



FAIR PROJECT

FARMER ACCESS TO INNOVATION RESOURCES

Documentation of FAIR pilot programme in Uganda

**Action research Phase 1
2006–2007**



Supported by:



Buitenlandse
Zaken

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADEFA	Agali-awamu Farmers Development Association
AFADEA	Alinyikira Farmers Development Association
ARD	Agricultural Research and Development
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CIDEV	Centre for Integrated Development
EA	Environmental Alert
FAIR	Farmer Access to Innovation Resources
FFS	Farmer Field Schools
INMASP	Integrated Nutrient Management for Sustainable Productivity
ISF	Innovation Support Fund
KEA	Kikandwa Environmental Association
NACIA	Nalukonge Community Initiatives Association
NACOB	Nagojje Community Biodiversity Association
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organisation
NSC	National Steering Committee
LISFs	Local Innovation Support Funds
MAAIF	Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAAS	National Agricultural Advisory Services
NARO	National Agricultural Research Organization's
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRM	Natural Resource Management
PID	Participatory Innovation Development
PROLINNOVA	Promoting Local Innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and NRM
UNCST	Uganda National Council for Science and Technology



INTRODUCTION

As part of the larger global partnership programme PROLINNOVA Uganda has been undertaking a pilot on increasing Farmer Access to Innovation Resources (FAIR), i.e. the FAIR initiative. This is being piloted in selected locations in four districts, including Wakiso, Nakasongola, Mukono and Mityana Districts.

Currently the project has been piloted in five countries (in Uganda, Ethiopia, South Africa and Cambodia with funding from DURAS, and in Nepal with the local partners' own resources). Its principle mechanism of empowering farmer-led research is through the establishment of decentralised Local Innovation Support Funds (LISFs).

a) Rationale for LISF pilots

The rationale of FAIR is:

- To establish sustainable area-based funding mechanisms to promote farmer-led research and development
- Evaluate, document and share experiences
- To enhance livelihood security and environmental management by local people
- To build replicable models for local control of research and development.

FAIR is an action-research project undertaken as a way of exploring alternative ways of stimulating local innovation and participatory agricultural research and development with farmers. The intention is to put farmers at the 'driving seat' of research activity.

b) Why the CP has decided to be involved in the FAIR project

PROLINNOVA Uganda decided to get involved in FAIR for a number of reasons. Right from the time of inception of the PROLINNOVA programme in Uganda, (before FAIR was conceptualised) the stakeholders of the country programme had highlighted increasing access to resources for farmers as one area of activity that would stimulate more innovation.

Uganda has several initiatives involving government, NGOs and donors that draw on the information and evidence generated from their pilots with the intent of influencing research and development practice. One such example is the competitive grants of National Agricultural Research Organization's (NARO) Innovation Fund which is administered by the Uganda Industrial Research Institute.

The PROLINNOVA Uganda country programme also saw this as an opportunity to build capacity of farmers to play an active role in Participatory Innovation Development (PID). This is in part because they get to manage funds for supporting the development of their innovations.

c) Main partners

Main partners in the endeavour are farmers and farmer groups, the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, research institutions and researchers, and NGOs working with farmers.

Farmer groups worked with directly in this pilot include: Agali-awamu Farmers Development Association (ADEFA), Alinyikira Farmers Development Association (AFADEA) from Wakiso District, Nalukonge Community Initiatives Association (NACIA) from Nakasongola District, Nagojje Community Biodiversity Association (NACOB) from Mukono District and Kikandwa Environmental Association (KEA) from Mityana District. The roles of the above mentioned farmers' groups involve:

- Communicating with farmers the purpose and opportunities of the LISF
- Receiving and managing the funds disbursed for conducting experiments
- Receiving and screening applications from farmers
- Monitoring progress of the activities supported
- Feeding experiences back to their constituency
- Reporting on their experiences to the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat.

NGOs involved in the project include: Environmental Alert (EA), Africa 2000 Network, Kulika Charitable Trust, and the Participatory Ecological Land Use Management Association. Their role has involved:

- Providing technical support in the set up
- Training of farmer associations in management of an LISF
- Monitoring of the implementation of the pilots.

Other partners involved include the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries, research institutions, including NARO, the National Agricultural Advisory Services and the Uganda National Council for Science and Technology, who provided support through bilateral meetings and shared their experiences in managing similar funds such as the National Competitive Agricultural Research and Development Fund and National Innovation Fund respectively.

d) Period of implementation

Implementation of the LISF started in April 2006 with the feasibility study being commissioned to understand more about initiatives in the country that are similar to the LISF and to draw lessons to inform the establishment of the community owned funds. Selection and mobilisation of the CBOs to implement the pilots was done in March 2007 and assessment of capacity to manage funds conducted in May 2007. Contracts were signed with the four farmer groups/ CBOs and funds disbursed to the groups in August 2007. It should be noted that one of the groups (KEA) had already started pre-financing activities of the pilots before receiving funds, after having cleared this with the PROLINNOVA Secretariat.

e) Country specificity related to the LISF and its choices

The majority of the population in Uganda (80%) lives in the rural areas and are predominantly involved in agriculture as an occupation. They are also dependent on it for their survival. Farmers have formed groups, commonly known as Community Based Organisations (CBOs), to address common issues, e.g. pest management, soil fertility management, access to credit facilities and markets for their produce.

The pilots carried out in Uganda were in the central districts: Mukono, Nakasongola, Wakiso and Mityana. In the above-mentioned areas farmers are faced with constraints such as:

- lack of access to extension services
- declining soil fertility (Wakiso)
- water shortage problems (Nakasongola).

Farmer experimentation, of course, was already being undertaken before the establishment of the LISFs, with scattered islands of success, and very little recognition of farmers' contributions to Agricultural Research and Development (ARD) by some of the conventional development actors.

Activities in ARD over the period leading up to the introduction of the LISF included researchers conducting their research with little or minimum involvement of farmers. In some few occasions this involved the carrying out of on-farm trials. Access to funds for agricultural research was highly competitive and mostly excluded farmers, since they lacked skills for writing proposals, or did not have exposure to information sources in the way that conventional researchers do. Often experimentation by farmers would be limited to the meagre resources that they had. And where the farmers are situated far from research stations, they had a very slim chance of getting support from extension services.

THE LISFS IN UGANDA

a) How they have worked

As mentioned earlier on, the LISF pilots carried out in Uganda were in the central districts of Mukono, Nakasongola, Wakiso and Mityana. All four pilots were conducted by already established farmer groups. These groups also managed the funds and monitored implementation of the activities for which funds were approved.

b) Information on past ARD activities in the 4 districts

Nalukonge

Nalukonge is a village in the district of Nakasongola that is approximately 150 km north of the capital city of Kampala. The majority of the population are cattle keepers. The main challenges faced by the community are:

- land degradation, soil erosion, silting of water resources

- insufficient water in the dry season - no water points
- wide scale presence of termites, locally known as “enkyebebe”
- bush/thicket encroachment
- a very low number of extension workers, making it difficult or impossible to access agricultural extension services by farmers.

One of the ARD activities undertaken by researchers in the district is on termite control, with various conventional approaches being tried, e.g. use of chemicals and digging of trenches. But this has been without much success. The partner in this area is the Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF).

Kikandwa

Kikandwa is a village approximately 60 km from Kampala. It is an area with rocky soils and many crop farmers, whose main challenges include:

- declining soil fertility
- lack of access to extension services, due to a number of reasons, including absence of personnel
- the long distance from the administrative centres of local governments and inaccessible roads.

Examples of on farm research in the area have been in the field of agro-forestry, since this is an enterprise that the community found to be viable based on the soil composition in the area. Tree seedlings of mangoes, avocado and guava, have been availed to test which fruit trees do well in the area.

Nagojje

Nagojje is a village in Mukono District that is approximately 50 km from Kampala and is in the lake shore basin of Lake Victoria. Nagojje is a community that is adjacent to the famous Mabira Natural Forest in Uganda, which is a source of many benefits to the local community as well as the government of Uganda. The community is allowed to carry out controlled harvesting of fruits and vegetables and engages in forest-based enterprises like cultivation of rat tern cane. They are also given a responsibility to police the forest against degraders, e.g. charcoal burners, whom they charge fines upon apprehension. The government generates revenue through eco-tourism and sale of harvested mature wood. On farm research has been mainly into control of pests in crop and animal diseases.

The PROLINNOVA Partner in the district is Centre for Integrated Development (CIDEV). CIDEV, founded in 2002, focuses on ensuring food security and natural resource management, with its activities in the district being mainly in these fields. CIDEV participated in the first training of facilitators in PID conducted in 2004, after which they have been actively involved in identification of local innovations in the district.

Lukwanga

Lukwanga is in Wakiso District, about 25 km from Kampala District. It is mainly a crop cultivating community with some livestock rearing families. The main challenges facing the community are:

- declining soil fertility and soil degradation
- inadequate agricultural extension services
- limited access to agricultural inputs and credit.

On farm research in the district has mainly been on soil fertility improvement, with farmers being trained to assess soil fertility and detect soil degradation, using simple indicators, e.g. colour of crops like maize. The approach involved the organisation of farmers through Farmer Field Schools (FFS).

EA is the project partner. It had implemented the Integrated Nutrient Management for Sustainable Productivity (INMASP) project with the community in Wakiso. Two farmer groups in Lukwanga (Alinyikira Farmers' Development Association and Agaliawamu Farmers Development Association) implemented the above project using the FFS approach and with technical support from EA. In this project the farmers were able to compare organic manure (chicken manure) and conventional fertilisers on a per yield and affordability basis. They also were able to learn new methods of assessing soil fertility by analysing the colour of particular crops, e.g. maize¹.

It is at such levels that farmers' innovations can be best appreciated. Their innovations have lead to the generation of site specific technologies using locally available resources.

c) Planning process: Activities undertaken as a basis for starting to work with LISF

Feasibility study

The first activity conducted to start the LISF project in Uganda was the feasibility study. It was commissioned by the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat and conducted by a consultant (Mr. Charles Walaga) in April 2006. The feasibility study was undertaken in consultation with the stakeholders to be involved in the implementation of the pilots.

Main experiences studied in the feasibility

The feasibility study looked at the two main types of innovation funds (open competitive innovation funds and 'closed' innovation funds) for Ugandan based farmers, researchers and development workers. They are classified according to how they are accessed.

The following were the main conclusions of the feasibility study:

1. Scope of the planned LISF in Uganda

The LISF would support applicants' experiments or innovations by availing funds required for:

- Costs directly related to experimentation (e.g. tools, equipment, seeds, laboratory tests, etc.)
- Costs involved in accessing technical support: mostly training costs, travel, accommodation and meals for technical expertise
- Costs involved in cross visits and exchanges

¹ For this, Environmental Alert together with the Lukwanga community, won the Energy Globe Award in 2006.

- Documentation and dissemination costs, and
- Commercialisation of innovations.

The LISF would support both 'public goods innovations' and 'private goods innovations,' depending on their potential to address serious agricultural constraints. All the support would be on a cost sharing arrangement. The LISF would not be responsible for the costs incurred beyond those specified in the funding agreement.

2. Geographical coverage

The LISF pilots would be conducted only in selected districts of central Uganda, mainly due to the size of the fund available for the pilot.

3. Access to the fund

The LISF design would be based on the requirements for farmers' access to information about the fund. The application procedures were to be farmer friendly and selection of innovation proposals for funding would be made competitive among the farmers.

4. Management

The management system would be designed to ensure that farmers have control over the LISF's decision making and management processes, but without excluding key strategic stakeholders that are necessary to make the fund a success in operation and in resource mobilisation.

5. Strategies for sustainability

These included the following:

- i. Initiate the implementation of the pilot Innovation Support Fund (ISF) in 2006 with the funds available
- ii. Cost sharing with recipients of the ISF support. The ISF support should be a maximum of 85%. Recipients should be required to demonstrate and provide guarantees that they will make good on their declared contribution
- iii. Innovations that will be supported should be evaluated for their commercial value. Innovations with a commercial value (private good innovations) should be supported under a benefit sharing arrangement to be determined by the nature of the innovation
- iv. Write proposals and apply to donors for 20,000 to 40,000 USD during 2006 and 2007
- v. Expand the pilot to more districts and to more research themes as resources become available
- vi. Cultivate a networking relationship with the government of Uganda institutions and with development programmes that are managing innovation funds
- vii. Advocate and lobby agriculture service NGOs to establish innovation support fund schemes (based on the PROLINNOVA ISF best practices and experiences) within their agriculture development projects and programmes from their existing funding streams
- viii. Evaluate, document and disseminate the supported innovations, the participatory fund management processes and related experiences
- ix. Use the results of the evaluation and documentation to advocate for farmer controlled innovation support funds and to lobby bigger donors and the government for funding the establishment of an innovation endowment fund.

The feasibility study was followed by a stakeholders' consultative workshop in May 2006 in which various stakeholders from civil society organisations, Government institutions, academia and farmers organisations were able to input into the process of designing the LISF mechanisms. All the stakeholders had been previously involved in the activities of PROLINNOVA Uganda. At the abovementioned workshop a strategy for implementing the

LISF pilots was developed. After the consultative workshop the report of the feasibility study was shared with the core team and the National Steering Committee (NSC). The NSC reviewed the strategy and gave input at their meeting held in the third quarter of 2006, after which the consultant made changes and submitted the final version to the Secretariat. The farmers' main recommendation was that the fund be localised so that they can benefit from it.

The LISF activities were also incorporated into the 2007 work plan of the PROLINNOVA country programme.

Role of NSC Prolinnova Uganda in the LISF

The NSC has discussed issues of the LISF at three of its meetings, starting from the one held in October 2006 and gave advice on the implementation for the pilots. The practical suggestions from the NSC, e.g. drawing lessons from the former farmer cooperative societies to inform the implementation of the LISF, have contributed to the success of the pilots.

d) The process of finding CBOs interested and capable of handling an LISF at the local level

The process started with selecting some existing farmers' groups in the central region that already had some innovations and where possible had been involved in the feasibility study and stakeholder consultation. Four farmers' groups (CBOs) were selected, sensitised, and their capacity to manage funds assessed, before funds were disbursed to them. The assessment of capacity to manage funds looked at the group's history of financial management and at procedures used to manage funds in the group.

Each of the farmers' groups formed an executive that would manage the LISF in the community. Guidelines for managing the LISFs developed by the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat were shared with the group LISF Executive. These were discussed by the Executive and where necessary feedback given to the Secretariat.

After the above process, contracts were prepared and signed between the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat and the four CBOs (see sample in Annex 2). Funds amounting to Ush 2,000,000 (USD 1,200) were disbursed to each of the four farmers' groups.

e) Institutional set up: How the LISF was organised, how the structure and governance was defined

LISFs in Uganda have been decentralised, with the four farmer groups (CBOs) having been given full control from the start in setting up and managing LISFs. The farmer groups' LISF executive committees managed the funds with support from the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat and the core team. The CBOs were found to be interested to operate an own, independent LISF at the community level.

The institutional set up is that the four farmer groups (CBOs) involved in piloting the LISF constituted executive committees specifically for LISF. The members of these executives were nominated by the members of the farmers' groups/ CBOs. The groups'

LISF executives announce the call for applications, receive these and screen them. These same committees inform the applicants of the status of their applications after the screening process. Most of the applicants whose applications were approved received their funds up front and in full, with a few receiving funds in tranches.

The LISF executive committees manage the LISF in their respective groups. This included receiving, screening, giving feedback on results of the screening process to the applicants, awarding grants to successful applicants.

Monitoring of the progress of the pilots is also done by the respective Group LISF executive committees. They prepare reports (some bi-monthly) and submit these to EA – the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat. Reports on the progress of the pilots have been shared by the PROLINNOVA Coordinator (who is also the LISF coordinator in Uganda) with the core team and steering committee. Technical support and guidance in the implementation of the LISF pilots has been provided to the farmers groups by the core team and the PROLINNOVA Coordinator.

The PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat (EA) has received and managed the Funds for the FAIR project in Uganda. They have monitored at the project level and providing technical support to the different farmer groups in the implementation of the LISF pilots. The Secretariat prepared contracts with the groups selected for implementing the LISF pilots, disbursed funds to their institutions, and prepared and submitted periodic financial reports to the lead agent for Phase 1 of FAIR (Farmer Support Group in South Africa). Other roles included participation in the regular teleconferences to discuss progress of the FAIR project activities.

Farmers have managed experiments, which are sometimes farmer-led or joint experiments with other research groups. These groups included extension workers of NGOs working in the area, and researchers at the sub-county level. Farmers were expected to provide materials that are locally available (own contribution in cash or in kind) and record or report any observations in the process of carrying out the activity for which they receive support. Farmers contribute 20% of the total budget of the activity if a farmer-led or joint experiment, and 10% if it is a farmer-to-farmer exchange. The contribution is as a percentage of the direct costs only, and does not include other agency support costs.

In three of the four areas of pilot implementation it was agreed by the groups that the supported individuals would need to return a percentage of the grant to the LISF, the amount of which was to be agreed upon by the group LISF executive committee. This enables others who have not yet benefited to have an opportunity for their ideas to be supported and also contributes towards fund sustainability. In Lukwanga (Wakiso) farmers plough back the value of the award plus 10% interest. In Nakasongola they returned the amount received from the LISF after 5 months, starting from November 2007. Generally the farmers set the rules for contributing towards the sustainability of the LISFs even after the current project phase ends. Some of the ways selected were: ploughing back by beneficiaries of the fund, setting up income generating activities (Kikandwa Environmental Association), and an own contribution by beneficiaries of the funds. By the time of preparing the report not all the groups had established a clear policy of fund replenishment.

f) Selection criteria

The criteria used by the group LISF Executive committees for selecting the initiatives are below and were the same in all four CBOs. The first draft of these criteria was developed by the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat and then shared with the farmers' group LISF executives. They were then reviewed after they gave feedback. Copies of the final criteria were then availed to the groups in the local languages.

Initiatives supported by the LISFs include both technical developments as well as ways and means of improving the process of innovation, for example:

- Crop production
- Livestock production/ improvement
- Soil fertility management
- Learning visits to other areas for institutional / technical assistance
- Generating innovative ways for collectively marketing their produce
- Developing creative ways to finance initiatives (e.g. group savings).

For an application to be supported by the group LISF executive committee, it has to satisfy the following criteria:

- It must be one's own idea that they want to experiment with
- If a technique is being developed it must potentially pass the 'TEES-test' (in other words be Technically, Economically, Environmentally and Socially sound)
- The applicant must contribute at least 20% of the costs of the total budget of the activity for which support is requested, which could also be 'in kind'
- The applicant must be willing to work according to an agreed plan, to be reflected in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- The applicant must be willing to monitor, record progress, and report to the Group Executive Committee
- The applicant must be prepared to share his/her results with others. This may be through receiving visitors on the field, teaching and sharing with others the results of their initiatives and also providing a written report of the activities supported, including financial reports.

g) Process: from application to implementation

The typical process followed is described here. Calls for applications are made by the farmer group LISF executive committees through their regular meetings and using local avenues, e.g. local radio and sub-county notice boards. For KEA it was through their regular meetings of their group, but also through a sensitisation meeting specifically for the LISF. For NACIA, NACOB and ADEFA it was through the group meeting and local radio. Application forms were collected by prospective applicants, filled in, and where necessary, support given by the group LISF executive committees in doing so. A date was set by the group LISF executive committee to screen the applications using the above criteria. The status of the applications after screening was communicated and

reason(s) for approval or rejection indicated. For the proposals not approved care was taken to ensure that they were informed as to the reasons why.

The quality of the applications was not so good at the start as several applicants thought it was an 'inputs for production' project. But with more sensitisation and clarification by the executive communities this was clarified. For those that needed help to apply the committee members helped them. Though these were few. Four applications in Kikandwa that needed improvement were resubmitted and approved after revision. Those applicants who had applications rejected were encouraged to reapply but for support for innovation development. They have also been involved in sharing events. These have been funded for purposes of learning about innovations and the LISF. (A copy of the application form is found in Annex 3.)

There were farmers who had good innovations or ideas but their applications were not approved in the first screening. This was either because of a lack of clarity or a large budget. They were then supported to revise them and resubmit for consideration in the second round of screenings. Examples of these are Nakyejwe Oliver (25 yrs), Kiseke Christopher and Bukya Joseph (68 yrs) from KEA whose applications were approved at the second round of screenings after being revised with support from the group LISF executive committee.

The funds to be disbursed were determined and drawn all at once to reduce transaction costs, e.g. transport, bank charges.

Periodic reports of the pilot implementation progress were prepared and submitted to the PROLINNOVA Secretariat. Two of the groups have been able to report regularly, with the others having had challenges in doing so. Support in these instances was provided by the field agency in the area of implementation of the pilots and the PROLINNOVA Secretariat. Initially the first reports were basically about disbursement. But with ongoing technical support from the Secretariat the reports prepared by the groups have been improved.

h) Summary overview of what was funded

By November 2007, 70 applications had been received, of which 52 were approved for funding under the LISF. Of those approved for funding, 23 were for women and 26 for men and two for organisations. 49 applications were for support to improve farmers' innovations through farmer-led research while two were to conduct farmer to farmer exchange visits.

By February 2008, a further 10 applications had been made by the members of the four communities, resulting in three more approvals of funding. More applications have since been made, with those organisations that still have funds having organised further meetings to screen applications, and those whose funds have been depleted waiting for replenishment of the same. The main reasons for non-approval were inability to meet criteria for funding under the LISF, e.g. applications to buy stock for businesses or applications to build chicken houses.

The range of grant size was between Ush 40,000 (USD24) to Ush 200,000 (USD 118).

i) Themes of the different applications

Applications may be categorised according to the following thematic areas:

Theme	Number
Soil Fertility	5
Crop management	25
Processing	18
Animal husbandry	16
Water and soil conservation	3
Other (stock for shops, construction of chicken houses, etc.)	12

CASE STUDIES

The following table summarises some selected examples of farmer experimentation and feedback from these LISF applicants.

Area	Name of Group/ individual supported	Amount awarded	Activity supported to carry out
Wakiso	Mr. Ndugga Evaristo (48yrs) Individual Farmers perspective: "I found out about LISF through the team from Environmental Alert that came to sensitize the community. I decided to apply because I wanted to continue developing my experiment on soil fertility. The process was not difficult and the information was also available in the local language. My recommendation is that the Fund runs for a longer time."	Ush 200,000 or USD 120	Up-scaling farmer experiment on soil fertility management in vegetable garden (sukuma wiki) using chicken manure. The farmer wanted to get data on how much chicken manure is needed in the plot of land (1 acre) in which he planted vegetable to harvest throughout the year. What the money was used for: To get support (labour) in establishing his experimental plot.
Kikandwa	KEA Green Hill Education Centre Group "We heard about the LISF from the LISF executive committee in Kikandwa. The process was easy since the committee was available and helpful when we needed their support in preparing our applications. We suggest that this support continues for us to develop our innovations."	Ush 146,000 or USD 87.6	Exchange visit on recyclable pots for planting seedlings to reduce costs associated with polythene bags. The pots decompose and act as manure and soil dropping off seedlings. The exchange has resulted in scaling up of innovation and increase in spread in the area.
Nagojje	Ms Natoro Norah Individual "I heard about the LISF from the LISF executive committee in Nagojje. The process of applying wasn't easy but the information given in local language and support of the executive helped me to prepare a good application. Support from researchers was not easy to get since they are very few; costs of their support are very expensive and far away most of the times	Ush 40,000 or USD 24	Farmer led experiment on her concoction from Plantain roots, aloe Vera , rock salt and venonia sp that she uses for treating swine fever in her pigs. Progress results are yet to be sent in.
Naka-songola	Mr. Mugume, Paul Individual "I heard about the LISF from the Team that came to sensitise us about it from EA."	Ush 160,000 or USD 96	Farmer's informal experiment on establishment of live fences that are termite resistant in a effort to fin a solution to termite infestation that leads to increased costs of fencing material.



Margaret from Kikandwa shares about her innovation of making meal out of Amaranthus seeds.



Njondwe shows his banana plantation where he was able to control banana weevil using bio-pesticide using funds from the LISF. He compared the plants where he used the pesticide and they performed better compared to those where he did not

During the visits conducted to the areas where the pilots were implemented the monitoring teams were able to see activities carried out with support from the LISF. Questions were asked by the monitors for clarification on issues, and advice was given where deemed necessary.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) of implementation in the field and M&E at project level

M&E of implementation in the field is done by the group executive committees, while at the project level it is done by the PROLINNOVA Coordinator together with the core team members and more especially those with experience in similar initiatives to the LISFs. The group LISF executive committees responsible for the LISF would visit the members who received the awards to find out whether the activities for which funds were disbursed were proceeding well, monitor progress, and provide support where they can,

or alternatively source support from the group LISF committee of the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat or Core Team. Some farmers that were able to write reports submitted their progress reports to the group LISF executive committee, while those that were not able to, reported orally to the LISF executives who conducted the monitoring visits.

At the end of each of the visits by either the group executive committees or the Core Team and the PROLINNOVA Coordinator, meetings are held for providing feedback to the farmers and the executive committees on observations made during the monitoring visits.

In November 2007 an Oversight Group was formed. It comprises of the Core Team members and representatives of Uganda National Council for Science and Technology (UNCST), National Agricultural Research Organisation (NARO) and two representatives of the farmers' group executive committees (NACIA and KEA).



The KEA LISF executive committee and beneficiaries discuss progress of their activities supported by the LISF with the backstopping team.

The roles of the Oversight Group are:

1. Reviewing the implementation of the funded experiments and offering technical support where necessary
2. Monitoring and evaluation of the funded projects
3. Providing support on lobbying and advocacy for the Local Innovation Support Fund concept
4. Developing and implementing strategies for resource mobilisation that ensure sustainability of the Innovation Support Fund
5. Developing a set of guidelines for implementation of the Local Innovation Support Fund.

Steps taken towards institutionalisation

Steps taken towards institutionalisation have included holding bi-lateral visits with government institutions, e.g. National Agricultural Advisory Services (NAAS), NARO and

UNCST. This was done to share experiences and lessons learnt in conducting the pilots with the long-term aim of interesting them in adopting the LISF approach, and where possible are able to source funding from government through these institutions.

In October 2007 a dialogue meeting between farmers (five women and six men) involved in implementing the LISF and researchers (14) in the central region was jointly organised by the PROLINNOVA Secretariat and NARO Council Secretariat. At this dialogue the farmers were able to share information about their innovations. After this the farmer groups developed joint action plans with the researchers for improving their innovations. As a result of the dialogue NARO nominated a director of one of its institutes to represent it on the LISF Oversight Group. The farmers' groups are following up the implementation of the joint action plans with support from the PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat and with support from the LISF. Follow ups with the NARO Secretariat have been made by the Secretariat.

ANALYSIS

Functioning

In general the LISFs has been able to operate very well, with many farmers being supported to develop their innovations through farmer-led experimentation. Contrary to the original intention, in several of these experiments involvement of formal researchers was not realised because most of them are very far from the farmers and costs of their services are also very high. Nevertheless, farmers have indicated an interest in involving these researchers in future. Setting up a regional LISF that supports the community-level LISFs is another proposed strategy for the future of the initiative.

There were differences in decisions made by the four groups concerning percentage of 'plough back' by the beneficiaries. For NACIA, each of the beneficiaries were to pay back the amounts awarded, while for ADEFA the beneficiaries were to plough back the amount awarded plus 10%. For KEA, the beneficiaries were to plough back 50% of the amount awarded.

This clearly showed that the communities were anxious that the funds continue to be operated, and that they desired longer-term support for their efforts in innovating. It should be noted that one group (ADEFA) had a history of operating a saving and credit scheme and thus had more experience in managing the fund. It may also be assumed that prior experience of the four groups (CBOs) in successfully managing funds contributed to the groups' success in managing the LISFs.

The support the groups received was from extensionists of NGOs working in the communities. There was very minimal support from researchers. One instance was at the dialogue meeting held in Oct 2007, where they were able to give farmers advice on how to proceed with their experiments.

Challenges

One challenge faced was confusion of the purpose of the LISF funds with funds for inputs for production projects. This had to be clarified by sensitising the communities and the groups' LISF executive committees. Further sensitisation was done by the group LISF executives in the respective areas

Another challenge faced was in handling conflicts of interest. In some cases members of the executive committees submitted applications for support of their experiments. The

general principle of dealing with this was for the respective members to recuse themselves when their applications were being considered. In some groups this was not always adhered to.

Some experiments took a lot of time and needed considerable support from researchers. This in turn demanded substantial financial and technical support. This was not possible because of long distances from research stations and high costs of researcher fees.

Farmers' plots were widely scattered, making supervision and monitoring difficult and costly.

Late submissions of applications by members led to delays in disbursement of funds in some areas.

Some areas were far from the nearest bank, thus making administrative costs very high. The distance from NACIA office to the bank was 80km, and this meant a high additional cost of transport.

One challenge at the stage of assessing the groups' ability to manage funds was that one of the groups did not have a proper bank account which would enable them to operate smoothly. Recommendations were made and advice given on how to address the identified gaps. An example here is with the NACOBAs groups, for which some signatories of the account were no longer involved. There was one remaining signatory, who was also the only executive member of the group. New signatories were included on this account to address the gap.

Potential impact on the way ARD takes place in the country

The impact of this pilot on the way in which ARD is undertaken in the country is potentially substantial. Bilateral meetings around the pilot resulted in a dialogue between PROLINNOVA Uganda Secretariat and NARO Secretariat, who then organised a dialogue meeting in which farmers involved in the LISF and researchers were able to meet and discuss how to work together. This further led to the NARO Council Secretariat inviting PROLINNOVA Uganda through its secretariat (EA) to participate in the consultation with agricultural research service providers. PROLINNOVA Uganda is as a result registering as a 'Non Public Agricultural Research Service Provider' and will continue to engage with this sector.

The FAIR pilot experiences in Uganda are already being used to inform policy perspectives associated with other competitive grant schemes set up to support ARD in the country. Most of the researchers engaged with were open to this type of farmer-led research. They even acknowledged that this approach is what they had talked about for several years, and saw this as an entry point into this key dimension of ARD. Through this collaboration there is a high potential for more impact, with also a possibility of PROLINNOVA Uganda being able to access funds from government initiatives to support the LISFs.

Potential impact at community/farmer level

In many respects it is too early to gauge the impact of the FAIR pilot in Uganda. But some immediate results that may lead to possible impact include: more innovation development being supported, increased productivity, e.g. increased banana yield as a results of improved pest control, better maize crop yield (more bags of maize harvested after using chicken manure in Lukwanga), increased sharing of information among

farmers of improved farming activity achieved in part through the support they have received from the LISF.

Some examples are as follows. As a result of receiving support from the LISF in Lukwanga, Wakiso District, Evaristo Ndugga has increased his productivity in his vegetable garden (Sukuma Wiki) to 3-4 bags per week and is able to fetch between Ush 50,000 to Ush 80,000 per month. This was achieved as a result of support that he received from the fund to upscale his innovation on vegetable production. Mr Mjondwe Lubega from Nagojje, Mukono District, claims that he has increased productivity of his banana garden as a result of the support from the LISF. This support had helped him control pests in his plantation.

In Nakasongola, where water shortages and termite infestation are major challenges, degraded land was fenced by the planting of termite resistant plant hedges, whose seeds were purchased with support from the LISF. This further led to enhanced re-vegetation and recovery of the areas (two fields). This helped to reduce recurrent costs of wooden poles that are often destroyed by termites in the area. This was an idea of an innovative farmer in the area in response to the challenge of termite infestation.

Two night-holding paddocks, where animals are kept as a way of enhancing growth of pastures, were also established as a result of rehabilitation of degraded rangelands using farmers' innovative practices with support from the Fund.

A water pond was established on a hill-top in a situation where the farmer does not have any low lying area/ valley as a way of harvesting water to use in dry seasons. In this area water shortage is a serious problem, with bore holes drying up in dry seasons. This innovative farmer came up with this unconventional idea of creating a crater like structure on a rock on his land to harvest water for use in his homestead and farm.

As a result of the initiative of three of the Farmer CBOs, 'revolving LISFs' have been established in order to promote sustainability and continuity of the Fund.

Many farmers have been encouraged to individually document their innovations that they developed through implementation of the four LISFs.

Exchange of information on Local Innovations among farmers has greatly improved. This has been realised through events that the groups organise to share progress on their activity implementation.

The LISF pilots seem to be encouraging more farmers to innovate, while others have improved on existing practices, e.g. Margret has improved her innovation of making food out of amaranthus seeds; Ndugga was able to test how much chicken manure is needed to sustain a harvest from an acre of vegetables throughout the year.

There is potential for further impact as the initiative continues with more community members submitting applications for support for their experiments.

Overall Lessons learnt

One lesson learnt is that with some support and capacity building, farmers can actually manage community owned funds. This country programme would like to give more attention to capacity building of farmer groups to manage community owned funds in future as a way of ensuring sustainability. This will be done through exchange visits by farmer groups with less capacity to those that have more capacity with the purpose of increasing learning among the farmer groups. Such capacity to manage funds will have other benefits in addition to being better placed to manage innovation funds. With this

capacity members of such groups may also secure access to vital financial services. These could respond to needs of credit for agricultural inputs, or withstanding a shock such as crop failure due to drought, or other household needs.

There is a need to clarify with community-based partners the purpose of the LISF at the outset so as to avoid any assumption that the LISF exists to supply inputs for farming. The process of sensitising and mobilising the communities took a considerable amount of time to ensure that the concept and objectives of the initiative were very clear. The four executive committees understand the purpose of the LISF and are making the right decisions on what they fund through the LISF.

Increasing access to resources can lead to the encouragement of farmers to innovate and improve their innovations, even though some farmers felt the amounts received are too small. The amounts disbursed were between Ush 40,000 (USD24) and Ush 200,000 (USD120) depending on the activity.

The group dynamics of farmers' organisations are vital for the success of the LISF initiative. It was much easier to deal with farmers' group executive committees, compared to dealing with the individual farmers, which would be laborious and very costly. These structures in turn dealt with the individual farmers on a regular basis.

Farmers have ideas and can solve some of their problems in agriculture with the right kind of support. It is very important however that outside actors do not direct or assume control of experimentation processes. To do so is to subvert the methodology and risk an outcome which is opposite to that intended. Many researchers struggle with this as their training, and perhaps their enthusiasm, tends to lead them this way.

Local knowledge may solve some agricultural problems faster and more cheaply than scientific approaches (e.g. night holding paddocks that enable soil fertility recovery and the 'live fences').

With the LISFs in place, there is potential for the assistance going directly to the farmers to create opportunities for faster and more cost effective research efforts with immediate take up of results (as the process is farmer-driven), as compared with research funds being channelled through formal administrative units.

OPERATIONAL PLAN

PROLINNOVA Uganda's vision for the LISFs in the future

PROLINNOVA Uganda's vision for the LISFs in the future is to ensure that their operation and costs are sustainable, and that farmers have capacity to manage the funds, including strategies to replenish it and to ensure maximisation of benefits to farmers in the areas of implementation. The wider vision for Uganda in the future is for "replicating" this LISF establishment process with other CBOs, in other districts and in other regions of Uganda. The general strategy of realising this will be to identify other districts where farmer groups have innovations, source funding to set up the LISFs and to support their implementation. Efforts have also been put into lobbying nationally to tap into locally available funding to support the LISFs in other districts.

Another step would be to set up a regional ISF that would replenish the LISFs, especially those that have demonstrated a high pay back rate by beneficiaries. This would act as an incentive to farmers to revolve their funds, such that other farmers in their community are able to benefit. Over time however additional funds will need to be leveraged either from external agencies or from local farmers themselves. The latter could be an

important indicator of local farmer prioritisation of actions in the event of lack of availability of outside funding, and would also require a particular kind of culture. If principles of mutual help and collective support, coupled with a keen sense of financially sustainable practices, are not well-developed this option is unlikely to be taken up.

Requirements to get there and what constitutes an enabling environment

For farmer groups to manage the LISFs further building of capacity is needed. Funding is needed for setting up the community owned LISFs. Mechanisms to ensure sustainability of the funds need further elaboration. These are likely to involve a combination of own contributions (assisted through training in the setting up of farmer-managed mechanisms), and the establishing of revolving funds. More time for farmers to develop experience in managing these funds, with support from necessary development actors, is also needed.

An enabling environment would consist of the following:

- A mechanism that enables farmers to access the fund without much bureaucracy
- Systems that are empowering and not marginalising to farmers
- Mechanisms to ensure ownership of the LISFs
- Local commitment towards partial replenishment of the LISF.

Concrete steps to be taken in Phase 2 include:

1. Ongoing documentation of the lessons learnt in implementing the LISF pilots in the first phase.
2. Policy dialogue with government institutions using evidence from pilots conducted to positively influence policies that can lead to increased access to resources by resource constrained farmers.
3. The elaboration of strategies to support farmers in developing their capacity to engage in self-reliant activities, including mobilisation of own contributions.
4. Resource mobilisation to finance the above initiatives and replenish the funds before they get to the stage where they are more self-sustaining and to scale out the practice (LISF) where it has not yet reached.

CONCLUSIONS

Increasing farmers' access to resources can significantly influence their ability to innovate or stimulate more innovation. It can also in the long run increase farmers' contributions to ARD, as they are supported to carry out informal experimentation that can lead to generation of site specific technologies, learning and practices.

The pilots have shown that giving farmers incentives in the form of grants and even a loan portion can enable them to innovate more. Farmers have ideas and can solve some of their problems in agriculture even with limited technical and financial support.

Local knowledge may solve some agricultural problems faster and more cheaply than scientific approaches. In their own words, farmers reported that "sometimes assistance going directly to the farmers can sometimes lead to faster action from farmers and at a less cost than that channelled through formal administrative units".

More time is needed to establish the long-term viability of these LISFs. This time would be used to build capacity of farmers to manage funds in a sustainable way. It was also noted through discussion with the farmers groups that repayment of support funds is not a new idea in their areas, as they have been part of government initiatives that either required repayment or an own contribution.

ANNEX 1: REPORT FROM THE REGISTER

Summary - All Applications

Date	Applicant Name	Current Status	Gender	Amt Requested	Amt Approved	Amt Used
08/01/07	Mr Lubega George	Not Approved	Male	1,500,000.00	0.00	0.00
09/02/07	Nambi Suzan	Not Approved	Female	60,000.00	0.00	0.00
06/03/07	Mr Ntalo Stephen	Approved	Male	175,000.00	175,000.00	210,000.00
16/04/07	Mrs Nabatanzi Margr	Approved	Female	100,000.00	72,000.00	100,000.00
16/04/07	Mr Lukwago Dan	Approved	Male	100,000.00	69,000.00	100,000.00
24/05/07	Mr Nduga Evaristo	Approved	Male	200,000.00	200,000.00	350,000.00
31/05/07	Mr Nsereko Lawrenc	Approved	Male	200,000.00	200,000.00	330,000.00
23/05/07	Mr. Kyambade Leon	Approved	Male	200,000.00	100,000.00	0.00
08/05/07	Miss Nakitya Daisy	Not Approved	Female	1,000,000.00	0.00	0.00
18/05/07	Miss Nansubuga Mar	Approved	Female	124,000.00	77,500.00	124,000.00
24/05/07	Mrs. Nanteza Betty	Approved	Female	99,800.00	50,000.00	99,800.00
23/05/07	Mrs Ntulume Joyce	Approved	Female	99,900.00	63,000.00	99,900.00
28/05/07	Mr Kitali Leonard	Approved	Male	66,000.00	66,000.00	79,200.00
13/05/07	Mr Musisi John	Approved	Male	82,000.00	60,000.00	82,000.00
23/05/07	Mrs Nansimbwa Viri	Approved	Female	100,000.00	55,000.00	100,000.00
20/05/07	Mr Kizito Geoffrey	Approved	Male	125,000.00	125,000.00	162,000.00
24/05/07	Mrs Nabagala Sirina	Not Approved	Female	99,700.00	0.00	0.00
23/05/07	Mrs Nakalyango Ted	Not Approved	Female	91,000.00	0.00	0.00
22/05/07	Mrs Namatovu Nansi	Not Approved	Female	81,000.00	0.00	0.00
23/05/07	Mrs Kamalya Rose	Not Approved	Female	100,000.00	0.00	0.00
24/05/07	Mr Bukya Joseph	Not Approved	Male	100,000.00	0.00	0.00
18/05/07	Mr Seguya Frank	Not Approved	Male	99,800.00	0.00	0.00
23/05/07	Mrs Kizza Maxsesiy	Not Approved	Female	82,000.00	0.00	0.00
21/05/07	Mr Kiseke Christoph	Not Approved	Male	99,000.00	0.00	0.00
23/05/07	Mr Ssegirinya Baluna	Not Approved	Male	100,000.00	0.00	0.00
28/05/07	Mr Kakembo Ziboyi	Not Approved	Male	103,000.00	0.00	0.00
29/05/07	Mr Nsubuga Haruna	Not Approved	Male	100,000.00	0.00	0.00
28/05/07	Mr Nsubuga Haruna	Approved	Male	100,000.00	75,000.00	100,000.00
06/05/07	Leonard Kitali	Committee Appro	Male	98,800.00	0.00	0.00
23/05/07	Nakalyango Teddy	Approved	Female	91,000.00	61,000.00	91,000.00
28/05/07	Koboongezo Commu	Not Approved	N/A	222,000.00	0.00	0.00
20/05/07	Koboongezo Commu	Approved	N/A	100,000.00	75,000.00	222,000.00
27/05/07	Bukya Joseph	Approved	Male	100,000.00	52,000.00	100,000.00
21/05/07	Kiseke Christopher	Approved	Male	99,000.00	65,000.00	99,000.00
30/05/07	Miss Perusi Kisuule	Approved	Female	200,000.00	60,000.00	72,000.00
28/05/07	Miss Nyanzala Josep	Approved	Female	146,000.00	146,000.00	175,200.00
24/05/07	Namirembe Harriet	Not Approved	Female	60,000.00	0.00	0.00
08/06/07	Miss Nakabugo Juliet	Approved	Female	100,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
10/06/07	Mrs Kamalya Rose	Approved	Female	100,000.00	61,500.00	100,000.00
06/06/07	Mrs Kasozi Agness	Not Approved	Female	103,000.00	0.00	0.00
10/06/07	Mrs Nakyegwe Olive	Not Approved	Female	98,000.00	0.00	0.00
07/06/07	Mr Ephraim B Kasizi	Not Approved	Male	100,000.00	0.00	0.00
09/06/07	Tebandeke FX	Not Approved	Male	150,000.00	0.00	0.00
06/06/07	Nasitanzia Namatovu	Not Approved	Female	81,000.00	0.00	0.00
10/06/07	Nakyegwe Oliver	Approved	Female	98,000.00	55,000.00	66,000.00
20/06/07	ssalongo Kakembo Z	Approved	Male	103,000.00	70,000.00	103,000.00
20/06/07	Mr Mugume Paul	Approved	Male	200,000.00	160,000.00	192,000.00
06/07/07	Mr Matiwa Benado	Approved	Male	200,000.00	130,000.00	156,000.00
13/07/07	Mr Amooti Ntalo Ge	Approved	Male	160,000.00	140,000.00	192,000.00
28/07/07	Mr Sebwato Godfrey	Approved	Male	280,000.00	200,000.00	240,000.00
22/07/07	Mayimuna Mugambe	Not Approved	Male	150,000.00	0.00	0.00
14/08/07	AFADEA	Not Approved	N/A	1,312,000.00	0.00	0.00
25/08/07	Miss Senkungu Debo	Approved	Female	95,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00

Date	Applicant Name	Current Status	Gender	Amt Requested	Amt Approved	Amt Used
26/08/07	Miss Sebagala Margr	Approved	Female	100,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
26/08/07	Miss Zimbe Daisy	Approved	Female	101,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
20/08/07	Mr Lubanga Mukinja	Not Screened	Male	200,000.00	70,000.00	0.00
24/08/07	Mr Jjondwe Lubega	Approved	Male	200,000.00	120,000.00	144,000.00
15/08/07	Mr Kalibala Joseph	Approved	Male	180,000.00	80,000.00	96,000.00
13/08/07	Miss Mugisha Sarah	Approved	Female	200,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
03/08/07	Mr Ssendawula K	Approved	Male	100,000.00	60,000.00	72,000.00
03/08/07	Ms Nansikombi R	Approved	Female	70,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
04/08/07	No Name	Not Approved	Female	150,000.00	0.00	0.00
29/08/07	Mr Rwamuhuuku Ge	Approved	Male	200,000.00	115,000.00	138,000.00
29/08/07	Miss Florence Karuh	Approved	Female	117,500.00	140,000.00	145,500.00
29/08/07	Miss Scovia Kemire	Approved	Female	160,000.00	140,000.00	192,000.00
20/08/07	Mr George Nohiri	Approved	Male	322,500.00	192,500.00	230,500.00
20/08/07	Miss Sylvia Ruzinda	Approved	Female	205,000.00	160,000.00	192,000.00
05/09/07	Miss Natora Norah	Approved	Female	100,000.00	40,000.00	40,000.00
07/09/07	Mr Lusagala Vincent	Approved	Male	140,000.00	90,000.00	108,000.00
04/09/07	Mr Kizito Nathan	Approved	Male	200,000.00	110,000.00	132,000.00
05/09/07	Miss Nasejje Peninah	Approved	Female	200,000.00	90,000.00	108,000.00
03/09/07	Miss Nyanzala Josep	Approved	Female	50,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
04/09/07	Mr Elvo Kibaya Mas	Approved	Male	200,000.00	50,000.00	60,000.00
21/09/07	Namirembe Harriet	Not Approved	Female	60,000.00		0.00
14/09/07	Semuzana Andrew	Not Approved	Male	300,000.00	0.00	0.00
14/09/07	Semuzana Gladys	Approved	Female	240,000.00	139,000.00	166,800.00
14/09/07	Rukira Fred	Approved	Male	222,000.00	170,000.00	204,000.00
02/10/07	Mpindi Lamech Maa	Not Approved	Male	350,000.00	0.00	0.00
10/10/07	KEA Savings and Cr	Approved	N/A	277,000.00	277,000.00	277,000.00
07/11/07	Miss Kezia Lwanga	Not Approved	Female	900,000.00	0.00	0.00
80 applications processed in 2007 33% of requested amount approved.				15,379,000.00	5,056,500.00	6,470,900.00

Total	15,379,000.00	5,056,500.00	6,470,900.00
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Total applications received:	80	
Relevant applications received:	51	63.75%
Applications approved:	50	62.50%
Individual female applicants:	37	46.25%
Individual male applicants:	39	48.75%
Group applicants:	4	5.00%
Grantee report received in time:	0	0.00%
Average age of applicants:	22	Years
Approved vs Disbursed Grants:	80.00%	
Average time to improve proposal to status: Approved:	2	days
Average time from application - screening:	25	days
Requested amount vs Approved amount:	32.88%	
Approved amount vs Amount actually used:	132.42%	

ANNEX 2: CONTRACT BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT AND CBOS FOR IMPLEMENTING THE LISF

CONTRACT BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL ALERT AND NALUKONGE COMMUNITY INITIATIVE ASSOCIATION TO CARRY OUT LOCAL INNOVATION SUPPORT FUND (LISF) PILOTS

This CONTRACT is made this 11th day of the month of August 2007 between (Being the Contractor) and(Beneficiary farmers' group/ CBO).(Beneficiary Farmers' group) has been contracted to carry out the Local Innovation Support Fund pilot based on the attached Terms of reference)

Contract period and reporting

The Contract is effective from 11th August 2007 and ends on 30th March 2008, by which time Nalukonge Community Initiative Association will have presented a final copy (hard copy and electronic) of the LISF pilot report. This will include findings during the process of carrying out the Local Innovation Support Fund in Nakasongola district. The entire assignment will last seven months and four weeks from date of signing the agreement, within which a final report will be provided to EA. Nalukonge Community Initiative Association will also be required to give bi monthly progress updates of the process to EA which include applications made and status of these plus comments on the same.

Disbursement of funds

EA will release Ug.Shs.2,000,000/- (Two million shillings only) to carry out the above Local Innovation Support Fund pilot. This will cover actual funds awarded to approved applicants and minimal costs of administering the fund eg meetings of the executive committee (though these have to be kept at the bare minimum). The group executive is expected to prepare and submit bi-monthly progress reports including financial reports to the Secretariat. The executive committee of Nalukonge Community Initiative Association is also charged with the responsibility of developing a plan for ensuring sustainability of the fund after the donor funded phase has ended

Monitoring and Evaluation of the pilot

After the stated period an evaluation of performance of this LISF will be conducted after which new negotiations could be entered into.

Signed in two copies, of which each party has taken one, on the date above written.

NOW THEREFORE the parties hereby agree as follows:

For the contractor

NACIA

Executive Director

Chairperson

Environmental Alert

Beneficiary Farmers' group

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR CONDUCTING THE LOCAL INNOVATION SUPPORT FUND PILOTS OF PROLINNOVA-UGANDA

Background

Environmental Alert, Ministry of Agriculture Animal Industry and Fisheries, PELUM Uganda, Kulika Charitable Trust, Africa 2000 Network together with other PROLINNOVA partners are undertaking an action research on Local Innovation Support Funds (LISF) under a project called Farmer Access to Innovation Resources (FAIR). Implementation of this project started with commissioning of a feasibility study on local innovation funds available in the country to inform the design and establishment of the LISF pilots of the FAIR project. Establishment of pilots of the Local Innovation Support Funds is perceived as one way of promoting local innovation, with these funds being owned and managed by farmers with supervision from the PROLINNOVA Secretariat. Farmers or groups whose applications are approved will receive financial awards to stimulate their efforts.

ISF funds will support innovators by providing financial awards required for:

- Costs directly related to experimentation (e.g. tools, equipment, seeds, laboratory tests, etc)
- Costs involved in accessing technical support, mostly training costs, travel, accommodation and meals for technical expertise
- Costs involved in cross visits and exchanges
- Documentation and dissemination costs
- Commercialization of innovations.

The fund is not for purchasing inputs for production or a conventional loan scheme.

Target

While the immediate objective is to stimulate innovation, these LISF pilots are to be conducted within selected districts of the central region of Uganda with plans to upscale lessons learnt beyond these districts if future funds are secured.

Procedure

The LISFs shall be managed by the farmers' Group Executive Committee and with the help of a core team member.

The fund shall be announced and calls for applications solicited using means that make the information accessible to farmers and in appropriate language.

The executive committee shall acknowledge receipt of applications that are sent, file these and review the same at a meeting convened by the same committee to screen those that are approved for funding.

Screening shall be carried out according to the guidelines developed (see separate document: 'Guidelines for LISF applicants').

After the screening meeting applicants whose requests have been approved and those whose have not been approved shall be communicated to with the reasons given.

Funds for approved applicants shall be disbursed in installments depending on the budget and approved work plan. Any subsequent installments after the first shall be made upon receipt of a report of activities carried out using previous disbursement including accountability for the funds given.

Approved applicants must contribute at least 20% of the total budget - though this contribution may be in kind. Farmers should be aware of the 10% own financial contribution in case of exchange visits

The applicants must undertake to share with other farmers lessons learnt from undertaking the activity.

If an application requires further development before it can be properly evaluated, approval must first be obtained from the executive committee & PROLINNOVA Secretariat then the relevant partner can work with applicant on developing a budget

The group executive committee is required to prepare and submit to the Secretariat and core team bi monthly reports on the management and administration of the fund.

The same committee is charged with the responsibility of ensuring sustainability of this fund after the donor funded phase ends. One way of doing this is through beneficiaries of the fund ploughing back a percentage of the products they generate as a result of the support from the fund, this can be in kind eg a sack of yams, to ensure that more members of the community benefit from the fund

The bi-monthly report submitted by the executive committee should include a brief summary of all applications & their status as shown below

No	Name	Location	Support requested	Amount requested	Status Approved/not	Comments

ANNEX 3: GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION FORM FOR THE LOCAL INNOVATION SUPPORT FUND



Guidelines for Local Innovation Support Fund (LISF) applicants

Environmental Alert together with government and non-governmental organizations is working towards providing better support for innovative farmers in an effort to stimulate their experimentation and development processes. This is being done in partnership with local Group Executive Committees. Initiatives that can be supported include both technical developments as well as ways and means of improving the process of innovation:

- Crop production
- Livestock production/ improvement
- Soil fertility management
- Learning visits to other areas for institutional / technical assistance
- Generating innovative ways for collectively marketing their produce
- Developing creative ways to finance initiatives (eg group savings)

For an application to be supported by the Group Executive Committee, it must satisfy the following criteria:

- It must be your own idea that you want to experiment with
- If a technique is being developed it must potentially pass the 'TEES-test' (be Technically, Economically, Environmentally and Socially sound)
- You must contribute at least 20% of the costs which may be 'in kind'
- You must be willing to work according to an agreed plan (MOU)
- Monitor, record progress, and report to the Group Executive Committee
- Be prepared to share your results with others

The maximum award for a single application is.....and must not cover more than 80% of the total budget.

If you would like to benefit from this initiative please contact one of the following executive committee members and your application will be assessed.

NALUKONGE COMMUNITY INITIATIVE ASSOCIATION LISF COMMITTEE		
NAME	POSITION	TELEPHONE

**APPLICATION FORM FOR SUPPORT FROM THE LOCAL INNOVATION SUPPORT
FUND**



1. Name of the applicant (individual or group)

2. Gender (tick)

Male

☐

Female

☐

Group

☐

If group is it registered or not?

Yes

☐

No

☐

3. Have you received support from any where else? If so explain.

4. What are you planning to do with the support requested for?

- a) Support to continue with research on innovation
- b) Empowerment of farmers' group through exchange visits
- c) To upscale and disseminate lessons learnt from activities supported by the fund .

5. Explain what kind of support that is needed and how long will your activity supported take?

6. Explain why the support is needed

7. How much support is needed? Give a break down of the requirements for the activity.

Total Budget _____ Ug Shs _____ own contribution (20%)

8. How did you get to know about the Local Innovation Support Fund (LISF)?

9. Location/ Date _____ Signature

_____/_____/_____

ANNEX 4: DISSEMINATION STRATEGY

Products to be developed:

- a) A basic paper (second draft produced)
- b) Alternative documentation:
 - Posters
 - Magazine
 - Fact sheets

Targets identified for the documentation products:

- Farmers
- Donors
- Development practitioners

Dissemination strategy:

- Brochures
- Posters
- Open days
- Fliers
- Talk shows
- Dissemination workshops / sharing events

ANNEX 5: DETAILED M&E INDICATORS FOR THE ISF PILOTS

Criteria/ Performance Area	Possible indicators	Relevant tools/methods	M&E
1. Adequate awareness among farmers (and other resource users) and support agencies on ISF opportunities and access mechanisms	1 No. of applications received per round of calls for proposals 70, 9	• Register	
	2 Percentage of applications which passed first screening on ISF criteria 74%,	• Register	
	3 Percentage of proposals reviewed meeting selection criteria 74%	• Register	
	4 Percentage of proposals from women, youth 51%(40), 10% (8)	• Register (for the participation of women)	
2. Effective mechanisms to process applications	5 Number of proposals processed after screening and finally approved 52,	• Register	
	6 Time period between receipt of application, screening, processing and communicating final results of selection process 26 days	• Register	
	7 Time taken to improve proposals (remedial) 2 days	• Register	
	8 Transaction cost relative to grant value – staff time involved and other resources used	• Time sheets for writing time worked • financial reports/accounts	
3. Effective disbursement mechanisms	9 Number of approved vs. number of disbursed grants 97.3%	• Register	
	10 Timeliness of disbursement in relation to fund needs (e.g. seasonal imperatives)	• Register • Feedback on grantees satisfaction through internal evaluation	
	11 Banking and other costs incurred in disbursement - both country level and international level	• Financial reports/accounts	

Criteria/ Performance Area	Possible indicators	Relevant tools/methods	M&E
4. Utilisation of the funds	12 Expenditure in line with agreed terms for use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant Reports Random field inspection Grantees feedback through annual assessment meeting 	
	13 Necessary changes/adaptations in initial plans quickly and effectively implemented	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant reports Random in situ inspection of experimentation work Feedback from grantees and other stakeholders through internal evaluation 	
5. M&E of LISF grant system is in place (existence and functioning)	14 Financial and narrative grant reports received on set deadlines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register 	
	15 Quality of grant reports received (clarity and completeness of information) undertaken (by whom, when, costs); lessons learned; analyses of stakeholders participation.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Register 	
	16 Implementation of annual assessment meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report of annual meeting 	
	17 Information from grant reports processed and used in ISF planning and implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes if country ISF committee; Minutes of international meeting FAIR (checking that action points were followed up) Report of annual assessment meeting 	
	18 Dissemination of findings from M&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Distribution or mailing list relevant M&E reports 	

Criteria/ Performance Area	Possible indicators	Relevant tools/methods	M&E
6. ISF has a strong, farmer co-managed, sustainable institutional framework	19 Relevant stakeholders, including small farmers/ natural resource users (men, women), endorse and support institutional setting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of ISF committee meeting; • Annual narrative reports 	
	20 Institutional setting of ISF is clarified and formalised	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ToR of ISF institution 	
	21 Strong involvement of farmers/ natural resource users in LISF management (at least "x" farmers participating in the ISF committee, critical incidents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of ISF committee meetings • Critical incidents on farmer influence in ISF noted in minutes. 	
	22 Adequate resource mobilisation to replenish pilot capital expenditure, both at local (community) and country levels. Amount (and percentage) of resources mobilised for replenishing the LISF e.g.: own contributions, amount of revolving funds mobilised from selling produce, contribution from other donors, stakeholder with significant long-term research funding stream co-driving project, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial report • Long-term operational plan for ISF • Secured funding commitments 	

PROLINNOVA Secretariat
(hosted by ETC Foundation)

**P.O. Box 64, 3830 AB Leusden
Kastanjelaan 5, Leusden
The Netherlands**

**Phone: +31 (0)33 4326000
Fax: +31 (0)33 4940791
E-mail: prolinnova@etcnl.nl
Website : www.prolinnova.net**

Environmental Alert

**P.O. Box 11259, Kampala-Uganda
Kabalagala Off Gaba Road-Behind Kirabo Kya
Maria Building, Kampala-Uganda**

**Phone: +(256) 414 510215
Fax: +(256) 414 510547
Email: rlutalo@envalert.org
Website: www.envalert.org**

