

PROLINNOVA Guidelines 5:

Code of Practice for Participatory Innovation Development (PID)

The practice of Participatory Innovation Development (PID) under the umbrella of the PROLINNOVA network is inspired by the following vision, mission and goal:

Vision: *A world in which women and men farmers play decisive roles in agricultural and natural resource management (NRM) innovation processes for sustainable livelihoods*

Mission: *To stimulate a culture of mutual learning and synergy among diverse stakeholder groups to actively support and promote local innovation processes in agriculture and NRM*

Goal: *To contribute to equitable and inclusive development of resilient and sustainable farming communities making environmentally sound use of available resources*

The network seeks to empower small-scale farmers and their organisations, with particular attention to empowerment of women and youth; to facilitate multistakeholder collaboration and shared learning in agricultural research and development (ARD); to promote ecologically oriented development of small-scale family farming and community-based NRM; to ensure network ownership by the members and good governance; and to encourage open innovation (“copyleft” – see PROLINNOVA Guidelines 3).

PID refers to farmer-led processes of experimentation and investigation together with other actors in innovation processes, e.g. formal scientists in research centres or universities, specialists from any organisation (agricultural advisory service, NGO, farmer organisation, private-sector organisation etc) who are willing to provide technical support along the path of further developing the local innovations. PID refers to collaboration in all kinds of innovation (technical, social, institutional, agribusiness etc).

The practice of PID embraces the following values, principles and strategies:

Core values

- **Mutual respect and recognition.** All actors in PID have the same status and receive the same recognition in terms of the value of their knowledge and expertise and their equal rights and opportunities to engage in decision-making. The knowledge and expertise of all partners is mutually respected and applied appropriately as the situation demands. We seek to ensure that women and men receive equal attention and benefit equally from the PID.
- **Sustainability.** We engage in PID on innovations that promise to meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We try to minimise or avoid any negative effect of the PID on social, economic and environmental sustainability – specifically on agriculture, natural resources and farming communities.
- **Partnership.** We strive for inclusive participation of all stakeholders in the PID in such a way that all partners have an equal opportunity to take part in making decisions about the topics and methods of the PID, including decisions about giving credit for achievements and disseminating findings. We strive to develop strong relations of mutual trust and respect for long-term collaboration, reinforced by respectful communication, and sharing responsibilities and recognition.

Core principles

- **Integration:** We recognise that activities to promote local innovation and facilitate PID should be nested within other community development initiatives / activities.
- **Shared learning:** We engage with wider communities of practice in sharing and learning around innovation and PID at national and international levels.
- **Ownership:** The different partners in the PID take joint responsibility for planning and implementing the activities and show active commitment to this responsibility.
- **Open-source innovation (“copyleft”):** Anyone may use the local innovations identified and further developed in PID and may modify or develop them further, provided that the modified or further developed innovations or any follow-up innovations, of which the described innovation is an element, is likewise freely available and any description of it includes the “copyleft” proviso and acknowledges the source of information (see www.prolinnova.net/content/prolinnova-guidelines).

Strategies

- We start by discovering what local people are doing and exploring to solve local problems or to pursue new opportunities, local innovation and initiatives.
- We orient our research toward development action that will enhance the wellbeing of the local people, both male and female.
- We engage in PID in such a way that local innovative capacities are enhanced.
- We engage all partners – and foremost the involved farmer and other community members – in discussion to confirm results and findings of PID before sharing these more widely.
- We promote institutional change at community and higher levels to sustain the PID process, including structures for decision-making that are socially equitable.
- We disseminate findings by publishing and sharing through appropriate media and language, taking into account PROLINNOVA Guidelines 3.