

Strengthening Community Resilience to Change:

Combining Local Innovative Capacity with Scientific Research (CLIC–SR)

Progress Report

September 2012 – January 2013



Baringo County survey enumerators during the training session

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A: INTRODUCTION

The Combining Local Innovative Capacity with Scientific Research (CLIC–SR) project promotes farmer-led joint innovation that builds on the creativity of local people in ways that seek to enhance local capacities of farmers and communities to adapt to change, including climate change (CC). The project aims to:

1. Strengthen the resilience to change of smallholders and their communities, especially the women, by enhancing their innovative capacity and thus their livelihood security through participatory innovation development (PID)
2. Build the capacity of organizations working on agriculture and natural resource management (NRM) so that they can effectively work with and support smallholder communities in their efforts to adapt
3. Increase insights and awareness on relevance and effectiveness of PID through sharing and learning
4. Mainstream PID as an accepted approach within targeted national and international policies and programs related to agricultural development, NRM and climate-change adaptation (CCA).

CLIC-SR activities are being carried out in two counties, Baringo and Machakos, that are vulnerable to changes of many types, including climate change. Machakos County was also selected due to the existence of a functioning Local Innovation Support Fund (LISF) system and therefore could immediately start on facilitating joint experimentation between scientists and local innovators through the Participatory Innovation and Development (PID) process. Furthermore, its proximity to Nairobi (60 km from Nairobi) is favourable in terms of coordination and offers an ideal option to undertake field visits for policymakers and other key stakeholders.

Baringo County has similar climatic conditions as Machakos and is experiencing various significant changes including the invasion of the plant species *Prosopis*. They are both semi-arid regions experiencing average rainfall of 600–700 mm per annum. The Joint Learning about Innovation Systems in African Agriculture (JOLISAA) project supported by the European Union (EU) is being implemented in the county and, through this project, several local innovations have been identified. CLIC-SR will build on the project.

In addition to the above, both counties have PROLINNOVA–Kenya (PK) member organisations covering these regions and these organisations therefore could take the lead locally to support implementation of CLIC-SR activities. The PK members are Practical Action and INADES Formation in Baringo and Machakos, respectively.

B: ACTIVITIES

i. Baseline surveys (Baringo and Machakos)

Baseline surveys were conducted in the two target counties in one division each to identify changes that the communities perceive to have experienced and how they are responding to them. These surveys identified existing local innovations that communities are engaging in to adapt to change. The field work was undertaken in November 2012 in Baringo County and January 2013 in Machakos. The analysis of the data collected and report writing is in progress. This includes documentation of specific cases of local innovation in the face of change. Practical Action took the lead in the Baringo workshop while INADES Formation took the lead in Machakos. In both cases, Focus Group Discussions and questionnaires were administered.

ii. Training in Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) and Participatory Innovation Development (PID)

PK conducted a three-day training to build the capacity of partner organizations supporting the implementation of the CLIC-SR project and farmer-led innovation. The training was designed to strengthen the capacity of partner organizations working at the local level with communities in agricultural and NRM development to support communities in their initiatives to adapt to change and to build resilience.

The training held on 16–18 October 2012 at the Agricultural Information Center (AIC) of the Kenyan Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) in Nairobi was conducted on a training-of-trainers (ToT) basis with 17 participants (10 men and 7 women). The course outline covered identification of existing changes, CCA strategies, national and international climate change (CC) policies, farmer-led adaptation strategies and innovations, policy framework, the Community Managed Disaster Risk Reduction (CMDRR) approach and Participatory Disaster Risk Assessment (PDRA). During this training, the participants developed a data-collection checklist and tools for conducting the above-mentioned baseline surveys. The Kenyan office of the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) took the lead in this training; the PID trainer in this workshop was Anne Wanja, a beneficiary of previous PID training conducted by the PROLINNOVA International Support Team.

PK, in collaboration with KARI and ETC Foundation, host of the PROLINNOVA International Secretariat, will be conducting a National Training of Trainers on Participatory Innovation Development (PID) supported by NUFFIC¹ Tailor-made Training (TmT). The training will take place in two stages, the main one is scheduled for 18–22 February 2013 and a follow-up for 24–27 June 2013. This will complement the above-mentioned training through further strengthening the capacity of the partners, increasing the number of people skilled in PID (and PID training) and particularly including scientists to support PID and to promote ownership and sustainability of the concepts of joint learning and innovation.

iii. Study on influencing policy: constraints, challenges and opportunities

A review of relevant policy-influencing experiences has been ongoing to draw key lessons to support in policy-influencing strategies in respect to PID and local innovation. A team of consultants plus two PK personnel are spearheading the process. The review will assess the challenges faced in influencing policy, including those faced by the policymakers themselves in implementing policy; and identifying the opportunities available to influence and implement policy.

iv. Project launch event

The launch of CLIC–SR was scheduled for November 2012. However, PK decided to strategically postpone it to be able to take advantage of the Week on Agricultural Innovation in Africa (WAIA) events that will be held on 25–31 May 2013 in Nairobi. The launch will take place during a cocktail event after the official opening of the international workshop on Agricultural Innovation Systems in Africa (AISA). The WAIA will bring together local and international partners, students, policymakers, government officials, farmers, media and researchers and thus provide the launch with the necessary publicity and achieve greater impact.

¹ NUFFIC: Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education; PK took the initiative of applying for additional funding from NUFFIC to be able to hold this training with a trainer from ETC Foundation, Netherlands.