

2020 Annual Report Contribution: PROLINNOVA–South Africa

FUNCTIONING OF THE COUNTRY PLATFORM

Efforts were made during 2020 to strengthen the Country Platform (CP) in South Africa. Zanele Shezi took the lead in these efforts to engage the other provinces, which included discussions with Ernst Letsoalo in Limpopo, based at University of Limpopo, and Sifiso Shandu, who is with Department of Agriculture in Mpumalanga Province. Michael Malinga, who was with an NGO in Pietermaritzburg called Pietermaritzburg Agency for Community Social Action (PACSA) until late 2020, was also engaged in these discussions. He has since moved to Mahlathini Rural Development Foundation, which has a strong focus on participatory research approaches.

In terms of linkages with other organisations, meetings have taken place with Klariska Moodley from the Accelerator Lab Program of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), based in the office in Pretoria. The unit was interested in looking for opportunities for collaboration in terms of supporting grassroots innovation that can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

ATTENDANCE OF PROLINNOVA MEETINGS

The Africa Partners Workshop took place from 26-28 October 2020. Due to restrictions associated with the Covid-19 pandemic, this was a virtual event. Representation from Prolinnova-SA included University of Limpopo, Institute of Natural Resources and PACSA. The presentation made by Prolinnova-SA included some examples of local innovation currently being supported in South Africa. One of these was a system for making use of limited space (and vertical space) in urban contexts to grow vegetables. There was interest from Prolinnova Mozambique in this system which led to its being documented on video by the INR team.

THE GLOBAL FARMER INNOVATION FAIR

As a participant in the Global Farmer Innovation Fair (GFIF) that was to be held jointly with A Growing Culture (AGC) in February 2021, time was spent documenting a social innovation in KwaZulu-Natal. This was done by an intern at the Institute of Natural Resources.

CONCLUSION

Prolinnova-SA has continued to remain active within the global network through the work of its partner organisations that support and encourage local innovation and engage in joint experimentation processes.

Prepared by: Zanele Shezi and Brigid Letty (July 2021).