

PROLINNOVA–GHANA ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2022

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Country Platform (CP) has been very active in the past year. The National Steering Committee (NSC), technical support team and local multistakeholder platforms (MSPs) at action-learning sites remained very functional in supporting projects (Scaling Up Local Capacity to Innovate in Food and Nutrition Security/SULCI-FaNS and Ethnoveterinary Research and Development/EthnoVet), participatory innovation development (PID), institutionalisation, networking and learning with farmers and among the other stakeholders in agricultural research and development. The chair of the NSC, Naaminong Karbo, died in August 2022 and was replaced by George Essegbey, a senior member of the NSC. Ms Margaret Kyiu, CP coordinator and SULCI-FaNS project coordinator, resigned her position in September 2022 and will be replaced in 2023. James Japiong resigned as finance manager in February 2022 and was replaced by James Binan. These changes were carefully managed to reduce their negative impacts on the CP's performance.

2.0 ACHIEVEMENTS, CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVES

2.1 Key activities implemented and results achieved

Farmer-led research:

Under the SULCI-FaNS project, 31 local innovations (18 by women, 12 by men, 1 by a women's group) were identified by the end of the year and widely disseminated among farmers in the action-learning sites and stakeholders including through local radio, farmer innovation fair, community sharing sessions and farmer exchange visits. Seven local innovations (5 by women, 1 by a man and 1 group) were improved through PID or joint farmer-led research and the results shared through the local MSP members, NGO staff, and technical support team members who jointly facilitated the PID processes. Thirty-three (9M/24F) innovators were trained in entrepreneurship and technical aspects leading to scaling and commercialisation of 16 innovations through the Local Innovation Support Facility (LISF), providing increased incomes and wellbeing.

Documentation:

Local innovation (LI) and PID results and processes were successfully documented, including a booklet with 31 local innovations, a booklet on PID processes and results, a booklet on the CP's experience with LISF in the SULCI-FaNS project, five short videos on innovators' successes and impact of LI/PID and LISF and two videos on farmer innovation fairs held at the two action-learning sites. The products were used to support dissemination and policy dialogue and institutionalisation of the PID approach.

Capacity strengthening:

The Local MSP members, NGO staff and technical support team have gained skills and are independently supporting LI and PID processes, sharing the results and integrating the approach into their own activities. Women innovators and group members have developed innovation and

entrepreneurial skills and transformed their innovations to improve food security and commercial products for income. Twenty-six outstanding women innovators were awarded certificates and material items by the Ministry of Food and Agriculture at the 2022 annual National Farmers Day at district level for their achievements.

Networking and policy dialogue at all levels:

Two farmer innovation fairs were held at the action-learning sites, which brought together innovators to showcase and exhibit their innovations for community chiefs, opinion leaders, district chief executives and heads of the Department of Agriculture at the district and regional levels. Two male researchers, a female university lecturer and four officers of the district Department of Agriculture (technical team members) are using the approach in their work and shared about this at other public occasions. Two technical team members from the University and Research have applied the approach in their PhD research thesis with case studies from SULCI-FaNS project activities. The local NGO partner (CEAL) in the Walewale action-learning site was able to establish a business link with **Stay Trend**, an Accra-based enterprise for innovative food products from women's groups to feed the Accra markets. The visits to ACDEP by Maria Klatte (Misereor Africa Desk Officer) in August 2022 and Sabine Dorlöchter-Sulser (Misereor Rural Development Desk Officer) in November 2022 related to the SULCI-FaNS and EthnoVet projects in Ghana provided good opportunities for mutual learning and deepened the relations between Misereor and ACDEP/Prolinnova for continuous international cooperation in sustainable rural development.

Fundraising:

The CP through its host organisation collaborated with the Prolinnova International Support Team to write and submit a proposal to Misereor leading to a new three-year project "Expanding the promotion of local innovation for food security and healthy nutrition to strengthen resilience" (ELI-FaNS) to be implemented in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa from January 2023 to December 2025. However, because of limited funding opportunities, the CP was not successful in leveraging local funding to sustain the LISF in order to support to more farmers for innovation and PID activities.

Achievements of the Ethnoveterinary Research & Development (EthnoVet) project

- Literature review on 11 ethnobotanicals and phytochemical properties of plants used for seven herbal preparations was completed in partnership with Centre for Plant Medicine Research.
- Protocols to conduct on-farm trials on farmer innovations to assess the efficacy of farmers' herbal remedies to prevent and treat animal diseases and conditions caused by Newcastle disease, African Swine Fever, PPR, anthrax and keet mortality were completed for action in 2023.
- Training on sustainable exploitation, conservation and propagation of medicinal/herbal plants was carried out for farmer and agricultural extension agents in all four project sites.
- The NSC of Prolinnova–Ghana was strengthened with the inclusion of experts in animal health. Some national research scientists in the NSC are guiding the project in the process to secure ethical approval for its research activities. The NSC held its annual meeting in November 2022 and reviewed and advised on project activities as well as CP-level networking and expansion of the membership, including NSC membership.
- Challenge: Heads of three stakeholder institutions were transferred from Tamale to Accra, thereby limiting their participation in project implementation. The new replacements are taking time to learn and take over their roles in the EthnoVet project.

2.2 Difficulties/challenges

Slow and low level of institutional-level mainstreaming of the PID approach: We will review our approach and develop more focused strategies drawing from Prolinnova–Ghana’s 2022–2026 strategic plan to achieve better results. A second challenge was the resignation of the CP coordinator / SULCI-FaNS project coordinator in the last quarter of the year, which slowed project and CP activities. A new CP coordinator will be employed in 2023 under the ELI-FaNS project.

3. SELF-ASSESSMENT OF NETWORK FUNCTIONING

- The CP has progressed at a modest pace towards its goals and objectives because national-level networking is still low, as activities are concentrated around project implementation areas. A permanent coordinator for the CP would change things positively.
- Governance at CP level is quite strong and supportive. The NSC is constantly being upgraded and involved to play its required roles.
- ACDEP as the CP secretariat remains a strong local NGO committed to and promoting the principles of bottom-up participatory rural development drawing on smallholders’ innovation and capacities. ACDEP possesses the requisite human resources and minimum resources to sustain the platform.
- Communication between and among partners within the CP has been made possible and effective through the involvement of local MSP and technical support team and local-site lead NGOs in projects and CP activities.
- Relationships with other CPs, the Subregional Coordinator, the International Support Team and the Prolinnova Oversight Group (POG) have been cordial and mutually beneficial.
- The CP partners and stakeholders as well as ACDEP have developed a high level of technical and project-management capacity through the relationship with Prolinnova at all levels.
- The CP’s achievements in fundraising at national and subregional levels have not been significant except through participating in joint Prolinnova proposals and projects thereof.

4. CONCLUSION

The CP has largely achieved its planned programme for 2022 with respect to project activities but not satisfactorily in terms of countrywide networking and policy-dialogue activities. Significant impacts are beginning to show at the household level in the action-learning sites with respect to food security, incomes and resilience, especially for women. We will continue to leverage on the new ELI-FaNS project and the EthnoVet project to strengthen networking and institutionalisation of the PID approach at both local and national level.