoFA and mostly ACDEP NGOs. It was established in 1995 by ACDEP during the ILEIA-ACDEP PTD/LEISA research project.

✓ **Purpose**

- To train and build capacity of partners and farmers on PTD/PID/LEISA (participatory approaches & methodologies) for development of feasible technologies and interventions to increase agricultural productivity of small scale farmers.
- To build strong stakeholder partnership for sustainable agric development in North Ghana
- Policy advocacy of key stakeholders and government for mainstreaming farmer-led, bottom-up participatory action research approaches in Agric research & development programs.
- Learning and knowledge sharing.

✓ **Governance and functioning of NGLWG**

The NGLWG is facilitated and coordinated by ACDEP and has a chairman. ACDEP also facilitated capacity building of the Group. It started in 1995 with 15 members (13m, 2 f) and has grown to over 60 members (45m 15f) to date. It was decentralized in 3 regional groups, with zonal leaders since 2005 to respond to growing interest and needs in PTD and participatory & sustainable R&D approaches and technologies by stakeholders. Regional teams have team leaders and are coordinated by ACDEP stations.

✓ **Principles**

- Value for farmer knowledge, innovation and bottom-up participatory approaches.
- Farmer first/interest
- Mutual trust, respect, commitment and sacrifice.
- Transparency and knowledge sharing,
- Collaborating and working in partnership with a common goal & interest.

✓ **Achievements**

- PTD /PID and participatory approaches institutionalized by research, NGOs, MoFA and other key stakeholders
- About 70% of farmers using PTD/PID and LEISA approaches and technologies in their agric activities
- 60% improvement in agricultural productivity

✓ **Challenges**

- Time limitations for members
- Transfers and movement of members into management positions and other jobs
- Funding constraints to sustain capacity building and coordination of the Group

2. PROLINNOVA Ghana functioning, governance, achievements and lessons

Presented by Mr Frank Adongo

Phase 1: 2003-2005

Ghana became member of PROLINNOVA international network in 2003. PROLINNOVA Ghana Programme was coordinated by a southern network NGO ECASARD.

✓ **Achievements**

- Awareness creation on PROLINNOVA among current and potential partners of the coordinating NGOs;
- Inventory and documentation of local innovations;
- Planning and review workshops at zone and national levels;
- Participatory Video documentation in northern Ghana for ETC-Ecoculture, by ARI & CECIK;
- Participation to PROLINNOVA international meetings and workshops in Philippines, Ethiopia and Uganda.

✓ **Challenges**

- Lack of clear focus and effective coordination
- Poor communication with zones programmes, particularly ACDEP and the NGLWG
- Low budget for zones activities.
- Consequently, the Ghana Programme suffered stagnation in period of the 2004-2005

✓ **Strategy adopted**

- Arrangement for autonomy (Prolinnova North and Prolinnova South)
- Direct contract with Prolinnova/ETC
- Autonomy to plan, implement and report activities to PROLINNOVA /ETC

National Steering Committee maintained overall management and oversight responsibility of the Ghana Programme.

Phase 2: 2006

In 2006 PROLINNOVA Ghana is subdivided into two zones; southern zone led by ECASARD and northern zone led by ACDEP due to problems encountered:

- Lack clear focus and effective coordination,
- Poor communication with the zonal programmes, particularly ACDEP and the NGLWG,
- Low budget for zonal activities,
- Consequently, the Ghana Programme suffered stagnation in period of the 2004-2005.

Prolinnova Ghana North participants to action planning workshop designed a one year pilot program. Activities are planned and budgeted. They defined strategies, assigned roles and responsibilities among key partners and NGLWG members.

✓ **Implemented activities included**

- PID/PV work on mineral lick ("Siella") led by ARI scientists,
- Documentation of farmers' salt lick innovation in Zakoli community, Yendi District.
- Farmer-led action research on Fonio in Chereponi led by SARI researchers,
- Participation in PROLINNOVA International network meetings and capacity building workshops: IPM – Cambodia, training of facilitators on PID in Uganda, PROLINNOVA policy advocacy workshop in Tanzania and Farmer-led Documentation workshop in Uganda.

✓ **Lessons learnt**

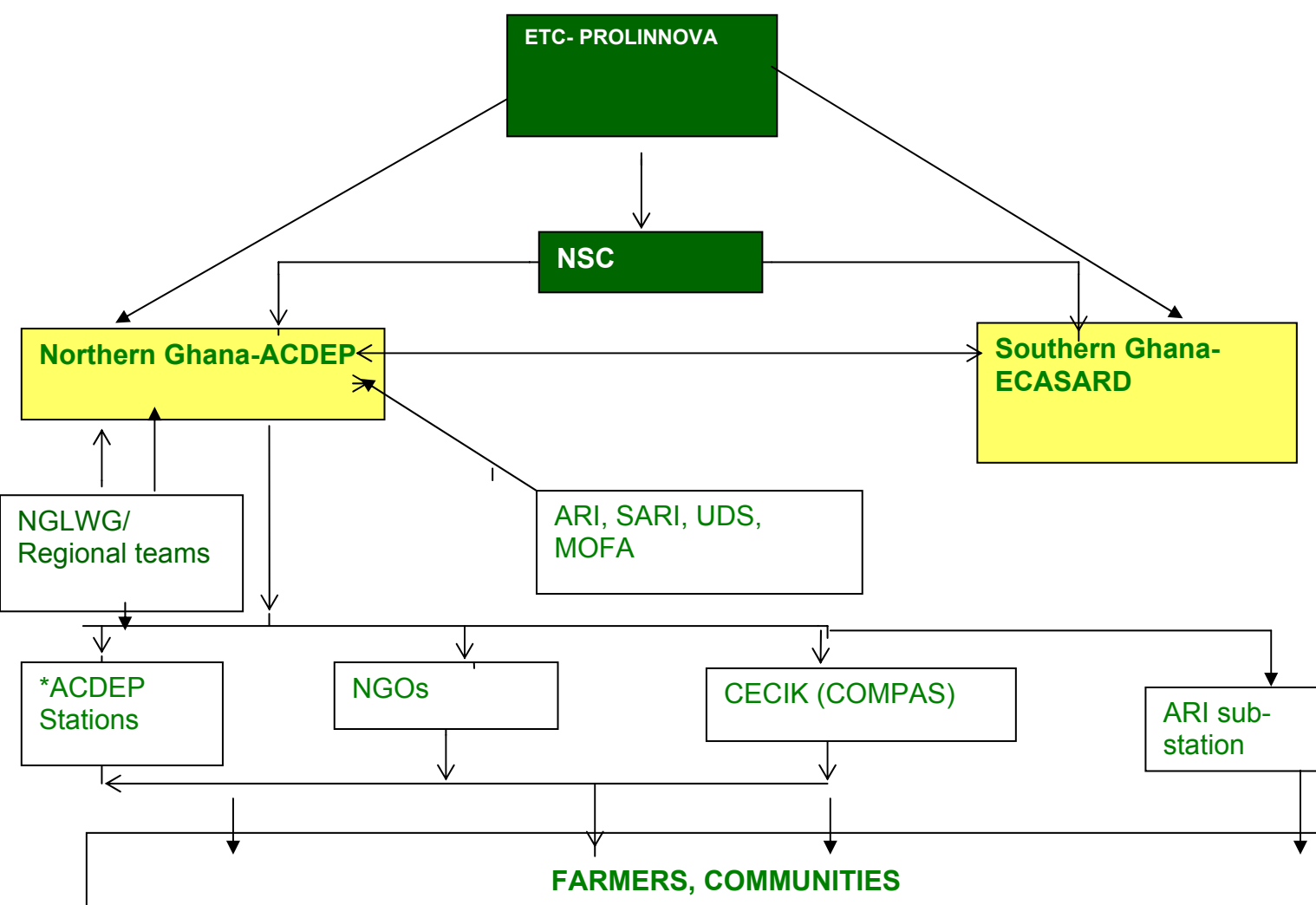
- Increased awareness and interest in PROLINNOVA philosophy and potential benefits by ACDEP's partners (ACDEP stations, SARI, ARI, MoFA and UDS);
- New R&D areas identified to further the work on Siella and Fonio to enhance sustainable food security;
- Mainstreaming and institutionalization of PID by research institutes and UDS;
- New partners joining Ghana North such as CECIK NGO a COMPAS partner;
- Increased interest and trust of PROLINNOVA/ETC in PROLINNOVA/NORTH GHANA.

Phase 3: 2007-2010

- ✓ PROLINNOVA North Ghana 4 – year strategic plan 2007-2010 related to PROLINNOVA international summarised in the table below:

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGY	OUTPUT / KEY RESULTS
1.0 To develop and share community-led innovation on participatory approaches & methodologies to sustainable agric, NRM and endogenous development for self-empowerment and development by December 2010	Supporting community and farmer level participatory action research and development	Results of farmer-led experimentation documented and in use in R&D activities and rural enterprise development
2.0 To build the capacity of partners to implement and advocate PID / PTD and participatory R & D to enhance community-level food security and natural resource management	Strengthening partnership and networking among the stakeholders and PROLINNOVA partners at local & international levels Learning on local innovation and participatory R&D activities for rural enterprise development.	Evidence of increased skills and functional networking and partnership activities between stakeholders and PROLINNOVA partners at local and international levels
3.0 To scale up and mainstream PROLINNOVA principles and PID/PTD approaches in research, education and development programmes of relevant Institutions and NGOs in northern Ghana	Mainstreaming and institutionalizing through policy advocacy, networking and joint learning activities.	Participatory approaches and principles in use in R&D activities and university curricula in Northern Ghana.

✓ Management and implementation structure



After his presentation, questions were asked by some participants while others contributed. We have learnt a lot of lessons and challenges faced by PROLINNOVA Ghana in general and Ghana North in particular.

Part 2: Presentations by PROLINNOVA Niger participants

1. Multi Stakeholder Partnerships building, governance and achievements

Presented by **MAGAGI Saidou**

✓ **PROLINNOVA international background**

It is an international initiative overseen by NGOs and implemented in two phases: 2003-2006 and 2007-2010. The main objectives are: to build and strengthen Multi Stakeholder Partnerships in R & D and methods; to promote participatory approaches and processes of local innovation in agriculture and Natural Resources; to mainstream and institutionalize PID approaches in research, education and dissemination/development. From 9 countries, it is expanded to 16 countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America and Pacific. ETC Ecoculture, Netherlands is the secretariat. The program is overseen and guided by IST (International Support Team) and POG (PROLINNOVA Oversight Group).

✓ **PROLINNOVA Niger Multi Stakeholder Partnerships building**

PROLINNOVA Niger is a national program initiated in 2004 in partnership with PROLINNOVA international, to build a global learning network, promote local Knowledge, local Innovation and Participatory Innovation Development (PID). Niger is the only Francophone country among the 9 old countries members of PROLINNOVA international i.e. Cambodia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Niger, Nepal, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda. PROLINNOVA Niger is launched in June 2005 with 6 institutions members: INRAN/CERRA Niamey, INRAN/CERRA Maradi, CRESA, PPILDA, NGO-Tattali and Farmer innovators. Between 2005-2008; 9 new institutions joined PROLINNOVA Niger: NGO D2000, DDDA Gaya, DDirection of alphabetization of Gaya, DDE/LCD Boboye, DRDA Maradi, DRE/LCD Maradi, DDDA Madarounfa, Municipality of Falmei, and Municipality of Yelou. In 2006, three (3) Francophone countries Senegal, Mali and Burkina Faso created together with Niger a program called PROFEIS (PROMoting Farmers Experimentation and Innovation in the Sahel).

✓ **Objectives**

- Build Multi stakeholder partnerships & a global learning network
- Build and strengthen capacities of partners
- Identify and promote local innovation, participatory approaches and PID
- Document and institutionalize PID in research, education and development institutions

✓ **PROLINNOVA Niger Functioning & Governance**

CRESA (Regional Agricultural Centre for Specialized High Training) is the coordinating agency. The program is overseen by a steering committee composed of one representative of each of the following institutions and organizations: Ministries of Rural Development, PPILDA (Project for Promoting Local Initiatives for the Development of Aguié), INRAN (National Agricultural Research Institute of Niger), NGO-TATTALI & D2000, IFO (Innovative Farmers organization), Faculty of Agronomy/University of Niamey and PROLINNOVA Coordination. PROLINNOVA Niger is subdivided into 2 poles and 2 working groups for best implementation and M & E of activities:

- **Pole West:** Covers regions of Niamey, Tillabery, Dosso and West Tahoua
- **Pole East:** Covers regions of Maradi, Zinder and East Tahoua.

Like PROLINNOVA Ghana, PROLINNOVA Niger also faced management, coordination and governance difficulties in 2004 and 2005. The program management wasn't transparent, technical

reports are lacking, poor communication, no publication and Niger website is empty, unconformity of planned activities with PROLINNOVA international objectives etc. To overcome these problems, a bilingual (English and French) and PID trained facilitator was recommended by international partners' to play a strong role in the PROLINNOVA Niger coordination and implementing activities. In 2006, a Deputy PROLINNOVA coordinator was appointed and things have positively changed: A strong multi stakeholder partnership built; management and coordination are more active, visible and transparent; capacities of partners' strengthened in PID approach and concepts, joint experimentations methods and PM & E; availability of technical reports, communications, publications in Prolinnova website, CD videos etc.; PID mainstreamed and institutionalized; budget increased by PROLINNOVA/ETC due to achievements, increased confidence and visibility; active participation to PROLINNOVA and non PROLINNOVA international meetings and workshops; proposals elaborated, approved and funded by PROLINNOVA/ETC now successfully developed (FLD, cross visit to Ghana and climate change adaptations study) etc.

✓ **Main achievements**

- Strong multi stakeholder partnerships built,
- Partners' capacities strengthened. 3 National training workshops organized:
 - PID training workshop (2006),
 - Joint experimentations and PID training workshop (2007),
 - Institutionalization of PID workshop (2008),
- Farmers capacities built and strengthened: 75 adults trained (women and men) in 3 villages (Takalahia, Garin Bourtou and Boumba Kaina),
- 25 innovations identified and characterized,
- 2 NSC and poles sharing and exchanging meetings held/year,
- Planning and selection of identified innovations workshops

✓ **Processes of joint experimentations of local innovations**

He explained the methodology and approach used in implementing 6 joint experimentations in different localities of Niger:

1. Fish smoking in an innovative local oven « Banda », Boumba Kaina village, Boboye
2. Local extraction of natron by women, Garin Bourtou village, Gaya
3. Effect of manuring millet glumes in cassava farming, Takalahia village, Gaya
4. Use of cassava tubers in cattle fattening, Takalahia village, Gaya
5. Women savings and credit system, Dan Saga Village, Aguié
6. Potato production on high land, Madarounfa.

Based on objectives and purpose, experimental designs are consensually established, joint experimentations planned, experiments trials monitored and data recorded, evaluated and followed, results are analyzed, documented and shared. To ensure effective participation of members and PID mainstreaming, we constituted joint experimentations working groups. Each group (3 to 4 members' women and men) is responsible of carrying out a joint experimentation.

✓ **Development of 3 innovative methods and approaches**

Under competitive funds, proposals were elaborated by PROLINNOVA Niger and submitted to PROLINNOVA/ETC. Three of them were approved in 2007 and implementation started in 2008:

1. Climate change adaptations study
2. Farmer-led Documentation (FLD)
3. Cross country visit: Niger & Ghana North

✓ **Documentation and publication**

- Identified innovations are documented in Niger catalogue,
- Niger brochures (English and French version)
- Annual Technical reports in Microsoft Words

- PowerPoint communications, posters etc.
- CD Video films and photographs etc.
- Publications on Prolinnova website www.Prolinnova.net

✓ **Participation to international workshops and training events**

- Participation to PROLINNOVA international meetings and workshops (2004, 2006, 2007 & 2008),
- Participation to international training in PID (IIRR, Philippines 2004 TOF)
- CIRDES workshop on climate change (Niger 2008)
- APPRI 2008 workshop (Burkina Faso 2008)
- CTA seminar on implications of climate change on farming systems (Burkina Faso 2008)
- Gender Rewrite shop (Ouganda, 2008)

2. Joint experimentation of fish smoking in local oven "Banda" in Niger

Presented by: **MAGAGI Saidou**

✓ **Identifying and selecting local innovation and innovators**

He presented a complete case of PID process in Niger. The women banda innovation is identified in 2006 during a field survey by trained field officers in PID. It is selected out of 11 innovations for joint experimentation by national workshop participants based on following criteria:

1. Innovativeness aspects,
2. Origin /locally evolved by farmers,
3. Socio economic impact,
4. Environmental effect,
5. Benefits
6. Replication
7. Capitalization

✓ **Planning joint experimentation**

He explained the different planning steps followed to ensure success of the joint experimentation: selection of farmer experimenters (2 women and 2 men), training of working groups in joint experimentation methods and approach, negotiation for establishment of the experiment design (2 models of traditional banda compared to improved banda) and determination of partners' contributions and input of each stakeholder based on farmers' capacities and availability of local resources. The improvements to be tested were farmers ideas derived from constraints faced by women in smoking fish in traditional banda (small capacity, wood consumption, poor smoked quality and added value, impossibility of smoking fish in rainy and windy conditions, attack by rodents, dogs, rats etc.).

✓ **Joint experimentation of fish smoking process**

Roles of institutions and organizations involved in the joint experimentation were clearly defined. These institutions are NGO D2000, INRAN, government extension services (Agriculture of Gaya and Environment of Boboye) and Faculty of Agronomy of University of Niamey. Two new institutions (Municipality of Falmey and Adult training inspection of Gaya) joined the process after participatory sharing and visit to farmers'.

✓ **Monitoring and Evaluation of the experiments**

A farmer selected by his community monitor together with the 4 experimenters and innovators monitored and recorded experiments trials. Farmers were guided and oriented by extensionists. The monitoring indicators used in information collection are: Weight of fresh and smoked fish, nature and quantity of wood used, time of smoking and conservation, sensory qualities (color, texture, odor and general acceptability), possibility of smoking during rain, sun and wind conditions, efficiency of conservation against dogs, rodents, rats, shelf life and nutritive quality of the products (smoked fish), uses of smoked fish, acceptability and price of the product in local and foreign markets (Benin and Nigeria). Through regular field visit of the working group, data collected by farmers are shared, evaluated and sometimes adjustments are made.

✓ **Evaluation and follow up**

The most important outcomes are:

Banda capacity is increased (250-350 kg innovative banda against 50-80 kg traditional banda); wood consumption reduced (167 kg wood consumed/ton smoked clarias gariepinus in improved banda against 1000 kg wood consumed/ton smoked Clarias gariepinus in traditional banda); four (4) timber species identified as economically suitable in fish smoking (*Combretum nigricans*, *Terminalia avicennoides*, *Piliostigma reticulatum* and *Anogeisus leocarpus*); improved banda protected well against dogs, rodents and birds and offered possibility to smoke fish in wind, rain and night conditions; smoked fish commercial value and sensory qualities improved (Color, texture, taste and odor); marital relationships strengthened: no conflict between women and their husbands as fish burning and spoiling have stopped; women living conditions and status are changed: savings contributed in buying family food, cloves and equipping houses of their new married children. They also buy animals (goats, cows, sheep etc.) for fattening. A gender group/cooperative of 35 members is formed.

✓ **Sharing the result and strengthening the process**

There are different levels and channels used in sharing results. At village level, farmers shared outcomes and their experiences during markets discussions, CBO meetings, naming and wedding ceremonies, farmer-to-farmer visits and exchange and participation to 'farmer day feast' and agro sylvo pastoral fair.

At national and international levels, documented results have been communicated in PowerPoint, brochures, posters and Micro Soft Words documents during several meetings, seminars and workshops. Presentations have always received good appreciation of participants. A Microsoft word working paper is published on Prolinnova website. Visual documentations in forms of photographs and video films are made.

3. Oral presentations by other Niger participants

Opportunity was given to 3 other members of Niger team to share their experiences in working with PROLINNOVA Niger.

3.1 Impact of the improved banda presented by Mme HAMSATOU Mamane

As representative of farmer organizations, she witnessed the impact of improved banda in Boumba Kaina. She said that their living conditions and social status have changed. Smoking conditions are facilitated and smoked fish are sold at better price. Their eyes are healthy as smoke is not entering, they are smoking large quantities of fish at a time and taking care much of their children. Marital relationships are improved as their husbands fish are not burning and spoiling. The village is receiving more visits of farmers, fisher folks, fish dwellers and tourists. They have got support and care from PROLINNOVA Niger. You see, without PROLINNOVA Niger support, I will never go through Burkina Faso and come to Tamale, Ghana. I'm feeling very happy and honoured. Since we arrived in Tamale; all of us are lodged in the same rooms and eaten together. We are equal partners'. She appreciated much food, accommodation and interaction between the two teams.

3.2 Adult training/alphabetization presented by Mme ABDU Zeinabou Toudou

She pointed out the advantages of educating illiterate adults (women and men). In most African countries like Niger, 30% of the population are illiterate. They cannot write, read or document their innovations and initiatives. No development or progress can be achieved with illiteracy. So, To help farmer innovators to document and promote their innovations in their languages and culture; PROLINNOVA Niger is implementing in 3 villages (Boumba Kaina, Garin Bourtou and Takaliah) alphabetisation of adults in "Hausa and Djerma languages". She evaluated the first year session and some of the adult students (25-70 years) can read and count. The teaching program is based on related innovations and joint experimentations in the 3 villages. The adult training has increased

awareness, mutual learning and understanding of PID approach and scientific knowledge and ideas contributed by scientist. This adult training is linked to Farmer-Led Documentation (FLD). Farmers are learning various ways of documenting and promoting their innovations (photos, video, magazine as rural press etc.). They will be taught how to report in local languages. She said Zakoli village innovators need to be supported in adult training to facilitate documenting their orthodox vet innovations. During the visit they told us that they are relying on their children to document relevant information.

3.3 PID institutionalization presented by MAILAMBA Lokotoro

He underlined efforts of PROLINNOVA Niger in supporting PID mainstreaming and institutionalization. Faculty of Agronomy lecturers from University of Niamey participated to PID training in 2006 and joint experimentation methods in 2007. New lecturers and researchers joined PROLINNOVA Niger program. On request of University lecturers and agricultural researchers, a PID institutionalisation workshop is organised in March 2008 (42 participants). The Dean Agronomy Faculty is studying ways of developing curricula for Msc. and Doctorate programs. The curricula for undergraduate field studies is based on participatory approaches PID/PTD and local innovations in farming, water harvesting, forestry, animal production etc. I'm very happy to visit Ghana. We exchanged and shared yesterday our experiences with Dean of Agronomy Faculty of UDS, Tamale campus and the Director of SARI, Ghana.

Discussions

Participants appreciated Niger presentations and contributions and acknowledge the quality of the joint experimentation of fish smoking in banda and witnesses of the 2 woman. To questions asked, pertinent answers were given by the 4 presenters.

Part 3: Market information and documents sharing

Participants went round the table where documents (edited books, brochures, catalogues, reports, journals, video films etc.) are exposed. After receiving explanations on documents and answers to their questions, participants were authorized by the 2 countries coordinators Joe Nchor and Magagi Saidou to pick any document they feel interested. It was a very good and fantastic event. All documents and video films were shared.

***NB:** session 3 (part 1, 2 and 3 presentations and market information) are documented in CD videos volumes A and B. For more information contact the process facilitators of this cross visit.*

Session 4: Field visits

1. Municipal Directorate of Agriculture (MDA), Tamale

This direction concerned 20 district of Ghana North regions. The director said to be very interested by fish smoking in banda joint experimentation because the improved banda helped women to economize wood and safeguard the environment. It was also good to hear to hear from the women innovator that they were supported by PROLINNOVA Niger and she witnessed improvement of their living conditions and prestige. The MDA director described their partnerships and roles with PROLINNOVA Ghana North. He explained some innovations identified and developed:

- Azadirachta indica (neem) grains processing by farmer groups to produce pesticides, oils and medical soap.
- Use of organic manure to improve soil fertility and crop productivity etc.

2. Animal Research Institute (ARI)

We met the staff of the institute. ARI is situated in Gnampala village. ARI partners are: Ministry of Food and Agriculture, ACDEP and farmers. Its main activities are:

- Conducting research on cow production, sheep, goats, poultry;
- Selection plants species and herbs for animals feeding;
- Support and advice to farmers in methods of curing diseases;
- Animal health (how to protect, how to keep animals and how to cure diseases etc.);
- Training in new techniques of farming and stocking leguminous and herbaceous plant species for feeding animals in dry seasons (Andropogon gayanus, Andropogon tectonum, mycrophylla, Stylosentus etc.).

There was a visit of the research station guided by the manager Dr Addo Kwafo and other ARI staff. We visited plant varieties demonstration and selection farms, biodiversity conservation farm, cows' cattle, poultry and farmer innovation on eggs ponders etc. Unfortunately, we didn't get much information on FLD. We didn't even get a FLD video film copy.

At the end of the visit ARI gave samples of plant/herbs species for animal feeding to Niger participants for trying out in Niger by farmers' and research institutes:

- Stylosanthus hamata and Cajanus cajan;
- Rice (variety grown on upper land) bought by PROLINNOVA Niger.



3. EPDRA, Yendi

It is one of PROLINNOVA Ghana North partner. The main objective is to improve Yendi district populations living conditions. The project officer also presented the main areas of intervention: food security, water conservation and irrigation, small ruminants' production, environment protection, health and nutrition, training and micro finance. The main partners are: ACDEP, MoFA, GHS-Yendi, ACTION AIDS – YENDI and CIFS. The financial donors are BEEW and ICCO. After discussion and debates, we visited in the evening a group of farmer innovators of salt lick in ZAKOLI village. Farmer innovators and the community members demonstrated the process of salt lick production, reasons of the innovation and the constraints. They asked more support and training from PROLINNOVA Ghana North. They also wished to visit WAPULI salt lick group to learn and share experiences. We discussed with them and appreciated their efforts. We both concluded that there is really a need for LISF intervention, PID training or joint experimentation and farmer-to-farmer field visit to WAPULI for the development of this salt lick innovation.



4. WAPULI village farmers group: Salt lick blocks

After greetings and the opening ceremony by Wapuli salt lick block association president, we did a self presentation to familiarize ourselves. The visit objectives were explained by ARI members. The differences of Wapuli salt lick block, the ingredients used, the process and the state of the innovation were explained briefly by ARI, Wapuli association president. Then farmers listed ingredients used and their importance (salty sand, termite sand, burnt bones powder, gem salt, cassava starch, calcium phosphate, specific plant leaves, baobab powder leaves) demonstrated the process of producing improved salt lick blocks, roles played by women and men in the association functioning and blocks production. Women grinded burnt bones and other ingredients in mortar and fetched water while men mixed thoroughly ingredients and fashioned with mould the salt blocks. The process of joint experimentation of salt lick blocks production and marketing by ARI and other partners had led to the improvements of the moulding material, salt lick blocks quality and added value. Salt lick blocks ingredients compositions were provided by ARI based on scientific knowledge of cows nutritional needs. ARI is comparing presently in its research station the growth of sheep fed with Wapuli salt lick blocks and those fed with imported salt blocks. Niger team exposed also their experiences in local natron extraction by Garin Bourtou innovative women, methods of smoking fish in improved banda, the advantages of adult training and farmer-led documentation (FLD). ARI scientists and farmers were very interested and impressed. Wapuli farmers expressed their desire to visit Niger.



Session 5: Debriefing meeting

The session is chaired by Dr Addo Kwafo. After an opening prayer by a participant, we preceded to the review and adoption the working agenda. We started the sharing with a video presentation titled "joining our forces" made by NGLWG. Mr Frank Adonko summarized the field and institutions visit events. Mr Rasheed made a long video film and pictures presentation of days 10 and 11/10/08. Then Niger participants shared individually outcomes and lessons of their visits.

The cross visit is recognized by participants as a strong tool for learning, sharing, discovering new innovations and building regional partnerships between PROLINNOVA countries. Farmers' felt very happy and honored.

III. Challenges

1. Satisfaction of learning expectations on FLD and LIFS. Ghana North FLD activity is not sustained and lacked evidences (no visible practicing farmers', lack of participatory video copy etc.); LIFS has not started in the field;
2. ECOWAS/CEDEAO to support local innovations development and marketing.

IV. Lessons learnt

- 1.** Downward period 2004 and 2005: The 2 countries faced similar problems in governance, coordination, management and activities implementation. But, different strategies applied in solving similar these problems. PROLINNOVA Ghana program was divided into two (Ghana South and Ghana North) while PROLINNOVA Niger program appointed a deputy coordinator to enlighten and rescue the situation.
- 2.** Good preparation, coordination and organization of the cross visit by the two countries teams. Strong mobilization and support by ACDEP executive director.
- 3.** The two countries have learnt and shared experiences from countries presentations, documents shared, comments, questions and contributions during workshop and meetings;
- 4.** Needs in training Prolinnova Ghana North adult innovators to document their innovations, applying LIFS etc. identified;
- 5.** Perfect and pacific integration of Niger people in Tamale metropolis and villages. Wapuli salt lick blocks are bought by Niger nomads' transhumant at better price than Ghanaians;
- 6.** Presence of gender innovators in Niger team has motivated and encouraged Ghana women innovators participation and stimulation to visit Niger;
- 7.** Traveling by road has contributed in reducing traveling cost and enhancing environmental and socio organizational habitat learning and tourism curiosity along the 3 countries road (Niger, Burkina Faso and Ghana).

Conclusion and recommendations

The cross visit is well organized and coordinated by the two PROLINNOVA countries.

Recommendations/Way forward

1. Final report to be shared at national, regional and international levels;
2. Ghana North to visit Niger in 2009;
3. Balanced support to institutions and farmers': Ghana North to give more support to farmer innovations, joint experimentations and farmer-to-farmer sharing visits;
4. Niger participants to retribute to Garin Bourtou women innovators experiences of Wapuli salt lick blocks association for testing.