

NOVEMBER 2007 NEWSLETTER Vol2, No2

EDITORIAL

Dear friends and colleagues

Welcome to the second and somewhat very lengthy and overdue PROLINNOVA SA Newsletter of 2007. Much has happened in recent months and this edition promises to be a bumper one.

In recent months many members of the programme have been extremely active, representing PROLINNOVA at international conferences in Senegal and Johannesburg. The Provincial Task Teams have been very active organising and networking within KwaZulu-Natal, Limpopo and Mpumalanga. More specifics on these activities are included in this Newsletter. Laurens van Veldhuizen, a member of the International Support Team (IST), visited South Africa in October. Monique tells us more about PELUM South Africa's activities in recent months and the theme for the next three years including promoting Food Sovereignty and entering into a critical debate with smallholders about the proposed Green Revolution for Africa. Thiambi provides a summary of a recent policy brief that PROLINNOVA-SA is working on. More news is provided on the Farmer-led Documentation Project and the FAIR project. The Provincial Task Teams are putting a lot of energy into their activities on the ground and the various coordinators provide us with details on their achievements. These activities are vital for the success and institutionalisation of participatory R&D approaches in South Africa and it is good to see how successful they have been during 2007.

It is with some sadness that we say goodbye to two very active members of our NSC. Firstly Bram Buscher returned to the Netherlands to complete his PhD. While he

still remains on the PROLINNOVA IST we in South Africa will miss his energy and useful insights about what was happening at the international level as well as within SA. Bram married Stacey, a fellow S. African, earlier this year and she has joined him in the Netherlands. We wish them both a wonderful future together and hope to hear more from them, especially as they share a strong interest in the environment in SA.

Thiambi Netshiluvhi has resigned from the ARC and takes up a senior and very challenging position at the Department of Science and Technology in Pretoria where we hope he will continue to push PROLINNOVA principles amongst his colleagues. Thiambi has served as the NSC vice-chair since 2006 and injected energy both at this level and across the entire programme. He, along with Brigid, was instrumental in forging strong relationships with the ARC by facilitating meetings and organising the MOU between PROLINNOVA and the ARC SRL Programme. We wish him well in his new position and look forward to getting regular feedback from him once he has settled down.

We hope that you enjoy this newsletter and if you have any news that you would like to share with us or any suggestions about the content of this newsletter and the PROLINNOVA SA programme, please email them respectively to thart@hsrc.ac.za and lettyb@ukzn.ac.za. Our goal for 2008 is to issue at least 3 Newsletters and your inputs will help. Examples of Prolinnova type activities in your area will be appreciated and can be included into future PROLINNOVA-SA Publications. As this issue is the last one before the festive season we would like to wish you all a prosperous, peaceful and innovative 2008.

Regards, Tim & Brigid.

Laurens van Veldhuizen visits South Africa

By Brigid Letty

Laurens van Veldhuizen (Programme Coordinator of the International PROLINNOVA network) visited South Africa at the end of September 2007. His visit had two main objectives (1) To participate in the review of the Department of Agricultural Economics, Extension and Rural Development of the University of Pretoria and (2) To review a number of current issues with PROLINNOVA SA and the FAIR Project.

Laurens joined Nick Vink (A professor from University of Stellenbosch) and Jock Anderson (formerly with the Worldbank) in a 3-day review of the Department of Agricultural Economic, Agriculture and Rural Development of the University of Pretoria. He looked specifically into the work of the extension sub-group, the Post Graduate School of Rural Development within the department and at community engagement activities across the whole department.

In terms of PROLINNOVA SA and FAIR SA, most of the discussions took place in a meeting with Rauri Alcock (Chair of the PROLINNOVA SA NSC), Maxwell Mudhara (The PROLINNOVA Provincial Coordinator for KwaZulu-Natal) and Nono Ngubane (Project Manager: FAIR SA) of the Farmer Support Group (University of kwaZulu-Natal) and Brigid Letty (Programme Coordinator of PROLINNOVA SA). Discussions continued during a one-day field visit to a group of farmers at Potchini who are involved in a Farmer-Led Documentation (FLD) project of Farmer Support Group, which was organised by Michael Malinga (a field worker with Farmer Support Group). Laurens met separately with Anton Krone (Director of the NGO SaveAct) who is coordinator of the International FAIR Project to review a number of general project issues.

A meeting between members of PROLINNOVA and staff members of the Sustainable Rural Livelihoods (SRL) Division of the Agricultural Research Council (ARC) took place in Pretoria on 4 October 2007. It was attending by SRL Division staff, Dr Sefora Masia (Group Executive), David Modise (Manager: Horticulture), Aartjan Verschoor (Manager: ARC Technology Transfer Academy) and Thiambi Netshiluvhi (Division Coordinator: Horticulture and vice chair of the PROLINNOVA SA NSC) as well as Brigid Letty (Programme Coordinator: PROLINNOVA South Africa) and Laurens van Veldhuizen (Programme Coordinator of the International PROLINNOVA programme).

The meeting was an opportunity to obtain a common understanding of the SRL Division programme and staffing component, and the objectives and programme of PROLINNOVA South Africa. Discussion followed regarding the relationship between ARC and PROLINNOVA SA and the way that ARC staff members will participate in the latter. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) has been drafted between the two parties and this defines the commitments required for and expected outcomes of the relationship between them. The two parties as well as the legal department of ARC have had input into the MOU and the document is now ready for signing.

The ARC Technology Transfer Academy (ATTA) is also driving the National Agricultural Research for Development (ARD) Programme in South Africa. Maxwell Mudhara, a member of the PROLINNOVA SA NSC is also a member of the National ARD Task Team, ensuring that links exist between the two initiatives. The SRL Division has taken steps to ensure that a module on PID has been included in the ARD in-service training course that is offered to staff from the ARC and the various provincial departments of agriculture. Moving forwards, the establishment of a pilot multi-stakeholder ARD hub in Limpopo

Province offers important opportunities for further institutionalising the development approaches promoted by PROLINNOVA.

The meeting highlighted the need to move beyond training and awareness creation regarding local innovation and PID so that we see examples of PID or farmer-led joint experimentation being piloted on the ground. It was felt that the PID workshop in Mpumalanga in October 2007 might offer opportunities for the identification of a project to be packaged and piloted.

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE FEEDBACK

PROLINNOVA International meeting in Senegal

By Thiambi Netshiluvhi

The 2007 PROLINNOVA International workshop was hosted at Toubab Dialao in Senegal, Dakar, from the 19th to the 23rd of March 2007, by the Innovative Environmental Development (IED) Organisation, a member of the PROLINNOVA International. Thiambi Netshiluvhi (ARC) and two representatives from other South African organisations, Brigid Letty (Programme Coordinator for PROLINNOVA South Africa) and Anton Krone (Coordinator of the project FAIR - Farmer Access to Innovation Resource) attended the meeting.

The purpose of the meeting was to discuss several aspects of implementing PROLINNOVA including the new work-plan for 2007/2008 financial year, budgetary issues, local innovation support funds (LISFs), report back on successes, failures, challenges and remedial actions for Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) by PROLINNOVA Country Programmes' coordinators, share practical experiences on PID, the requirements for new partner affiliates, backstopping needs, annual achievements/failures, policy advocacy,

participatory innovation and curriculum development.

The first day of the workshop started off with several presentations touching base on deepening understanding of participatory innovation development (PID), partnership building and PID, joint experimentation, differentiation of social and economic innovations, and promotion of experimentation with local innovations. In addition, there was a session, an "information market", where the various PROLINNOVA Country Programmes showcased their programmes. The "information market" provided a platform where members of different country programmes (CPs) shared and learned about different local innovations as well as policies from different countries. The session also enhanced networking between members of the various CPs. The second day comprised two parallel sessions on policy advocacy and PID curriculum development. Thiambi participated in the PID curriculum development session as he was also tasked by the PROLINNOVA SA to present the CD concept note that had been prepared. The PROLINNOVA SA's concept note explained the basic steps to be followed when attempting to incorporate PID/ARD and other forms of participatory approaches into institutes of higher learning such as universities, agricultural colleges and others.

Also interesting was the field trip that was undertaken by the workshop participants on one of the days of the meeting. The purpose was to make observations of the local innovations taking place in the nearby villages around Senegal, Dakar. The participants had to choose one of three trips to different community groups. The trip made participants realise that farmers always improvise and develop strategies to cope with adversities that they face during their farming lives. One of the exciting innovation examples was when a farmer realised he had been faced with water

shortages. He then created his own drip irrigation which was under the soil and in close proximity with roots of the intended fruit trees. This local innovation/technology saved water and was very effective. The two other groups visited communities where social innovations had developed. One was a situation where a local women's network comprising groups from some eight villages situated on the borders of a national park had created a strong relationship with the park officials and taken greater ownership of the park, finding a way to effectively assist the officials with soil conservation measures and also taking tourists on guided tours of the area.

The meeting also provided opportunity for an international FAIR meeting with participants from the four participating countries coming together to share experiences and talk about various project administration issues.

AFRICA CONFERENCES - FEEDBACK

PROLINNOVA at FARA 4th General Assembly

By Brigid Letty

PROLINNOVA, represented by the South African Country Programme, took part in the Fourth General Assembly of the Forum for Agricultural Research In Africa (FARA) and in the Africa Agricultural Science Week that was held from 10-16 June 2007 in Johannesburg, South Africa.

PROLINNOVA involvement took place through their participation in two events. Firstly, we participated in a side event that focused on Overcoming Challenges in Scaling Out Agricultural Research Successes. This side event involved three different initiatives, namely Research Into Use (RIU), Dissemination of New Agricultural Technologies in Africa (DONATA; www.fara-africa.org) and PROLINNOVA. It was organised by RIU (www.researchintouse.com). Additional

partners in this side event included the NEPAD (New Partnership for Africa's Development) Secretariat, Picoteam and WRENMedia (which brings out the on-line journal *New Agriculturist*). The side event was held on Monday, 11 June from 15h00 to 18h00 at the Sandton Convention Centre in Johannesburg. Monique Salomon, a researcher from the Centre for Environment, Agriculture and Development (CEAD) at University of KwaZulu-Natal and Nono Ngubane from Farmer Support Group, the community outreach arm of CEAD, gave presentations on PROLINNOVA and experiences from the South African FAIR (Farmer Access to Innovation Resources) pilot, respectively.

The second involvement of PROLINNOVA in the Africa Agricultural Science Week was during the South Africa Day that was held at Irene at the grounds of the Agricultural Research Council on Tuesday 12 June 2007. The three provincial task teams of PROLINNOVA South Africa, representing Limpopo, KwaZulu-Natal and Mpumalanga, assisted a number of farmer innovators to display their innovations at the SA Day. In total, four innovators and a representative of the Eastern and Southern African Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESAFF) attended the day, with support from various members of the provincial task teams. Research Into Use funded the preparation of a number of posters, brochures and videos documenting local innovation, and their support is much appreciated. Susanna Thorpe from WRENMedia interviewed a number of the innovators, with support from Zanele Shezi (Farmer Support Group), who assisted with translations.

PELUM - FEEDBACK

NEWS FROM PELUM SOUTH AFRICA

By Monique Salomon - PELUM SA Country Representative

PELUM South Africa's **membership** now stands at 36 individuals from 25

organisations. Some funding was received from PELUM Regional Desk in Zambia to cover operational costs.

PELUM SA's theme for the coming three years is **Food sovereignty** "....the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems". Within this theme, it will work in the following areas:

1. Production, processing and marketing organic, traditional and indigenous foods (led by Rainman Landcare Foundation);
2. Saving seeds and breeding rights (in collaboration with PROLINNOVA SA)
3. Safe, healthy and culturally appropriate foods (in collaboration with Durban Botanical Gardens)
4. Advocacy for resource rights including land (no driver identified yet)

PELUM SA was present at the World Congress for Rural Women, and the FARA General Assembly. Members are very concerned about the **Green Revolution for Africa (AGRA)** initiative funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates and Rockefeller Foundations, as it seems to promote Genetically Engineered crops and breeds. It is proposed to engage smallholder farmers in critical debate with AGRA.

PELUM SA is raising funds for a two day **Food Sovereignty Indaba** planned for May 2008 in Pietermaritzburg. The event will bring together stakeholders from civil society, public and private sectors. The Indaba will house a lecture and entertainment theatre, a photo exhibition, a fair-trade market place and shops, and a food court with cooking demonstrations. Farmers and PELUM members will compete for the Indigenous Food Fundi Award. A book of selected contributions to the Indaba will be published. A delegation of four PELUM SA members and three farmers will be selected to enter into the inter-country competition for the best display on

Food security, Food sovereignty, Human and Environmental Health at the Tri-Annual General Meeting of PELUM Association held in Tanzania in October 2008.



POLICY BRIEF

SEED SAVING AND TRADING DYNAMICS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA: POLICY ANALYSIS

By Thiambi Netshiluvhi

Thiambi Netshiluvhi (Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Division, Agricultural research Council) prepared a draft paper that explores literature about the importance and challenges of the seed sector in general and policies thereof. The paper identifies major weaknesses which prevent the farm-saved seed system from playing an effective role in local food security and the mainstream economy. Important findings are hoped to provide inputs into policy development to support farmers' rights.

According to the literature, farm-saved seed (FSS) play a pivotal role in the livelihoods of farming communities and human race across the globe. FSS was the basis for food security as it relied on the use of rich diversity of seeds. However, the commercial seed markets gradually induced the creation of two distinct seed systems, formal and informal. On the one hand, the formal seed system comprises well-defined quality seed in respect of genetic purity and the sector focuses on only a few cash crops and is subjected to national policies and regulations. On the other hand, the informal system is not regulated by any policy or quality standards and focuses on a diverse range of FSS. These differences have led to the neglect of the informal seed system.

The informal seed system is also threatened by the introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) and hybrid seeds, which are highly promoted by the private sector given their financial value. Hybrid seeds pollute locally saved seeds through uncontrolled cross-pollination. The other challenge with using GMO and hybrid seeds is that the quality of the crops generated from such seeds particular in the second generation is severely compromised. In fact these crops are supposed to be replaced every season thereby ensuring regular profit for the seed companies and breeders. Farmers must buy new seeds during every planting season. The promotion of open-pollinated varieties (OPVs) at subsistence level does not help aspiring commercial farmers, as such seeds cannot be used at a commercial level because only hybrid seed is recommended. The imposition of hybrid seeds on smallholder farmers is promoting the gradual death of the farm-saved seed practice. Highly adaptable gene pools of many locally saved seed varieties are no longer pure due to the incorporation of some GM and hybrid genetic material during cross-pollination.

Because of failure to undergo quality tests or comply with set regulations or national seed policies, locally saved seeds cannot be commercialised or traded. This has been exacerbated by poor or no support to informal seed system by governments and private sectors. Current seed policies differ from one Southern African Development Community (SADC) country to another and require harmonisation. In addition, seed policies for quality assessment and trading are complex. Farmers' rights are not protected and they are being eliminated through patents, breeders' rights and contracts.

In the midst of these challenges, various recommendations are made in the policy paper about how the two seed systems can work in harmony with each other. Effective harmonisation of seed policies is seen as

something that would promote effective seed trade between SADC countries. The national policies need to be effectively revised to accommodate the needs of this smallholder farmer seed sector. In order to ensure that farmers at all levels benefit and seed diversity is improved, the two seed systems should be made to compliment each other to ensure effective seed security. Effective seed security will subsequently strengthen both food security and economic growth for all farmers.

PROJECT NEWS

Farmer-led Documentation

By Michael Malinga, Nicholas Madondo and Max Mudhara.

Farmer Support Group (FSG), the Community Development and Outreach Division of Centre for Environment, Agriculture and Development at the University Of KwaZulu Natal, sent a farmer, Nicholas Madondo, to participate in a Farmer-led Documentation (FLD) workshop that took place in November 2006. PELUM, PROLINNOVA and Oxfam NOVIB organized the 5-day exchange and capacity building workshop that was held in Uganda. FLD is seen as a mechanism to address the weakness in the participation of farmers in the documentation of development processes, which is a global phenomenon.

Mr Madondo, who attended the workshop is from Potshini, a sub-ward of Okhahlamba Local Municipality and falls under the traditional leadership of the Amangwane Tribal Authority. FSG is one of a number of institutions working in Potshini on issues related to agriculture and natural resource management and implements the outreach component of the Smallholder System Innovation (SSI) project which is involved in watershed management.

On the basis of workplans developed during the FLD course, PELUM invited the participants to apply for financial resources

to pilot FLD in their area. With assistance from FSG facilitators, Mr Madondo successfully developed a proposal for funding. An awareness creation workshop was held on 17 May 2007, which was also attended by the two local farmers that had participated in a basic photography course organised by PROLINNOVA that took place in Limpopo in 2006. Following a discussion at the workshop, it was agreed that FLD would serve the following purposes:

- Enable farmers to keep valuable knowledge and practices for next generations.
- Promote learning and sharing of experiences between farmers themselves and service providers
- Empower farmers to be able take their own decision based on their own experiences using their own documentation as a record of the previous experiences.

Although photography was to be used in the project, it was noted that it was one of the several ways of documenting farmers' experiences. Other options for documenting identified were songs, drawings and story telling. Nevertheless, these were not the focus of the project. In understanding this project, the farmers agreed that documentation could include farming knowledge as well as cultural knowledge. Women thought that the documentation would inform future generations about the important role they played, in the development of the family or the community and how they solved problems, be it technical (e.g. pests and diseases) or social.

The FLD pilot project only had a budget for 12 cameras so it was resolved that the two Farmer Learning Groups (FLGs) in Potshini would share the cameras equally, i.e., six per group. The groups decided on having 3 to 6 farmers per camera. Cameras, films and albums were distributed in early June and used films were to be handed to Mr Madondo for processing. A session was also held on the art of taking photographs.

Although documentation was supposed to start in June 2007, the severe drought prevailing in the 2006/07 season meant that there was virtually no activity in the gardens during the winter period. Farmers were keen on documenting activities in the gardens and they had to wait for rainfall, after which they would then plant in the gardens.

When the first photos were developed the learner groups met to give feedback on their first experiment. This meeting was interesting as everyone was eager to see, for the first time, their performance in taking photographs. Some challenges were noted in the manner in which photographs were being shot. In some instances photos taken were out of focus or without subject. The meeting motivated those who had not yet started taking photographs to do so as they had witnessed what their friends had done, and realized that there was not penalty for taking bad photographs.

A feedback workshop was held on 22 October 2007 to allow everyone who participated in the FLD pilot project to share their experiences with other people from the surrounding communities. Five farmers prepared poster presentations on the wall of the workshop venue. The posters showed how they documented and how it helped them. Following the poster presentations, the participants were invited to discuss and ask questions about the implementations of the FLD pilot. Questions that were asked included the issue of how farmers prioritized what they were going to photograph. It was noted that the decision of priority rested with the farmers, just as in decision making during farming. An analogy was given with selecting seed, where one only selects seed that will give big healthy plants. In photography, it has to be something different and worth documenting. One farmer added that since he started documenting it's easier for him to ask for help either on his livestock or crop diseases as he just takes the photograph showing the problem to the extension officer.

FAIR Project Update

By Nono Ngubane

The FAIR pilot project in SA has made progress in the setting up of the local institutions that can take charge of the project activities. Two institutions have been set up, i.e., the Forum and Voluntary Association.

Innovation Forum

In 2007, Sibusimpilo Okhahlamba Forum was formed. A visioning workshop was held during which farmers and landsusers from the respective areas developed a plan of action. The forum is a platform in which beneficiaries share their learning's and experiences drawn from the different initiatives they are involved in. Forum sessions are held monthly with the hosting rotating between three villages. Forum local leaders selected from each of the participating villages organise and jointly facilitate the learning sessions. The topics for the learning sessions are drawn from the following thematic areas; soil fertility, marketing, institutionalization, experimentation, water conservation and fundraising. Leaders hold planning sessions prior to the meetings; invite relevant stakeholders to address particular issues pertinent to farmers and other landusers. The forum has been successful in drawing the attention of the Okhahlamba Municipality Deputy Mayor to engage with the beneficiaries.

A second round of the Innovation Market was held in 2007 in Okhombe village. The intention was to create project awareness, stimulate innovativeness and submission of proposals. It was organised in partnership with the Forum Leaders. Two groups presented about the learning events, (cross visits) which they had undertaken with funding from the LISF. They shared lessons learnt and future plans to strengthen their initiatives (crafts and savings and credit). New proposals were invited, and the support

team assisted prospective applicants in synthesizing their innovative ideas and action.

To date the pilot has seen the approval of applications for experimentation and cross/learning visits. Applications on technology development/ experimentation in the following areas have been approved:

- (1) Winter cattle supplementary feed,
- (2) Chicken breeding,
- (3) Sunflower chicken feed,
- (4) Planting of craft grass, spread across three pilot sites.

Three applications for cross /learning visits to see social and marketing innovations have been approved and undertaken. They were looking at the following areas:

- (1) Looking at possible ways of self-managing craft business, and
- (2) Linking savings and credits into business
- (3) Learning about alternative ways of conserving water (water harvesting techniques).

The following initiatives emerged from the learning events:

- Stronger networks and partnerships (in context of new relationship) for potential innovators,
- Strengthened and increased marketing possibilities,
- Reciprocal visits by the hosts and arrangements to exchange on craft products.

In addition, groups have expressed a greater need to re-establish their linkages with government departments as well as with local municipalities and private businesses who can give them support for local innovation processes in the learning sites and on existing enterprises. The two have been classical examples of socially and economically stimulated processes; in which Business Learning Networks could be formalized.

Voluntary Association

The Hlahlindlela Voluntary Association (VA) has been established as an interim organization before the eventual formation of a trust. Members of the executive of the VA participate in a workshop which looked at their roles in leading the association. During the same workshop, a constitution and a workplan were drawn up. The VA developed a workplan to guide its road map. The association was allocated 'seed money' to practically engage in processing future innovation applications. The group will be responsible for holding, disbursing and administering the LISF funds in the pilot sites. In addition, the VA was launched in the area so that everyone is aware of its existence and purpose.

Documentation and dissemination of information

Support was provided to farmers in preparation of posters and videos for FARA General Assembly in June 2007. Farmers and partners participated in the FARA. Partners shared experiences in the side events and on the exhibited stand. Farmers' experiences were presented on video and posters. Mr Mbhele was interviewed about his innovations and the interview was published in New Agricultural Magazine. A synthesis of the FAIR pilot was posted in the PROLINNOVA website.

PROVINCIAL NEWS

LIMPOPO

By Ernest Letsoalo and Brigid Letty

Planning session

A planning session was held at the Limpopo Department of Agriculture (LDA) offices in Polokwane on 10 June 2007 with staff from the LDA Indigenous Knowledge and Innovation Division and staff from the Centre for Rural Community Empowerment (CRCE) at the University of Limpopo (Turfloop campus). The purpose was to review the proposed 2007 activities for Limpopo as well as the budget available for

carrying out the activities. Joe Ramaru (LDA), who is one of the coordinators of the Limpopo Task Team has handed the implementation of PROLINNOVA-related activities to one of the researchers in the division, Rendani NemaKanga.

Orientation workshop in June

A two-day PID orientation workshop was held from 11-12 June 2007 at the CRCE offices. The workshop was attended by three CRCE students as well as 14 scientists from the Limpopo Department of Agriculture. It was facilitated by Ernest Letsoalo (CRCE), Joe Ramaru (LDA) and Brigid Letty (PROLINNOVA SA Coordinator), with input on participatory video from Koki Mphahlele (CRCE). At the workshop, a number of local innovations and cases of indigenous knowledge were identified during the process of defining the concepts of local innovation and PID. Workshop participants were tasked to document these cases as well as some cases that were seen to have potential for participatory innovation development and validation.

The following cases were to be documented:

- Using boiled water to prevent pests before starting a nursery
- Preservation methods to prolong maize seeds e.g. smearing of cow dung and ashes
- Dosing with a local herb to release retained placenta
- Cleaning of womb after cattle abort using malengakane
- Feeding bananas to improve the libido of bulls - Masingi
- Use of an aloe mixture for the treatment of diseases of animals (chickens, goats, cattle)
- Using boiled donkey dung to treat gallsickness
- Production of licks from crushed bones.

The following innovations were seen to need further research:

- Pest control using a mixture of dried beetles
- Control of internal parasites use phathane and Mukongovhoti
- Research plants used to release retained placenta (i.e. Vit A content)
- Use of small shrubs called Mangani (Shangane) to prevent nasal worm in sheep (parasite control)

A follow-up workshop was planned for September 2007, where the documented cases were to be presented to the group. This workshop took place at the CRCE offices on 13 September 2007.

Farmer mobilisation activities

Farmer visits are planned to Mpumalanga (Bushbuck Ridge area) and six districts of Limpopo Province. This was a decision taken by the Small Scale Farmers Networking Forum last year in their last meeting of the year 2006. Farmer leaders who are committee members complained that their monthly meetings are only held in one place and that farmers in their districts do not believe that there is really a forum representing farmers. The forum members are also sceptical as to whether reports from the meetings are actually shared with farmers in these various districts. The farmer visits are meant to address these issues that have been raised.

Thus, the objectives of this activity are:

- To meet with farmers represented in the forum in various districts
- To share with these farmers the different activities within the Small Scale Farmers Networking Forum including activities related to PROLINNOVA, PELUM and Eastern and Southern African Small Scale Farmers Forum (ESSAF)
- To highlight to these farmers the importance of electing relevant people who can represent them in the forum if they are not satisfied with the current representative

- To share with them what they stand for as a Small Scale Farmers' forum
- To identify common activities that will lead to cross visits in the future.

The first visit will be late November-early December to Mpumalanga Province (Bushbuck Ridge) and will involve the Mpumalanga farmers that attended the PID workshop in Nelspruit in October 2007. The farmer visits will help farmer leaders to gain support from their districts.

MPUMALANGA

By Ntowane Marobane and Brigid Letty

Planning workshop & meeting with Ecolink

A planning session, involving the Mpumalanga task team coordinators (Ntowane Marobane from Agricultural Research Council (ARC) and Khensani Sambo from the NGO, Ecolink), took place in Nelspruit in the beginning of July 2007. The purpose was to look at the proposed activities for the provincial task team. The main activity identified for Mpumalanga for 2007 was capacity building in terms of participatory approaches that focus on local innovation.

PID workshop in October

The PID sharing and learning workshop took place in Nelspruit at Mpumalanga Regional Training Trust (MRTT) from 24-26 October. It was facilitated by Ntowane Marobane and Khensani Sambo from Mpumalanga as well as Tebogo Serapelwane (ARC Sustainable Rural Livelihoods Coordinator for North West Province), Ernest Letsoalo (Centre for Rural Community Empowerment at University of Limpopo) and Thabile Poto (Researcher with ARC-Institute of Tropical and Sub-tropical Crops).

A number of local farmers, extension staff and scientists from the Mpumalanga Department of Agriculture (Ehlanzeni, Nkangala and Gert Sibande Districts) were invited to attend the workshop. A total of twenty people attended the workshop which involved two days in the conference venue

discussing concepts and planning the way forward, as well as a field visit to a number of local innovators previously identified in the surrounding communities.

The participants received an assignment that involved documenting local innovations as a way of identifying opportunities for PID. They are to submit their assignments to Ntowane by 8 February 2008, which will also provide an opportunity for regrouping at a district level and considering progress that has been made with the action plans developed at the workshop.

One of the upcoming activities will be for the farmers from Mpumalanga to meet with Limpopo farmers who will be undertaking a cross visit to Bushbuck Ridge in Mpumalanga Province.

KWAZULU-NATAL

By Max Mudhara and Brigid Letty

Regrouping workshop

In an attempt to re-establish PROLINNOVA activities and an interest in local innovation and PID in KwaZulu-Natal, the PROLINNOVA KZN task team (which is coordinated by Maxwell Mudhara (from Farmer Support Group (FSG) the outreach arm of the Centre for Environment, Agriculture and Development) and Hannes de Villiers (from Farming Systems Research (FSR) Section from the KZN Department of Agriculture and Environmental Affairs (KZNDAEA)) made contact with all those who had attended the PID workshops in Pietermaritzburg in 2005, as well as people from other organisations that might be interested, and arranged a regrouping workshop at the University of KwaZulu-Natal on 3 May 2007.

The purpose of the workshop was to revisit the concept of PID, develop a provincial activity plan, discuss how to move forward in KZN (types of activities for the 12 month period) and look at institutional issues such as how PROLINNOVA KZN should be

constituted. The meeting was attended by twelve people representing FSG and Centre for Adult Education from the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Provincial Department of Agriculture (Vet Services and Farming Systems Research Section), SaveAct (a partner in FAIR South Africa), AFRA and Institute of Natural Resources (Secretariat for PROLINNOVA South Africa). Following the introduction to PROLINNOVA and the approaches supported by the network, the participants introduced themselves and reported on their current activities as well as the potential linkages and relevance of their activities to PROLINNOVA.

The 22nd June was set as the date for a follow up meeting, which focused on planning activities. Since it proved difficult to arrange the second meeting, with a general lack of interest in office-bound workshops, a decision was taken to rather arrange a cross visit that could allow for these discussions to take place in a more informal environment.

Cross visit to Msinga

The PROLINNOVA KZN task team arranged a cross-visit to Msinga as a way of creating interest in local innovation and PID. It was hosted by CAP, the NGO that Rauri Alcock (Chairperson of the PROLINNOVA National Steering Committee) runs in Msinga. The cross visit was attended by representatives from a range of organisations including: FSR Section from KZNDAEA, CAP, FSG, the Bergville District Office of the KZNDAEA, Institute of Natural Resources and the Valley Trust. Farmer Support group arranged for a taxi to transport a group of farmers from Busingatha, Okhombe, Potshini and Bhelani (the latter supported by World Vision), in the Northern Drakensberg, to attend the cross visit.

CAP is working with farmers in Msinga to find ways to improve the productivity of their indigenous chickens. The group visited a number of the households that CAP is working with, where some form of local

knowledge or local innovation has been identified.

- The first household visited was Mr Majozi. He has adapted and developed his own way of preventing predation of young chicks by hawks. He ties pieces of coloured plastic (preferably bright green) onto the backs of the chicks which appears to confuse the hawks by changing the shape and colour of the chicken.
- The next household visited was that of a participant of another cross visit who had constructed a chicken house adapted from what she had seen.
- The third household was showcasing chicken laying nests made from the bases of dead sisal plants. A member of the household, Mrs Chonco, demonstrated how she does this.

After the three visits, the group moved on to the CAP Learning Centre, where a discussion about local innovation (including the use of local terminology) and opportunities for PID took place before lunch was served. The cross-visit proved to be a good way of opening dialogue about local innovation. The meeting pointed the need to hold further field visits to be hosted by one of the organizations participating on that day.

Latest PROLINNOVA-SA Catalogue of Innovations

A second compilation of local innovations and indigenous knowledge practices has been prepared and printed by PROLINNOVA South Africa. Documenting innovations is a way of creating awareness about the creativity and innovativeness of farmers and natural resource users. It is also a passive method for protecting farmers' intellectual property rights. Some of the innovations contained in this catalogue may provide ideas about overcoming challenges, while some may need to be taken further through a PID process.

The catalogue contains one profile of an innovator and 21 case studies, which cover a variety of issues related to crop production and soil conservation, livestock management, social processes, cultural practices and domestic needs. Throughout the document various issues have been raised for consideration. They are issues that challenge our understanding of local innovation.

Please contact Brigid Letty or the Coordinator of your Provincial Task Team if you would like a copy of the catalogue.

PROPOSED COUNTRY PROGRAMME ACTIVITIES FOR 2008

By Brigid Letty

For 2008, PROLINNOVA South Africa is focusing on increasing the number of participatory innovation development (PID) activities on the ground as well as continuing to focus on institutionalising participatory, farmer-led research and development approaches within key institutions.

We intend strengthening Provincial relations between PROLINNOVA-SA and other provincial stakeholders, and also plan to establish additional Provincial Task teams.

We'll tell you more about our proposed 2008 activities in our first 2008 newsletter.

PROLINNOVA RESOURCES

Documents on the PROLINNOVA Website

These and other publications are either directly available on the www.prolinnova.net website or can be obtained by following the links from this website. South African authored publications are in bold in the list. These publications are extremely useful as they not only provide an insight of the various Country Programme activities but also an indication of what other groups and farmers are doing in terms of Prolinnova type activities and processes around the world. A more complete list with all the 2007 publications will be provided in the first Newsletter of 2008.

- New mechanisms for strengthening partnerships in research and development of ecologically-oriented agriculture and NRM, GFAR, Dresden, 2000.
- Grassroots Innovation. *ILEIA Newsletter* 16 (2), 2000.
- *Farmer innovation in Africa: a source of inspiration for agricultural development*. Earthscan, London, 2001.
- PROLINNOVA: the path from local initiatives to a Global Partnership Programme, GFAR/IFAD Workshop on Methodologies, Organization and Management of Global Partnership Programmes, Rome, 2001.
- *PTD for agricultural improvement: challenges for institutional integration*. IIRR, Silang, 2002.
- *Advancing PTD: case studies on integration into agricultural research, extension and education*. IIRR, Silang, 2003.
- *Developing technology with farmers: a trainer's guide for participatory learning*. ZED Books, London, 1997 / reprint IIRR, Silang, 2004 (also in Spanish & Arabic)
- *IK Notes* (World Bank 2004-2005):
 - 70. Ethiopia: a woman innovator speaks
 - 71. Participatory video: rural people document their knowledge and innovations
 - 72. Regional radio in Tunisia
 - 74. Building multi-stakeholder partnerships to promote farmer experimentation and innovation in Ghana
 - 76. Promoting local innovation: enhancing IK dynamics and links with scientific knowledge
 - 77. Burkina Faso: indigenous innovation in farmer-to-farmer extension
 - 78. **South Africa: a smallholders' innovative approach to producing and exporting fruit**
 - 79. **Local Innovations Using Traditional Vegetables to Improve Soil Quality**
 - 85. Innovation Support Funds for farmer-led research
 - 96. Ethiopia: Endogenous and modern innovations: differing perspectives
- *Proceedings of the First International PROLINNOVA Workshop*. ASE, Addis Ababa / IIRR, Silang, 2004.
- Participatory approaches to ARD / Farmer innovation as entry point to participatory research and extension / PTD where there is no researcher / Developing partnerships to promote local innovation. In: *Sourcebook on participatory research and development for sustainable agriculture and natural resource management*. CIP-UPWARD, Los Banos, 2005.
- **Catalogue of farmer innovations, Inception phase 2004 (PROLINNOVA South Africa)**
- Addressing rural poverty in Africa through ARD. Invited paper, American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), Washington DC, 2005.
- Social dimensions in ARD: how civil society fosters partnerships to promote local innovation by rural communities. Keynote, EFARD, Zurich, 2005.
- Multi-stakeholder partnerships to integrate participatory approaches into institutions of ARD. Keynote, Tropentag, Stuttgart 2005 (www.tropentag.de)
- Participatory research that builds on local innovation in beekeeping. Tropentag, Bonn 2006 (www.tropentag.de)
- Enhancing local innovation. Lead paper at Innovation Africa Symposium, Kampala, 2006
- **Indigenous Knowledge on the South African Landscape: Potentials for agricultural development? 2006 (a few hardcopies can be obtained free of charge within South Africa by emailing Tim at thart@hsrc.ac.za and providing your postage details)**
- *PTD/PID Circular: periodic update on Participatory Technology/Innovation Development* (since 1994)
No. 13: Top Twenty publications on PID, 2004

No. 14: Annotated list of journals, 2005
No. 15: Electronic databases and websites

PROLINNOVA Working Papers

- Working paper 1: Experiences With Farmer Experimental Design Workshops In Egypt
- Working paper 2: Farmer Experimental Design Workshop For The Leinuts Project In Kenya: A Low-Potential Area Case
- Working paper 3: Trying out PTD with NGOs in Peru and Bolivia
- Working paper 4: Building Capacity In Participatory Approaches
- Working paper 5: Participatory Technology Development In Cameroon: The Route And Milestone In The Process of its Institutionalisation
- Working paper 6: Towards Sustainable Development In Mahaweli Settlements Through Farmer Participation
- Working paper 7: PTD For Sustainable Dryland Agriculture In South India: Balancing Our Way To Scale
- Working paper 8: Participatory Evaluation With Pastoralists In Eastern Sudan
- Working paper 9: Farmer Access to Innovation Resources (FAIR): Findings from an International Review of Experiences
- Working paper 10: Strengthening Prolinnova policy dialogue and advocacy strategy
- Working paper 11: Research to promote local innovation: the case of 'siella' mineral lick for livestock in northern Ghana
- Working paper 12: Harnessing Local and Outsiders' Knowledge: Experiences of Multi-Stakeholder Partnership to Promote Farmer Innovation in Ethiopia

- Working paper 13: Recognising and enhancing local innovation processes
- Working paper 14: Reflections on FAIR project

New Releases in 2007

- Participatory research that builds on local innovation in beekeeping to escape poverty. By Hailu Araya, Yohannes GebreMichael, Abera GebreAmlak and Ann Waters-Bayer. This contribution was presented and discussed at the: Tropentag 2006, University of Bonn, 11-13 October 2006, Conference on International Agricultural Research for Development.
- Trees are our Backbone - Integrating environment and local development in Tigray Region of Ethiopia. Issue Paper # 145, IIED. GebreMichael, Yohannes and Waters-Bayer, Ann. July 2007. ISBN 978-1-84369-661-2; ISSN 1357 9312. IIED Dryland Issue Papers:
<http://www.iied.org/pubs/search.php?s=DIP&x=Y>.
- Prolinnova at Work: Highlights in 2004 - 2006. Brochure printed by IIRR, May 2007.
- Natural mineral licks to enhance livestock growth. Article in March 2007 issue of *Appropriate Technology* (pp. 46 - 48). N. Karbo, CSIR-Animal Research Institute, Nyankpala Station, Tamale, Ghana. Reproduced with permission of Research Information Ltd from "Appropriate Technology" Vol. 34, No. 1 (2007); see www.appropriate-technology.org.

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