
Guidelines to
Participatory Innovation
Development

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PREFACE

The Guidelines to Participatory Innovation Development (PID), as a resource manual, is the first attempt made by Practical Action Nepal under PROLINNOVA Nepal Programme from which relevant practical mechanisms can be derived to render existing and conventional projects (more) FARMER-LED. The overall focus of the guidelines is on the conceptualisation and practice of participatory approaches built on farmer “Innovation” and “Innovations” (Innovation, here, refers to the process and innovativeness to the product). Emphasis is placed on guiding the reader towards the essence of Participatory Innovation Development (PID) and to recognise the need to promote local Innovations as evolving alternatives to development. PID is treated as an alternative approach to development that attempts to strengthen the participatory process. Hence, rather than a separate entity or an altogether “new” concept, it can be best regarded as a way to help “people to do things better”.

The intended primary audience of these operational guidelines are the government extension services, public or private research institutes, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations either working with or interested in the field of participatory research and development.

The PID Guideline is supposed to be taken in a flexible way. This is not a blueprint or fixed manual, and is only supposed to provide other organisations with some guidance for further experimentation. There is a room for improvement and the possibility of an updated version of the same that can be expected in the following year.

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I would also like to express my gratitude to Achyut Luitel, Country Director, Practical Action Nepal, for his moral support and providing me with his primary inputs during the initial phase of our work. My appreciation also goes to Gehendra Gurung, Team Leader, Practical Action Nepal, for providing his practical insights and understanding of the whole concept. Similarly, I would like to acknowledge the support of Upendra Shrestha, Fund Raising and Communications Manager and his associate Sujana Upadhyay, Practical Action Nepal, for edition and layout design, and ultimately bringing out the first copy of the complete work.

I am also grateful to the PID international resource persons Jean-Marie Diop, Scott Killough, Orlando Buenviaje and Chesha Wettasinha with whom I had the opportunity to interact and gain valuable insights in PID during the PID Facilitators' training held at Uganda (26 June-12 July, 2006). I am grateful also to those many participants who attended the training and from whom I gathered some very useful feedbacks. My sincere appreciation also goes to Ann Waters -Bayers and Laurens van Veldhuizen, Chris Reij and other renowned authors from whose publications I have been able to draw the conceptual as well as practical framework of PID.

Last but not the least, it is worth to mention here, that while I was in the last stage of completing the work, I was able to draw the inspiration from the paper prepared by Patrick Mulvany (Practical Action UK) for the UN Poverty Forum in New York on 16 November 2006. The learning by ITDG (now Practical Action) over the span of 40 years about technologies and how they can benefit the majority reflects the importance of local control over the development and promotion of Innovation. It has been summarised under three headings: (i) Technology is mainly knowledge and skills; (ii) Technologies that have co-evolved with society can be sustained; and (iii) Technologies developed with and/or controlled by poor people benefit them. This paper justifies the need for PID as an alternative approach to development.

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Table of Contents

Preface	i
Acknowledgement	ii
Background	1
Rationale	3
Participatory Innovation Development	
Innovators, Innovation and Innovations	4
Principles and Significance	4
Supporting Local Innovations	6
Local Innovation Selection Criteria	7
PID Implementation Process, Monitoring and Evaluation	
PID Process Cycle (Procedure)	9
Role of Stakeholders	13
The Target Group	15
Scope and Limitations	15
References	16

Guidelines to Participatory Innovation Development

BACKGROUND

The historical evolution of agricultural research and development shows gradual realisation and recognition for need of participatory approaches that facilitate the process of linking scientific knowledge with local knowledge and create an enabling environment where communities' initiatives are respected, promoted, scaled up and shared for wider outreach and benefit.

For the last 10,000 years farmers have exchanged ideas, technologies, seeds, and Innovations etc. among themselves. The period during the 1840's may be marked as the beginning of a "dissemination" culture that led to eventual formulation of extension approaches. During this period the first extension lecture was held at Cambridge University (UK) with the main objective to "reach out" the scientific or lab research findings to the farmers. The first land grant universities were established in the USA in 1862 with an aim to conduct research, and provide agricultural extension.

The period of 1900s shows the extension approaches being more formalised and adopted globally. In the USA, in 1918, the system of extension workers called country agents was set up to disperse technology from research stations to farmers. And in the 1950s, Training and Visit (T&V) system or approach was developed in Israel. The Transfer of Technology (ToT) model is more dominant during the 1960s during which period of time the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) was established and T&V was widely promoted in Asia and Africa by World Bank.

What we refer to "participatory approaches" began from discussion on farming systems research and extension during 1970s followed by beginning of Participatory Technology Development (PTD) and farmer to farmer extension approaches during 1980s. The approaches of facilitating (two-ways) learning between "insiders" and "outsiders" evolved during 1990s as an element aimed at strengthening participatory approaches.

In December 1999, Southern and Northern NGOs – with support from the GFAR (Global Forum on Agricultural Research), the Non-Governmental Organisations Committee (NGOC) of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR) and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs – met in Rambouillet, France, to consider how existing approaches to participatory research and development in agriculture and natural resources management could be scaled up. At this meeting, ETC Ecoculture, a Netherlands-based NGO, was asked to facilitate the launching of a PROLINNOVA programme built from the bottom up¹

The first phase of PROLINNOVA was funded in 2003 by International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) in Ethiopia, Ghana, and Uganda. Subsequently, DGIS (Directorate General for Development Cooperation – The Netherlands) provided 4 -year funding for strengthening/starting up in nine countries: Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, Cambodia, Nepal, Niger, South Africa, Sudan and Tanzania. Besides this, the emerging PROLINNOVA countries include Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru in Latin America.

By the end of 2006, PROLINNOVA obtained assurance of continued funding by DGIS until the end of 2010. This initiative has been also supported by DURAS (French Government), Misereor, GFAR, World Bank and CTA. The central objective of the programme is up-scaling, mainstreaming and institutionalisation of community-led approaches to NRM.

PROMoting Local INNOVation (PROLINNOVA) Nepal Programme is part of the PROLINNOVA Global Programme, which works through multi-stakeholder partnerships in nine countries. Currently, partner organisations of the programme in Nepal include: CARE Nepal, Practical Action Nepal, Institute of Agriculture and Animal Science (IAAS), Ecological Services Centre (ECOSCENTRE), and Local Initiatives for Biodiversity, Research and Development (LI-BIRD). The focus is on recognizing the dynamics of indigenous knowledge and learning how to strengthen the capacities of local farmers to adjust to changing conditions, especially to develop and adopt their own site appropriate systems and institutions of resource management in order to gain food security, sustain their livelihoods and safeguard the environment. The overall objective of the PROLINNOVA Nepal programme is to develop and institutionalize partnership and methodologies that promote processes of local Innovation in environmentally sound use of natural resources.

¹ Adapted from PID facilitator's training workshop session, Uganda, 26 June - 12 July, 2006, Scott Killough and inputs by Mariana Wontschowski, ETC.

RATIONALE

Recent experiences show that changing the development agenda requires new ways of thinking about and doing research and development. Fundamental to this is reassessing the traditional notion of research and development as a process primarily concerned with generating and transferring modern technology to passive end-users. Research and development is now widely seen as a learning process. The paradigm shift here is about making development agendas more farmers or user-led based on local knowledge and skills. This also means strengthening participatory approaches in the local context. These new perspectives suggest that research and development can no longer be the exclusive domain of scientists, but rather a joint process requiring the participation of a wider range of actors, users or stakeholders. More importantly, it redefines the role of local people from being merely recipients and beneficiaries to actors who influence and provide key inputs to the process.

Nepal is a very diverse country in terms of social cultures, traditions, resources and topography. Technological practices, systems and processes are found as per these diverse parameters. Promotion of local innovative thoughts and actions would contribute significantly towards the principles of sustainable development in a diverse country like Nepal where respect to nature as well human beings in diverse and even adverse conditions is a pre-requisite.

PID, in the global as well as the country-level context, is necessary to consolidate and strengthen the past efforts in participatory development approaches. This rests on the basic hypothesis that:

- ▶ Analysing local innovations provides a focus for groups / communities to examine opportunities and set agenda for R&D
- ▶ Recognition of local capacities and creativity is prerequisite for true partnership in R&D
- ▶ Engagement in this PID process strengthens:
 - community organisation for development
 - capacities of agricultural services to support endogenous development, i.e. “from within”

PARTICIPATORY INNOVATION DEVELOPMENT

Innovators, Innovation and Innovations

An Innovator has been defined as "someone who develops or tries out new ideas without having been requested by outsiders to do so". "New" is something that was started in the innovators' lifetime and not inherited from parents, like a farming technique or a different way of organising things.

In Nepal, the first definition of Innovations was coined and adopted as "New ideas based on local resources evolved through the experimentation of local people to address the specific local constraints and opportunities"². The more standard form of definition is viewed in two terminologies— "INNOVATION" and "INNOVATIONS". Innovation refers to the process and capacity of creating something new - better said "innovativeness or creativity". Whereas Innovations refers to the actual products of this process - the technologies or instruments that are produced through the process of creating. PROLINNOVA's focus is on Innovation (WITHOUT an "S"), that is, creativity and capacity to innovate. We use Innovations as entry points to call attention to partners to the creativity of farmers. The most important is not how many Innovations are documented and spread, but actually how many people started to realise that they can deal with/interact with farmers in a different way, looking at them as sources of ideas and solutions rather than just only passive receptors.

Principles and Significance

The very basic principle of PID is that the local, situational, often more intuitive knowledge of villagers and the formal knowledge of scientists (researchers or other subject matter specialists) are combined to experiment on Innovations.³

PID is governed by important principles that are summarised as follows:

- ▶ Start from what farmers have developed or are developing on their own and build on it.
- ▶ Prevent adverse effects of PID on others/environment
- ▶ Respect knowledge and experience of all producers and apply as appropriate

²PID training workshop held at Narayangarh, Chitwan district, 2004.

³Scheuermeier, U; et.al, 2004.

- ▶ Disseminate findings by sharing through appropriate media
- ▶ Process has to be context specific
- ▶ Farmers/ local people take the lead in the process
- ▶ Idea of replicating within the community

PID uses farmer Innovation, as a strategy to converge different actions and actors. Local Innovation through self-organised planning, implementation and evaluation of systematic experiments fosters self-respect and self-confidence in the rural communities involved and the process is closely linked with a process of social change. Farmers innovate due to necessity, changing conditions and curiosity, doing informal experiments on new ideas either from their own - and/or learned from other farmers, researchers, extensionists and/or other information sources like the mass media. However, research and extension pay little attention to the importance of Local Innovation for agricultural development⁴. The benefits of technological advances and private sector growth have not been able to reach the marginal and resource poor beneficiaries. In this context, promotion of Local Innovation becomes extremely important to bridge the gap as well as capacitate the innovators against external threats that may be in the form of new consumer product, sophisticated technologies, and changing socio economic environment within the locality, and even natural disasters. Although PID often deals with experimentation on agricultural practices, new things and ways that work are by far not limited to what is usually called technology.

Many problems and opportunities for the poor and marginalised are not technical ones, but of a social character (ways of organising the community, for example).

PID also lays emphasis on the aspect of local democracy in the control of Innovation (be it local or imposed). Benefits are maximised and sustained when local communities are allowed to choose and decide on the technologies and processes they prefer as per the local context and eventually gain control over it.

Innovations may include new “Products and Processes” such as:

Products

- ▶ Crops, varieties, tools and machines, inputs etc.
- ▶ Cultivation and land management practices (e.g. maize planting on ridges, erosion control structures, enrichment

⁴ Chris Reij and Ann Waters-Bayer, volume 1: *Participatory Research and Development*

planting in forests).

Processes

- ▶ Interaction between different people and institutions (e.g. designing rules for communal grazing, joint forest management).
- ▶ Ways of organising work (Rural financing, co-operative production and marketing).
- ▶ Marketing ways (e.g. joint marketing to a distant urban market with better prices, bulking of produce). necessary to ensure that the selected subject is an innovative “product” or “process”.

Development of Knowledge and Skills

In Chivi, Masvingo Province, Zimbabwe, the challenge was to demonstrate how the arid and structurally overpopulated regions 4 and 5 could be weaned off food aid. The outcome of the work was a sea-change in government extension services. All staffs were retrained from being deliverers of Training and Visit's exogenous technologies to becoming facilitators of indigenous Innovation processes. After a thorough community process of selection, priority technologies were applied communally – land forming and water harvesting works were built and seed fairs were held for the free exchange of good local varieties and associated knowledge. The ideas spread geometrically and the benefits were retained... and even in current troubled times the local economy and their agro ecosystems are more resilient; their food sovereignty – their ability to control their local food system - has been improved. (For more information see 'Beating Hunger' by Kuda Murwira, IT Publications)

The application of PID process and its outcome has been illustrated in the box below as an example of Practical Action's work in Zimbabwe⁵

⁵ Patrick Mulvany, “Technology as if People Mattered”, International Forum on the Eradication of Poverty, 15-16 November 2006, New York,

Supporting Local Innovation

Gathering evidences of local Innovations in documented form is a good starting point for promotion of PID. By documenting Innovations one gets in contact with farmers, understand their ideas. You are then better able to prioritise the Innovations as per the context. The information can be collected using various methodologies such as participant observation, questionnaire, focus group discussions (FGD), transact walk, case or research studies on specific subject, or sectors.

The primary questions a PID practitioner should answer are: FOR WHOM (seeking identity of the user), followed by WHY (the internal and external needs), WHERE (the location the Innovation is going to be placed/operate) and WHAT (the product that is visualised and eventually promoted)

The supporting interventions can be of the following nature:

1. Value addition or modification to the existing technologies or processes (Innovation)
2. Financial incentives for its further modification or replication
3. Capacity building (technical backstopping, training, resources support)
4. Establishing sustainable linkages with relevant stakeholders
5. Policy influence
6. Setting up support funds for Innovations in a community
7. Exposure to larger audience

Regular monitoring is required after the interventions in which local stakeholders' role is prominent. The capacity of relevant stakeholders needs to be built in this context. The sustainability of the PID process also depends on the monitoring tools and practices.

Local Innovation Selection Criteria

One scope lies in the need to differentiate whether a particular practice or technological advances is simply traditional or indigenous, OR it is actually an INNOVATION. It has been viewed and understood that while local or indigenous technology or practice is recognised as a common practice already adapted and widely used, Innovation is considered more of something new that may have emerged from traditional practices but not necessarily the same. It is common that while indigenous and local knowledge has been recognised to play a central role in the coping strategies of the poor, the innovative

processes involved in sustaining these practices go unnoticed. For example, the rationale of traditional healers have proven herbal solutions to common and sometimes fatal sicknesses and diseases was discussed with the active participation of representatives from various government line agencies and non- government development organisations in training workshop on PTD and PID at Narayangarh, Chitwan, 2004.

Basically, local innovation may be selected from:

- (i) Traditional or local innovation limited in its use to certain location or area.
- (ii) Traditional but modified with scope of replication
- (iii) Innovations brought from outside but modified/value added in the local context
- (iv) Altogether new Innovation
- (v) New Innovation directly transferred from another location.

There is a degree of flexibility in the selection process of local Innovations for further experimentation. It should relate to the local context and hence may differ according to the individual or group. An Innovation is relatively easy to identify to begin with. The easiest could be the ones where a community or an individual modifies a certain product or process as per his requirement and local context that has been “installed” or “provided” by outsiders. However, few criteria should be part of the selection process. The Table: 1 (a) below brings this criteria, separated in “Important” and “Desirable”. The “important” ones are meant to reflect what features should be primarily considered before calling products or processes “innovative”. The “Desirable” refers to criteria which are a “plus” to the Innovation. Hence, desirable characteristics may not be fully reflected but we may want to consider them as an added advantage.

Table1(a): Selection Criteria

Cr. No.	Important
1.	Technically feasible, Economically viable, Environment friendly and Socially acceptable (TEES test)
2	Locally evolved/ developed using local knowledge and skills
3	Address immediate or long term solutions or opportunities (potential benefits)
4.	Widely replicable
5.	Interest and consent of innovators
	Desirable
6.	Adaptability (how easily can it be used/modified)
7.	Use of easily available/accessible local resources
8	Low cost in terms of affordability
9	Cost effectiveness in terms of time and resources

The selection criteria matrix as shown in Table 1(b) below can be used to rank and select or prioritise different Innovations. Innovations are listed in the first row and the nine criteria as in table 1(a) is compared against these to check the fulfilment and can be ranked accordingly.

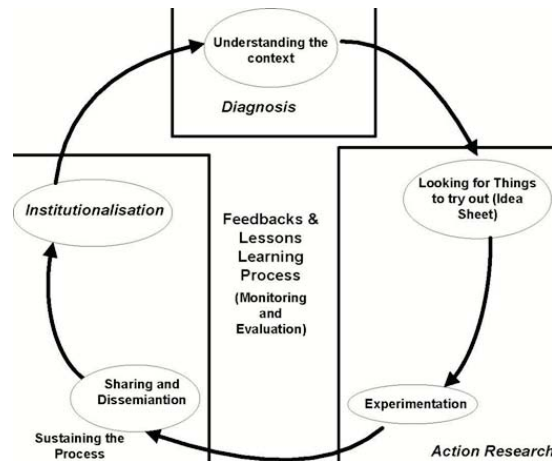
Table 1 (b): Selection Criteria Matrix

Innovation	Criteria	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	Ranking	Remarks
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												

PID IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PID Process Cycle (Procedure)

PID process is viewed as a cycle comprising of five major steps that encompasses three stages as diagnosis, implementation or the action research stage and the sustainability stage. The Monitoring and Evaluation is a continuous process contributing towards strengthening the whole process. The steps are described as in the figure shown below.



The Diagnosis Stage in the PID ensures that the local situation of the community is analysed and needs assessment carried out to identify potential interventions for the promotion of local Innovations. As such, needs assessments using participatory tools and techniques are undertaken at the level of individual innovators, the community level and the institutional level in order to understand their capacities and make appropriate interventions. In this process, local Innovations are identified, documented and prioritised as well. But Innovations can also be documented outside the diagnosis stage by looking directly at innovative adaptations and solutions that are already in practice. This provides a broader scope of entering into the PID process. Local Innovations in the field can also be located through other means such as joint walks with community members, advertisement through papers or through collection of feed backs from focus groups eg: school children, farmers group, mothers group and CBOs.

The Implementation/Action Research Stage includes practical steps of joint-action on the basis of prioritised Innovations. In this process it is important to ensure that innovators and stakeholders are directly involved. This is explained in simple steps below:

1. Brainstorming or discussing with the community to explore and document and “try new things” with Innovations that already exists and recording the selected Innovations in idea sheets. This step also requires field verification by relevant PID practitioners in terms of the selection criteria.
2. Prioritising and selecting the Innovations from Idea Sheets to experiment with. The selection criteria matrix (Table 1; a and b) given above may be used in this selection process. This step is carried out in with the involvement of community members, government stakeholders (eg: service providers) and local organisations (farmer group/s, CBOs and NGOs)
3. Develop Experiment Sheets on the basis of selected Idea Sheets. This step involves closely working with the innovators and should cover detail aspects of the experimentation - what, why, how by whom and when. An Activity Sheet is prepared on the basis of the Experiment Sheet.
4. The fourth step is the actual implementation stage where joint experimentation takes place. This step may not always be in terms of technical interventions or process, or even in terms of financial supports and rather may simply mean promoting an Innovation through its replication or information dissemination. Simultaneously, individual and institutional capacity building measures are undertaken in the form of training as well as non-training interventions, following the results of the needs assessment made and the Innovations prioritised by the community. Ideal steps in Action Research that has been found to be effective are as follows:
 - (i) Focus group discussion
 - (ii) Innovation verification / Validation of local Innovations: The validation consists of two processes: short-listing and ranking.
 - (iii) Implementation as per experimentation plan (value addition and resource supports)

- (iv) Scaling up (value addition and resource supports)
- (v) Monitoring and technical backstopping
- (vi) Replication and promotional activities
- (vii) Evaluation

The role of stakeholders is most prominent in this stage (Different types of stakeholders and their possible roles are described separately).

5. The stage of sustainability comprises of activities meant to make the results (in terms of process, capacity, and outputs) more sustainable. It can include sharing and dissemination of the whole process through exhibition and fairs, replication of best practices, producing and disseminating special publications, farmer to farmer extension and exposures visits, commercialisation of commercial products or creating market, establishment of Innovation fund mobilised or managed by communities themselves, etc.

Institutionalisation literary means influencing the current policies, practices and norms of institutions or organisations to adopt new ways or modify what is available. The Local Innovation Support Fund (LISF) could be one alternative approach to sustain the promotion and sustainability of local Innovations by mobilising the fund through a community managed system. This would also ensure a continuous flow of incentive for local Innovation for its development and promotion. In addition, the learning of LISF mobilisation and management can be consolidated to influence wider audience and institutionalize the whole process.

Current trends show that development organisations involved in PROLINNOVA have begun to fit in the PID concepts and approaches in their programmes and projects implementation strategies. The PROLINNOVA project activities being implemented in different countries have been mainstreamed into suitable ongoing projects. This institutionalization process within the implementing organisations can also be regarded as an approach towards continuing and sustaining the PID concepts and principles.

Lobbying can also be focussed at changing attitudes and generating commitment in addition to change in policy formulation and priorities.

*⁶ Fre Kafeero,
July 2006*

Building strategic alliances is a key success factor for institutionalisation⁶. But eventually the whole process of institutionalisation may depend on the individual organisations' area of interest or mandate and capacity of influencing other actors. The inclusion of conceptual content and the applicability of PID in educational curricula will contribute in the institutionalisation of PID concept and processes, leading to more sensitive professionals, who are able to recognise farmers' capacities and act as facilitators.

In the formative stage of PID, the best approach towards sustainability will be to raise awareness and to build capacities at the organisational level as well as community level. Other sustainable interventions can be built in from this stage.

Examples of Idea Sheet and Experiment Sheet (This example is not a standard and may be changed or modified as per different context)

IDEA SHEET

Topic

What do we want to investigate?

Why do we want to investigate this?

Persons involved in developing the idea (name, address, function)

Date and place

EXPERIMENT SHEET

Topic

What do we want to investigate?

Why exactly do we want to investigate this? What is the underlying problem or opportunity?

What would be the benefit if the experiment is successful?

What exactly do we want to find out?

What are the questions which the experiment should answer?

Participatory Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) is followed in the PID process. Ideally, the M&E process is followed in each steps of the PID cycle which cross cuts in all the stages. M&E system is at the core of PID process that indicates PID is also a continuous process of collecting feedbacks and lesson learning.

The experimental processes led by local actors, as an example the farmers on their own plots, requires monitoring on regular basis. The fact that farmers are managing the process means that we need some special tools for M&E, which are adapted to their use. The monitoring is done by the innovators themselves with the involvement

⁷ Laurens Van Veldhuizen, Ann water-bayer, Henk de zeeuw, 1997

and support of external stakeholders. The joint participatory monitoring and evaluation system thus established helps in systematizing the experiences.

Monitoring and evaluation is therefore a documentation and information system that allows the individual innovators and stakeholders to know and understand the progress being undertaken in the field and to learn from it for further experimentation and future tasks. The monitoring of PID process must be easy to follow and carried out (for example by using simple formats, visuals to capture certain moments, symbols and drawings) It should also provide a documentation of the whole process, not only allowing discussion on a particular experiment being monitored but also encouraging the sharing and promotion of the similar experiment in other contexts. The PME approach in all the stages of PID will help evaluate the whole PID process in order to obtain feedback and lessons learnt to further strengthen the approaches.

Role of stakeholders

In the case of an organisation commencing to deal with PID, it will certainly need support from others with more experience. But also in the ongoing PID process, various organisations will have different but closely interacting roles to play⁷. PID approaches are multi-stakeholder by nature. They have to be undertaken in cooperation between partners (farmers, extensionists, researchers, etc).

These are described below, avoiding the use of term "farmers" and "agriculture" so that it might not advocate the misunderstanding that PID is implicitly about agricultural development or natural resource management.

(i) Academic and Research Institutes:

- ▶ providing information on new technologies;
- ▶ Introducing and developing PID related courses in educational curricula
- ▶ participating in fieldwork during situation analysis and
- ▶ identification of "best-bet" options;
- ▶ advising on the design and monitoring of user's trials;
- ▶ doing on-station research into field-generated Innovations or adaptations or questions raised by users;
- ▶ providing Subject Matter Specialist (SMS) services, and
- ▶ using their knowledge of users' situations and questions

to influence the national research agenda.

(ii) Government Extension Services:

- ▶ providing technical advice about specific technologies;
- ▶ preparing training/extension materials on those technologies;
- ▶ providing secondary data (materials, soils, climate, prices, etc);
- ▶ encouraging extension approaches like farmer-to-farmer and sharing of results in a wider area; and
- ▶ using knowledge of users' situations and questions to influence government extension policy.

(iii) NGOs or Development projects:

- ▶ mobilising beneficiaries and giving them organisational support;
- ▶ facilitating community-led situation analysis and planning of the local research agenda;
- ▶ supporting users in carrying out their experiments;
- ▶ giving guidance in dealing with gender issues;
- ▶ mediating in conflict resolution; and
- ▶ encouraging farmer-to-farmer extension.

(ii) Farmers or Farmer Organisations/Community:

- ▶ identifying and articulating felt needs and current problems;
- ▶ co-ordinating the process of carrying out, monitoring and evaluating users' experiments;
- ▶ co-ordinating the process of carrying out, monitoring and evaluating users' experiments;
- ▶ organising exposure visits and exchange programmes, both within the local area, and outside field; and
- ▶ eventually assuming responsibility for continuing the PID process in the area.

In addition to these stakeholders, others might also play a vital role if so required (e.g. local manufacturers, private sector research, etc).

THE TARGET GROUP

The target group or communities are the marginal and resource poor producers and farmers, indigenous communities dependent on natural resources, occupational castes, and small rural entrepreneurs and manufacturers.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

PID approaches have been widely used in agriculture production systems and Natural Resource Management (NRM). Most of the references here have been drawn from the experiences in this sector. But the realisation is growing that PID concepts and methods are relevant also in other fields such as food processing and small-scale industry⁸. This indicates that the scope of PID also lies in other informal sectors.

Nepal with its rich diversity in culture, geography and natural resources has immense wealth to offer in terms of embedded but unexplored Innovations that have evolved over the years, Building on this diversity, strengthening of local Innovation (again, the process not the product) and mainstreaming to integrated development efforts will mean enhancing the resilience of the vulnerable particularly for whom “a small Innovation may speak volumes of their innovativeness in the face of poverty”. Supporting Innovation also means boosting up farmers confidence and capacity. This is more important than the Innovations per se, because with improved capacity farmers can innovate more often, and with less assistance, access to outside resources and services.

The whole concept of PID is still in the formative stage and may take sometime before this approach is widely recognised and applied in a more generalised manner. The major challenge in PID approach lies in bridging the gap between local knowledge and scientific knowledge. This is mainly due to the different level of understanding of the innovators, the facilitators and the service providers, and the difficulty in bringing these stakeholders together. But again this is also what PID tries to address.

⁸ van der Blik et al 1993

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