



## **Prolinnova–Asia Regional Platform**

# **2024 Annual Report**

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## 1 Introduction

This report covers activities undertaken in 2024 within the Asia regional platform of the Prolinnova network. It provides a summary of activities that took place at the country and subregional level. The year was mainly focused on the re-establishment and activation of the Nepal Country Platform (CP) and maintaining contact with the other CPs in the region, none of which have Prolinnova-related funded projects/ programmes

## 2 Activities of the CPs

### 2.1 *Prolinnova–Cambodia*

#### Introduction

CDO (Community Developer Organisation) became the host organisation of Prolinnova– Cambodia in the year 2022 after it was selected through a consultative process at country and regional level.

CDO is committed to work with staff of governmental institutions, researchers, extensionists and small-scale farmers in order to build strong relationships between and among them. CDO currently works closely with four institutions representing the provincial-level Departments of Agriculture and Cooperatives (PDAs).

A new National Steering Committee (NSC) was elected during the first working group meeting of Prolinnova–Cambodia on 17 February 2022. The NSC comprises four members (3 male, 1 female) from Provincial Department of Agriculture & Fisheries Prey Veng (PDA-Prey Veng), Kampong Cham National Institution of Agriculture (KCINIA) and Cambodia Agriculture Cooperative Unions (CACU). Community Developer Organisation (CDO) as the host organisation is the secretariat to the NSC.

#### Activities

Prolinnova–Cambodia continues to engage in Prolinnova-related activities and communicates through email and virtual meetings. CDO also participated in the webinar organised by the International Institute of Rural Reconstruction (IIRR) Philippines and Prolinnova–Asia. However, the efforts to integrate the Participatory Innovation Development (PID) approach into its work are still not clearly defined.

CDO continues to work directly with the Cambodia Agriculture Cooperative Union (CACU) and Agricultural Cooperatives (ACs) in Thboug Khmum, Takeo, Kampong Speu, Kampong Thom and Kampot Provinces to provide orientation and training to farmers on climate-resilient agriculture, especially in rice production. CDO also organises regular meetings among representatives of producer group leaders (PGLs), market actors and other buyers<sup>1</sup> to discuss market demand, production plans, product pricing and the quality of organic products, as they focus only on certified organic products.

#### Future plans

- CDO will continue to work with the Department of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries (Cambodia) in Kampong Spue, Takeo, Kampot, Kampong Chanang (new name of Kampong Speu Province) and Kampong Thom Provinces and CACU to stimulate innovation in climate-resilient agriculture by and between farmer members.
- CDO will set up an internal control system and apply it to all producer group members in order to get organic standard certification, especially in rice farming.

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<sup>1</sup> The term “market actors” refers to the various entities involved in a market who are involved in buying, selling and trading goods and services. The term “buyers” refers specifically to those market actors who purchase goods or services. These can include both consumers purchasing for personal use and businesses acquiring products for operational or resale purposes.

## 2.2 *Prolinnova–Nepal*

### Summary

Prolinnova–Nepal has been trying to re-establish and re-activate itself after a new host organisation (RIMS Nepal) was identified in the beginning of 2022 and a new NSC was formed. RIMS later withdrew from the platform, citing its inability to continue as the host organisation. Following this, Ruparantaran Nepal, another NGO, accepted the role of the host organisation but they too withdrew citing their inability to spare time to lead Prolinnova with limited human resource and funding capacity. During early 2024, LI-BIRD had accepted the role of host organisation (in principle) but it failed to take any initiative in this regard until late into the year 2024. Despite this gap, individual members of the Country Platform (CP) like Basanta Ran Bhat, Suman Manadhar and Ram Krishna Shrestha (Chair, NSC) have taken their own initiative to organise Prolinnova–Nepal-related activities such as meetings and webinars. In the meantime, Sharad as the the Prolinnova–Asia Regional Coordinator (RC) has been also coordinating the CP in the absence of an active host organisation.

The Nepal Permaculture Group (NPG) agreed in September 2024 to be the new host organisation of Prolinnova–Nepal. Prem Thapa is the CP coordinator and Suman Manandhar is additional focal person for Nepal CP.

### Activities

Prolinnova–Nepal nominated Basanta as a POG member, and this nomination was accepted. Similarly, CP members actively took part in the webinar on local innovation and climate change adaptation jointly hosted by Proinnova and IIRR Philippines, during which Basanta made a presentation on local innovation integrated into organic farming systems.

Following its induction, NPG held a virtual meeting of the CP on 18 October 2024. Prem Bahadur Thapa, Executive Director of NPG, facilitated the meeting with support from Prolinnova partners – Chesha Wettasinha (member of the International Support Team), Basanta (member of the Prolinnova Oversight Group), Suman (Friend of Prolinnova) and Sharad Rai (Prolinnova–Asia RC). Twenty participants from different sectors and organisations in Nepal attended the meeting, including the NSC chairperson, Ram Krishna, Joint Secretary of the Department of Agriculture and Forestry. All participants offered support in their individual capacities towards reviving Prolinnova–Nepal.

### Future plans

Formation of a National Working Group (NWG) and developing a plan of action for fundraising to revitalise Prolinnova–Nepal’s activities are the top priorities for the year 2025.

## 2.3 *Prolinnova–South India*

### Introduction

Prolinnova–South India was formed in February 2020. The network brings together NGOs, staff and students of academic institutions, the private sector and other agricultural research and development institutions. The founding members of the network are Peermade Development Society (PDS, an NGO working in the area of farmer innovation for more than two decades), Creativiti Council (a nonprofit company providing support systems for local innovators), St Thomas Mission Society (NGO specialised in rural development), Marian College (academic institution) and Lacon India (private company for certification of organic products).

Prolinnova–South India has constituted an NSC for spearheading its activities. Members are Haridas VR (National Head for Climate Adaptive Agriculture), Caritas India, Suzanna Ommen (Asst Professor, Marian College) and Mathew Abraham (Agricultural Officer, Agricultural Department, Government of

Kerala). PDS is the host organisation of the CP in South India. The CP coordinator is TJ James, founder of Creativiti Council, who has been an individual member of the Prolinnova network since 2002.

#### Activities

##### **Participation in the International Farmer Innovation Fair**

The two innovators from South India, Joshy Joseph and Jose Chacko, had the opportunity to showcase their innovations via video at the **International Farmer Innovation Fair** held in Nairobi in April 2024.

- **Joshy Joseph** presented the **Multipurpose Machine** designed for grinding, cutting and mixing, offering enhanced efficiency and utility for farmers and small-scale enterprises.
- **Jose Chacko** demonstrated the **Pepper Plucker**, an innovative solution to simplify and improve the efficiency of pepper harvesting.

Both innovators presented their innovations through a digital link, receiving recognition and valuable feedback from the international audience of experts, practitioners and fellow innovators.

#### Future plans

Preparations are being made for hosting the International Partners Workshop (IPW) at Idukki, Kerala, scheduled to take place from 10 to 14 November 2025. This event will serve as a platform to celebrate grassroots innovations and knowledge exchange among Prolinnova partners, farmer innovators, researchers, other development practitioners and policymakers.

Prolinnova partners and supporters from over 20 countries across Africa, Asia and Europe will gather for the IPW. This workshop will serve as a crucial forum to deliberate on fundamental and operational strategies for strengthening Prolinnova's global network and advancing farmer-led innovation for the period 2026–2030.

PDS looks forward to an engaging and productive year ahead, strengthening collaborations and furthering the impact of farmer-driven innovation development.

#### **2.4 Prolinnova–Philippines**

Prolinnova–Philippines continues to contribute towards promoting local innovation and PID initiatives by taking part in and hosting relevant events and workshops. IIRR hosted the webinar jointly with Prolinnova–Asia titled: “Revisiting farmer-centred participatory approaches for sustainable agricultural development” on 17 September 2024. Papers were presented by Prolinnova partners in Asia and Africa as well as IIRR partners in both continents.

### **3 Conclusion**

Absence of a stable lead organisation in Nepal and the passive nature of Cambodia's host organisation have been the major issues at CP level. In the case of Cambodia, this is exacerbated by the communication issues when using English as the link language. Lack of funding remains the most pertinent issue at regional level.