

Once in the Prolinnova family.. always in the Prolinnova family... Dharma Dangol continues his mission to promote local innovation post retirement

Dharma Dangol has been an active member of Prolinnova- Nepal from its inception. He was also the CP coordinator of Prolinnova Nepal in the period during which the country secretariat was hosted by the Natural History Museum of the Tribhuvan University in Kathmandu. Dharma retired in April this year but is committed to continuing the work of Prolinnova, especially in regards to integration of the approach into education at all levels. Dharma resides in the Kirtipur Municipality of Kathmandu and has started liaising with schools in the area, building on interactions he has had with some of them in the recent past.



Dharma Dangol arranged for Prolinnova IST member, Chesha Wettasinha, and her colleague Mona Dhamankar to have an interactive session on the importance of recognizing local innovation in changing times with students of Khwopa College, Bhaktapur, in November 2017 (photo: Chesha Wettasinha)

Recently, the Education Committee of Kirtipur Municipality has given him and a principal of a local High School with a background in science, the responsibility to develop a curriculum to integrate agriculture, innovation and biodiversity into teaching. They have been requested to develop teaching units on these topics for students of grades 1 to 8 ranging from 6 to 14 years of age. Dharma considers this a great but challenging responsibility given to them by their local government.

Once they develop the teaching units, they would need to train teachers who will be responsible for helping students to learn about agricultural innovation, including farmer-led innovation development. Considering that many Nepali families are still reliant on small-scale farming for their livelihoods, introducing younger children to an approach that recognizes and celebrates farmer innovators could make a difference in how they perceive farming as a future occupation. This may help to curb the trend of youth moving out of farming as they consider it a lowly occupation.



Dharma Dangol making a presentation on Prolinnova at Creative Academy School in Kirtipur on 1 January 2017 (photo: Dharma Dangol)

Interactions between local innovators, men and women, and students will be a key feature of this curriculum. He hopes to include meetings between students and farmer innovators, in the schools or in the innovator's homes, as was done with students in the university when Dharma was teaching. He also plans to organize training workshops on popular writing to motivate school and college students to write essays, articles and stories about innovators. He hopes to compile and publish the students' writings that would serve as a reference book for schools. He also thinks that this will be very useful reading material for those who wish to study local innovation.