

## International Community of Practice Report 2023–2024



*Farmer innovator from Kenya sharing her innovations with participants of the IFIF in April 2024*

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## List of acronyms and abbreviations

ACDEP	Association of Church-based Development Projects
ADAF/Gallè	Association for the Development of Production and Training Activities
AE	agroecology
AFCIA	Adaptation Fund Climate Innovation Accelerator
AfPW	African Partners Workshop
AFSA	Alliance for Food Sovereignty in Africa
AGC	A Growing Culture
ARD	Agricultural research and development
CA	Collective Action
CCRP	Collaborative Crop Research Program
CEIA	Centre for Effective Innovation in Agriculture
COSADER	Food Security and Rural Development Association (French acronym)
Covid-19	Coronavirus disease 2019
CoP	Community of practice
CP	Country Platform
DGAK	Dairy Goat Association of Kenya
DITSL	German Institute for Tropical & Subtropical Agriculture
ELI-FaNS strengthen	Expanding the promotion of local innovation for food security & healthy nutrition to resilience, with a focus on women
ESA	Eastern & Southern Africa
ethnovet	ethnoveterinary
EVM	Ethno veterinary medicine
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FaReNe	Farmer-led Research Networks
FIF	Farmer Innovation Fair
FIPAO	<i>Foire de l'innovation Paysanne d'Afrique de l'Ouest /</i> West African Farmer Innovation Fair
FLIN	Farmer-Led Innovation Network
FLR	Farmer-led research
FO	Farmer organisation
FRN	Farmer research network
GALID	Gender Analysis for Local Innovation Development
GFAiR/GFAR	Global Forum on Agricultural Research and Innovation
GIZ	German Agency for International Cooperation
IFID	International Farmer Innovation Day
IFIF-C	International Farmer Innovation Fair and Conference
IIRR	International Institute of Rural Reconstruction

INR	Institute of Natural Resources
IPW	International Partners Workshop
IST	International Support Team
KALRO	Kenya Agricultural and Livestock Research Organisation
KIT	Royal Tropical Institute, Amsterdam, Netherlands (Dutch acronym)
KZE	Catholic Central Agency for Development Aid
KZN	KwaZulu-Natal
LISF	Local Innovation Support Facility/Fund
LOFODA-G-meal	Locally Formulated Dairy-Goat Meal
M&E	Monitoring and evaluation
MF	McKnight Foundation
MSP	Multistakeholder platform
NaviNut	Enhancing women's agency in navigating changing food environments to improve child nutrition in African drylands
NBLE	Nyando Basin Lofoda Enterprises
NGO	Nongovernmental organisation
NRM	Natural resource management
NSC	National Steering Committee
Nuffic	Netherlands Organisation for Internationalisation in Education (Dutch acronym)
PID	Participatory innovation development
PIPA-DAC	Promoting farmer innovation & participatory approaches in development processes in agricultural value chains & adaptation to change
PK	Prolinnova–Kenya
POG	Prolinnova Oversight Group
Prolinnova	Promoting local innovation in ecologically oriented agriculture and NRM
Proli-FaNS	Promoting local innovation in Food and Nutrition Security
Proli-GEAFaSa	Promoting local innovation in Water Management by Family Farmers in the Sahel (French acronym)
Réseau MARP	Network to promote participatory approaches
RIMS	Resource Identification and Management Society
SDAE	District Services of Economic Activities (Portuguese acronym)
SRC	Subregional Coordinator
SULCI-FaNS	Scaling Up Local Capacity to Innovate for Food and Nutrition Security
UCAM	Union of Agricultural Cooperatives of Marracuene
UK	United Kingdom
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFF	Uganda National Farmers Federation
WCA	West & Central Africa
WRF	World Rural Forum

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This report on activities of the global Prolinnova Community of Practice (CoP) network covers the period from January 2023 to December 2024. It is structured as follows: i) a short summary per Country Platform (CP) that describes current status and Prolinnova-related activities undertaken over the period of the report; ii) a summary of network-wide activities including workshops, capacity-strengthening events and multi-CP projects and participation in policy-dialogue events; and iii) an overview of governance and networking matters, which includes the activities of the regional / subregional Prolinnova platforms.

## 2 GOVERNANCE AND NETWORK FUNCTIONING

This section covers the various governance structures related to Prolinnova and talks about the efforts to achieve regionalisation of the network.

### 2.1 PROLINNOVA OVERSIGHT GROUP (POG)

The POG is the governance body of the Prolinnova international CoP and has nine members (see <https://prolinnova.net/prolinnova-oversight-group>). A number of people continued throughout the reporting period, namely Fanos as representative of the northern focal point, Lisa van Dijk, taking the role of co-chair, Brigid Letty as IST representative, Franklin Avornyo joined in 2023 as the representative for West and Central Africa (WCA) subregion, and Peter Gubbels, who transitioned from WCA representative to independent member.

In late 2023, **Jony Jos**, a small-scale farmer from Tripunithura in Kerala State, India, became the representative of farmer organisations (FOs) in the POG. He was successor to Elizabeth Mpofu, founder of ZIMSOFF (Zimbabwe Smallholder Organic Farmers Forum), who was POG member in 2022–23. Jony graduated in horticulture from Allahabad University and worked with the Kerala Department of Agriculture until his retirement in 2021. Since then, he has focused on growing paddy, bananas and vegetables. As a volunteer advisor in Nellulpadaka Samithy, a collective of paddy farmers, he helps improve farming practices, value-chain development and marketing strategies. His experience as full-time small-scale farmer, combined with his past role in government service, positions him well to contribute to the POG from both perspectives.

In June 2024, the terms of four POG members came to an end – those of Bernard Triomphe and Suman Manandhar (independent POG members) and TJ James (for Asia) and Violet Kirigua (for Eastern & Southern Africa). To replace them, the Prolinnova CoP elected two new independent members for 2-year terms and two new persons to represent the multistakeholder CPs in their respective regions for 3-year terms.

- **Basanta Rana Bhat** (Nepal) is the new representative of the CPs in Asia. He holds an MSc in Agriculture (Conservation Ecology) from Tribhuvan University in Chitwan, Nepal, and works with the Institute for Social and Environmental Research in Kathmandu, Nepal. He has been an active member of Prolinnova–Nepal since 2008. He is a skilled trainer of participatory innovation development (PID) and brought out a PID training manual in Nepali.
- **Birgit Habermann** (Austria) is a new independent member of the POG. She holds Master's degrees in ecology (Vienna University) and agroforestry (Bangor University) as well as a PhD in Development Studies (University of Sussex). She has worked since 2019 with the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), based in Nairobi, Kenya, in transdisciplinary research on farmer-led innovation and learning for adaptation to climate change.
- **Ernest Letsoalo** (South Africa) is the new representative of the CPs in Eastern & Southern Africa. He holds a Master's degree in Agricultural Extension from the University of Limpopo and a Master of Philosophy in Science and Technology with focus on Agricultural Knowledge

Production and Utilization from Stellenbosch University. He is a lecturer at the University of Venda in Limpopo Province. He has been actively involved in the Prolinnova network since the International Partners Workshop (IPW) in Ethiopia in 2004.

- **Mutizwa Mukute** (Zimbabwe) is a new independent member of the POG. He holds a PhD in Environmental Education from Rhodes University in South Africa. As international consultant, he facilitates environmental education, transformative learning, developmental evaluation and organisational development. His involvement with Prolinnova started in 2000, when he was a member of the CGIAR NGO Committee and co-developed the Prolinnova concept.

At its July 2024 quarterly meeting, the POG agreed that one of the newly elected independent members of the POG, Mutizwa Mukute from Zimbabwe, would become the POG co-chair, working together with the continuing co-chair Lisa van Dijk (based in France).

## **2.2 NORTHERN FOCAL POINT OF PROLINNOVA INTERNATIONAL NETWORK**

The Northern Focal Point of the Prolinnova network, Agrecol Association for Agriculture & Ecology, based in Germany, had funded the migration of Prolinnova's website from Drupal to Wordpress so that the CPs could post their own materials more easily: the Agrecol webmaster, Oliver Wöhr, continued to provide periodic advice in handling the website. Agrecol members provided links to possible research partners for funding proposals to donor organisations in Europe, particularly in Germany, such as for the International Climate Initiative grants and the call for proposals from the German Ministry of Food & Agriculture. Agrecol Association covered the additional costs of three farmer innovators from West Africa who attended the International Farmer Innovation Fair & Conference in April 2024 in Nairobi so that they could also take part in the African Partners workshops immediately thereafter. Fanos Mekonnen and Ann Waters-Bayer served as the contact persons between Agrecol and the Prolinnova network.

## **2.3 STRATEGY AND FORESIGHT PROCESS FOR 2026-2030**

As the current strategy period of Prolinnova comes to an end in 2025, the IST initiated a process of developing a new strategy for Prolinnova for the period 2026–30. This includes a reflection on the past strategy period and a foresight exercise on agricultural research and development, economic and other crucial current and future trends. The process of developing the new strategy is expected to take up to 9 months with the near-final draft ready for presentation at the International Partners Workshop (IPW) to be held in Kerala, South India in November 2025.

A team of several individuals from the POG and the Prolinnova network are tasked with conducting the exercise and drafting the document for discussion at the IPW. The team includes Mutizwa Mukute (POG co-Chair), Peter Gubbels (POG member), Brigid Letty (IST member in the POG), TJ James (Prolinnova Asia), Djibril Thiam (Prolinnova WCA), Vincent Mariadho (Prolinnova ESA) and Chesha Wettasinha (Prolinnova IST). By December, a questionnaire was circulated to CPs via SRCs to gather their insights.

## **2.4 REGIONALISATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL NETWORK**

Regionalisation has progressed within Africa and Asia and is discussed below.

### **2.4.1 Asia Regional Platform**

While regionalisation efforts within Africa are supported through the Misereor-funded projects, this has not been the case for Asia. Sharad Rai, long time member of Prolinnova-Nepal, took on the role of Regional Coordinator and has driven efforts to operationalise the regional platform. During 2023, some members of Asia CPs participated virtually in the IPW that took place in South Africa, while representatives from Asian CPs – including farmer innovators - also participated virtually in the International Farmer Innovation Fair and Conference (IFIF-C) in Nairobi in April 2024. The SRC has actively engaged with CPs to bring them together to form the regional platform and has also facilitated

activities such as the webinar that was organised with IIRR on 17 September 2024 titled, 'Revisiting farmer-centred participatory approaches for sustainable agricultural development'.

#### 2.4.2 Eastern & Southern Africa (ESA) Subregional Platform

During 2023, there was a monitoring and peer-to-peer learning visit by the ELI-FaNs Coordinator, Joseph Nchor and the Prolinnova-Kenya country coordinator, Vincent Mariadho, to the South African Prolinnova Team. The period also saw the organisation and facilitation of Prolinnova ESA Sub-region coordination and networking meetings which resulted in formally establishing the Prolinnova ESA Subregion. A virtual sub-regional meeting of ESA CPs took place on 20 September 2023 which was attended by representatives from six CPs (Ethiopia, Sudan, Mozambique, South Africa, Uganda and Kenya), together with a representative from the IST and the POG.

By the end of 2023, five of the eight CPs remained active and submitted their reports on their achievements during the year. Two physical backstopping visits were made by the SRC, to Mozambique and Kenya. Issues addressed included; status of CP's PID activities, SWOT analysis of CP structures (networking & governance), fundraising, and training in institutionalisation. As a result, Prolinnova Mozambique started to develop their institutionalisation strategy. During the backstopping visit, the SRC also visited and interacted with several farmer innovators and members of the local steering committee in Marracuene and Xaixai in Mozambique as well as in Makueni, Busia and Kisumu in Kenya.

Opportunities for networking within the subregion included the participation of Prolinnova as panelists at the Access Agriculture 10th Anniversary Webinar on 25 October 2023, during which a testimony on use of videos to share its work on the Access Agriculture website, EcoAgTube. Information from the subregion was also shared in two articles (one from CP Mozambique and other from CP South Africa) in the *Appropriate Technology* online magazine. The SRC also contributed to an online discussion on "Looking to local innovation to address the climate change challenges" where he stressed the need to recognise the "not so scientific" local innovations and the innovative capacities of crop farmers and pastoralists in addressing the effect of climate change in Africa, and shared his views on a Global Livestock Advocacy for Development (GLAD) Livestock initiative<sup>1</sup> online forum on Climate change and Innovation. He also participated in four international external webinars (1) Decolonising Food Systems, organised by AFSA on 3 August 2023; (2) 'Grassroots Innovation for Agro ecology' Researcher and Organisations open dialogue on 28 September 2023 organised by 11th Hour and Schola Campesina; and (3) Pre-Summit Breakfast held on 31 August 2023 in Nairobi as part of the Africa Climate Summit; (4) AU-EU Innovation Agenda Stakeholders Event in Nairobi, where he established contact with Mr. Silas K. Maiyo of Cooperative University of Kenya, interested in building the innovative capacities of his students.

As at end 2024, the ESA platform unfortunately only had four active CPs remaining, namely Kenya, Mozambique, South Africa and Uganda. Those CPs that were not involved in the ELI-FaNs project continued to focus on networking and information sharing. Prolinnova–Mozambique held its NSC meeting, disseminating and replicating its improved granary innovation in Marracuene, as well as its innovative grass vessels for growing tree seedlings at Gwemulene. In addition to submitting its Annual report for 2024, Prolinnova–Uganda it held its annual NSC meeting and participated in the co-submission of a proposal with Prolinnova Kenya to McKnight Foundation. Unfortunately, Prolinnova–Sudan and Prolinnova-Ethiopia remained inactive due to political instability and weak governance structures. Most of the members of Prolinnova Sudan remained exiled due to the ongoing civil conflict

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*1 Global LAD-Livestock refers to the Global Livestock Advocacy for Development (GLAD) initiative, which is designed to champion sustainable livestock systems worldwide*

in Sudan. At the subregional level, the SRC continued to support the CPs through regular virtual contacts, organising annual subregional platform networking and coordination meetings, inviting representatives from neighbouring countries to participate in the two Prolinnova PID training events that took place during the year.

By the end of 2024, the ESA subregional platform was established with a membership of six CPs, although the names of the members representing each CP were not yet finalised. An ESA platform meeting was held in November 2024, during which participating CPs shared and exchanged their networking activities and made decisions on formalising the two coordination and governance bodies, the ESA Subregional Support Team and the ESA Oversight Group. The SRC also advised representatives from Somaliland and Egypt about the process for setting up Prolinnova platforms and representatives from these countries participated in the IFIF-C in Nairobi in April 2024.

#### 2.4.3 West & Central Africa (WCA) Subregional Platform

During 2023, the Prolinnova subregional platform in WCA was active primarily through the activities of the CPs. Most activities were implemented under externally funded projects under the Prolinnova umbrella, especially ELI-FaNS (Extending the Promotion of Local Innovation for Food and Nutrition Security to Strengthen Resilience, with a Focus on Women) being implemented 2023–25 (Phase 3) in Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Kenya and South Africa; Proli-GEAFaSa (French acronym for “Promoting local innovation in water management in family farming in the Sahel”) being implemented 2023–26 (Phase 2) in Burkina Faso and Senegal; PROFEIS (Promoting farmer experimentation and innovation to improve food security and resource conservation in the Sahel) in Mali and the Ethnoveterinary Project in Ghana – all four projects funded by Misereor/KZE (*Katholische Zentralstelle für Entwicklungshilfe / Catholic Central Office for Development Aid*), Germany; and FaReNe (Supporting and strengthening Farmer Research Networks to improve their resilience to climate change) being implemented 2022–25 (Phase 3) in Burkina Faso and Mali, funded by McKnight Foundation, USA.

In line with Prolinnova’s regionalisation agenda, as set out in one of the objectives of the ELI-FaNS project, regionalisation in WCA made progress during 2024. A meeting of CPs in the subregion was held on 24 May 2024. The meeting provided an opportunity to review the bottlenecks to the operation of the taskforce that was set up as the foundation of the subregional platform and is to lead the process of setting up the platform's structure. Suggestions were made for revising the subregional charter. The participants agreed that the two bodies of the subregional platform – the Subregional Support Team and the Subregional Oversight Group – be created in accordance with the conditions set out in the revised charter.

Backstopping by the SRC is a key element of the regionalisation process. The SRC, Paul Jimmy, undertook a number of backstopping visits together with IST members in 2024. The first backstopping visit was together with Chesha Wettasinha and Joseph Nchor to Prolinnova-Benin in March. The second was done together with Djibril Thiam to Prolinnova-Burkina Faso in July. The third mission was with Chesha Wettasinha and Joseph Nchor and was to support Prolinnova Ghana. During these different visits, the opportunity was taken to run a training session on PID for Prolinnova's actors and partners in each CP, as well as a field visit to meet and interact with the actors. A meeting was also held on the last day of the mission with members of the NSC, during which the challenges facing the CP were identified, followed by a brainstorming session on appropriate solutions.

Towards inter-CP capacity building and knowledge sharing, the SRC co-facilitated the organisation of the third webinar of the Prolinnova series on “Linking with Universities & Research Institutions on the PID approach” that was held on 7 February. This webinar was entitled “Networking and resource mobilisation to support the process of integrating PID into institutions of agricultural research and higher education”; the keynote speaker was Assane Gueye from Senegal CP. Assane took this

opportunity to share about how a Prolinnova partner in Senegal had implemented a networking strategy and process toward institutionalising PID among the stakeholders in ARD. This was followed by a panel discussion to provide insights and experiences on how networking and resources mobilisation from different sources support PID integration. The webinar report is found via this link: <https://prolinnova.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/Report-Webinar-3 Linking-with-universities-22.10.24-FINAL.pdf>. The SRC also co-organised two webinars on the topic “Local innovations and agricultural water management” related to the Proli-GEAFaSa project – the first for the French-speaking countries partners and the second for English-speaking countries partners. The webinars were held on 30 May and 12 December, respectively. In each webinar, around thirty participants were present and exposed to the presentations by project actors from Senegal and Burkina Faso CPs. This was an opportunity for mutual learning for the participants with regard to LI in agricultural water management in the context of climate change in the targeted countries and Africa in general.

Another opportunity for building capacity within the region was the Barefoot Guide Story Writing class, which was attended by Samuel Ayamga from Prolinnova Ghana and Nicole Sarah from Prolinnova Benin. This was an online training on "learn to write stories of change" (17-31 October 2023) with participants' fees paid by ELI-faNS project.

## **2.5 REGIONAL AND GLOBAL EVENTS**

### **2.5.1 International Partners Workshop (IPW) 2023 in SA**

For the first time, Prolinnova South Africa – in particular the Limpopo Task Team – hosted the IPW in Polokwane from 22 to 27 October 2023. The event included a field trip to the Tjiane Drop-in Centre on the first day, which was an effective opportunity for policy dialogue since it was attended by Senior Management from Limpopo Department of Agricultural Research and Development and University of Venda, who also attended the formal workshop opening the following day at Polokwane, followed by a full day focused on the ProliGEA-FaSa and ELI-FaNS, financial reporting sessions, and a financial reporting session. The IPW, which included some online participants from Asia, started on the Wednesday and included an update from the POG, updates on multiple projects including the PROFEIS (Promoting Farmer Experimentation and Innovation in the Sahel) and FaReNe (Farmer Research Networks) projects being implemented in Mali. There were sessions focused on keeping CPs active, regionalisation and networking, preparation of the international farmer fair to take place in April 2024, the webinar series focusing on institutionalisation, an inspiring talk on Agroecology, given by Oliver Oliveros, who is the coordinator of the Agroecology Coalition, and long-time friend of Prolinnova, and finally an action planning session.

### **2.5.2 IFIF-C and Africa Partners Workshop (AfPW) 2024, Nairobi**

The IFIF-C 2024, which took place in April 2024, was funded by “The 11<sup>th</sup> Hour Project”, a Program of Schmidt Family Foundation based in California (USA) and was an opportunity for meeting and exchanges among various ARD actors around LI/PID concepts and experience in diverse countries. An exhibition of local innovations took place by about 40 innovators from 14 Prolinnova CPs across Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Mali, Mozambique, Senegal, Somaliland, South Africa, Uganda), and Asia (online, e.g. Nepal, India). Keynote communications and panel discussions also took place for the participants to enrich each other at this learning sharing platform. The IFIF&C 2024 report is found via this link: <https://prolinnova.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2024-International-Farmer-Innovation-Fair-Conference-Final-report.pdf>.

In conjunction with the IFIF-C, annual project partners meetings for the two Misereor-funded projects (PROLIGEA-FaSa and ELI-FaNS) and bi-annual AfPW took place. The meetings, co-funded mainly by the two projects, enabled CP coordinators to review progress on project implementation as well as CP activities in networking, policy dialogue and institutionalising PID. They also allowed for capacity

building on institutionalising PID and on LISF, local innovation enterprise development and M&E through presentations, experience sharing and group work, which will improve Prolinnova's results and impact.

### 2.5.3 6<sup>th</sup> Africa-wide Agricultural Extension Week

At the 6th Africa-Wide Agricultural Extension Week in Abuja, Nigeria in November 2024, Paul Jimmy, SRC-WCA, presented the case: "Institutionalising PID in a nongovernmental and a governmental organisation in northern Ghana". He also used the occasion to introduce the Prolinnova network to the audience, serving as a starting point towards reviving the CP in Nigeria that was set up a decade ago but had become inactive.

## **2.6 WEBSITE AND SOCIAL MEDIA MANAGEMENT**

The Prolinnova website (<https://prolinnova.net/>) continues to provide a useful resource for people wishing to access information about the network and its approaches. During 2024, there were an average of 4,342.08 monthly unique visitors and a total of 52,105 unique visitors for the year 2024. There were on average 5,810.25 visits per month and a total of 69,723 numbers of visits for the year 2024. The five top countries that were visiting the Prolinnova website were the United States, Russian Federation, China and India. South Africa was the only CP that made the top ten countries visiting the website. The Prolinnova facebook page also offers opportunities to share information about events (<https://web.facebook.com/Prolinnova>).

## **3 UPDATE ON THE COUNTRY PLATFORMS**

A brief summary on the progress made by each CP is provided below.

### **3.1 PROLINNOVA-BENIN**

The start-up of the ELI-FaNS project in 2023 was a pivotal point in the life of the Prolinnova-Benin CP. This brought resources and also catalysed the establishment of MSPs at two learning sites, Tchaourou and Bembéréké. Prolinnova-Benin organised several capacity building events for its partners, including PID training and refresher courses. The project also supported the documentation of Lis as well as the organisation of a local innovation fair at Guessou-Sud in the commune of Bembéréké. Towards strengthening governance, the CP brought together members of the NSC as well towards developing an activity-monitoring plan on 29 April 2023. Prolinnova-Benin also contributed to establishing the action funds in the NaviNut (Enhancing Women's Agency in Navigating Changing Food Environments to Improve Child Nutrition in African Drylands) project, financed by the German Ministry of Food & Agriculture (BMEL), also under the Prolinnova umbrella. The action funds provided support to four women's groups to produce and market the improved traditional foods co-developed during the project. Prolinnova-Benin was unfortunately not represented in person at the IPW in South Africa in October 2023.

In 2024, Prolinnova-Benin entered the second year of implementation of the ELI-FaNS project. The CP paid particular attention to the promotion and commercialisation of 7 Lis, which included processing of shea nuts into flavoured butter, the production of local organic feed for animal production, and the processing of improved soy cheese. The CP benefited from a training program on local innovation and PID led by a team from Prolinnova's international support team (IST) consisting of Chesha Wettasinha and Joseph Nchor in March 2024. The backstopping visit included a field visit to the two learning sites to interact with the local MSPs at the two learning sites. This training opportunity was also used to meet the NSC and also backstop and monitor the precursor project to the CP creation, namely the Nuffic-funded Tailormade Training (TMT+) project. As part of the ELIFaNS project, the LISF was operationalised and 14 farmer innovators benefited over the course of the year. The CP also developed its PID institutionalisation strategy. The webinars as well as the IFIF-C and African Partners

Workshop that took place in April 2024 provided opportunities for sharing and learning. Prolinnova–Benin's virtual participation in the Tropentag 2024 International Conference in Vienna through presentation of a poster and the ensuing discussion was an excellent opportunity for drawing attention of researchers and academics to Prolinnova's approaches to improving food and nutritional security.

### **3.2 PROLINNOVA–BURKINA FASO**

In 2023, the CP activities in Burkina Faso were linked to three projects: ELI-FaNS, coordinated by Diobass–Burkina; Proli-GEAFaSa, coordinated by Réseau MARP; and FaReNe, coordinated jointly by Diobass and Réseau MARP. The activities carried out under these three projects were mainly informing local actors in the action-learning sites about the new project phases; identifying, characterising, validating and documenting local innovations; producing communication materials (catalogues, technical sheets, leaflets, etc.) on local innovation; supporting the organisation of innovation fairs, exchange visits and experience sharing; preparing broadcasts on CP activities on national radio; and holding regular consultations at the level of the NSC, coordination team and local MSPs. In addition, representatives of the CP took part in meetings or workshops at several levels: McKnight Foundation partners workshop in Niamey (Niger) in March (FaReNe); hosting the SRC-WCA during his backstopping visit in September; and attending the IPW in October in South Africa. The CP self-assessment reported good performance in terms of the functioning of the secretariat, communication between and among partners within the CP, and relations with other CPs, the SRC, the IST and POG, however, resource mobilisation remained an issue to be addressed. In addition, the security situation was becoming increasingly uncertain with terrorist groups holding the northern and central parts of the country, including some Prolinnova action-learning sites that had experienced attacks and displacement of the people. This hindered achievement of some of the objectives set in the framework of the CP's projects.

In 2024, as with 2023, the CP activities were linked to the three projects. Besides the identification and characterisation of local innovations at learning sites, CP activities included participatory planning of joint experiments and funding for Action Research Groups (Groupes de Recherche Action in French) or local MSPs involved in the project; evaluation, documentation and capitalisation of joint experimentation results; organisation of capacity-building sessions on management of LISFs; presentation of PID and LISFs approaches to the Chamber of Agriculture in the North and Central Plateau to raise awareness for the institutionalisation of these approaches as well as the inclusion of local innovations (biofertilisers and biopesticides) in agro-ecological transition projects and programs at regional or local level. In addition, representatives of the CP took part in meetings or workshops at several levels: participation in the IFIF-&C and the AfPW 2024 in April in Kenya; participation in McKnight Foundation's annual partners workshop in Mali; participation in Prolinnova's webinars on the Proli-GEAFaSa project for Misereor's French-speaking (30 May) and English-speaking (12 December) partners. Prolinnova–Burkina Faso also took part in commemorating World Environment Day & World Day to Combat Desertification & Drought, where the CP exhibited some innovations and presented the PID approach to government officials, the Minister of Environment, the Governor of the Central-West Region and some High Commissioners.

The major challenges remain in participation, involvement and commitment of members through joint activities; level of involvement of research/universities in the LI/PID process; and mobilisation of financial resources needed to carry out the CP's mission, in particular to raise funds for new projects. An effort was made this year with two bids, one of which was in response to McKnight Foundation's call for projects on Global Collaboration for Resilient Food Systems. Although unsuccessful, the comments served as lessons learned for future submissions. The second was a response to the call for proposals issued by the German Ministry for Food and Agriculture (BMEL) through the submission of the Proli-SAM ("Strengthening farmer-centred multi-stakeholder platforms for local innovation and sustainable agroecological markets in the Sahel") in collaboration with a German university, especially

South Westphalia University of Applied Sciences, and Prolinnova Senegal CP; the outcome was not yet determined by end 2024. The CP self-assessment reported good performance in terms of the functioning of the secretariat, communication between and among partners within the CP, and relations with other CPs, the SRC, the IST and the POG.

### 3.3 PROLINNOVA–CAMBODIA

Community Developer Organisation (CDO) became the host organisation of Prolinnova-Cambodia in 2022, having been selected through a consultative process at country and regional level. A new NSC was elected during the first working group meeting of the CP on 17 February 2022. The NSC comprises four members (3 male, 1 female) from Provincial Department of Agriculture & Fisheries Prey Veng, Kampong Cham National Institution of Agriculture and Cambodia Agriculture Cooperative Unions and CDO is the secretariat for the NSC. Prolinnova-Cambodia continues to participate in Prolinnova-related activities and communicates through email and virtual meetings. CDO also participated in the webinar organised by IIRR Philippines, Prolinnova Asia and the IST. CDO continues to work directly with the Cambodia Agriculture Cooperative Union (CACU) and Agricultural Cooperatives (ACs) in Thbounng 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, market actors, and other buyers to discuss market demand, production plans, product pricing, and the quality of organic products. These provide opportunities for exposing more actors to the approach of PID.

### 3.4 PROLINNOVA–CAMEROON

The main activities undertaken during 2023 related to the project *“Promouvoir l'innovation paysanne et les approches participatives dans les processus de développement en faveur des petits producteurs des chaînes de valeur agricole et d'adaptation aux changements dans la région du Centre du Cameroun, PIPA-DAC”* (Promoting farmer innovation and participatory approaches in development processes for small-scale producers in agricultural value chains and adaptation to change in the Central Region of Cameroon, 2022–24) funded by Misereor/KZE. Through PIPA-DAC, 15 LIs were characterised and documented and four were selected for PID. The PIPA-DAC project marks the CP's progression towards promoting LI and PID among partner organisations, farmers and civil society in Cameroon. As part of the joint research process, two researchers from the Ecole Nationale Supérieure Polytechnique at the University of Maroua were invited to supervise students' work. The four students involved have all successfully defended their theses. In the workshops organised by Prolinnova-Cameroon, farmers' capacities were strengthened in LI and PID but also to facilitate their access to projects and programmes initiated by the Cameroon Government. These workshops also enabled the CP to initiate four MSPs. Overall, Prolinnova–Cameroon was functioning well, with the NSC having two meetings during the year. A third meeting was planned but could not be held because of financial constraints, which is the same reason that the CP could not take part in the IPW in South Africa.

Again, in 2024, the main activities were related to the PIPA-DAC project coordinated by the NGO COSADER. In 2024, a workshop to identify LI was held in Bafia, in the Mbam & Kim department, bringing together farmers, agricultural advisory services and the project team. Five LIs, including three by men and two by women, were selected for the next stage of the project. Seven PID joint research processes were also implemented. Added to the four PID implemented last year, there are now a total of eleven PID/ joint research process documented and published in the form of a catalogue on the Prolinnova website (see link: <https://prolinnova.net/recueil-des-processus-de-dpi-au-cameroun-compendium-of-pid-processes-in-cameroon/>). This documentation was shared during dedicated workshops. A training session on PID was held from 27-29 February in Yaoundé. The beneficiaries were 15 farmer innovators pre-selected in the targeted Counties in the Centre region, 7 students from the *Ecole Nationale*

*Supérieure Polytechnique (ENSP)*, University of Maroua and the *Faculté d'Agronomie et de Sciences Agricoles (FASA)* at the University of Dschang. Prolinnova-Cameroon was present at the network's major events, notably IFIC&C and the AfPW 2024 held in April in Kenya, with two representatives, the CP coordinator and an innovator in the person of Catherine Ngah, who presented her innovation on the use of red *Xanthosoma* leaves in snail breeding.

### **3.5 PROLINNOVA-DRC**

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the newest CP in the Prolinnova network and was officially recognized by the POG at its meeting in April 2024. Since then, the DRC CP has been operating internally and maintaining appropriate relations with other CPs as well as with the SRC-WCA, IST and POG. The CP has set up a monthly subscription system, which is a crucial strategy for ensuring the platform's sustainability, pending the various financial partnerships that could be forged over time to enable it to carry out its mission. The monthly subscription system also strengthens member commitment and guarantees a degree of financial autonomy to manage certain activities. In terms of the CP's self-assessment, it was noted that the CP needs technical capacity-building to ensure that it can get on with implementing Prolinnova's concepts and activities.

### **3.6 PROLINNOVA-ETHIOPIA**

The CP in Ethiopia has still not been able to identify a new host organization, although a few partners/individuals have shown interest in reviving the platform. Despite this, the CP has been represented in a number of events including the ESA platform meeting in September 2023 and the IFIF-C in Nairobi in April 2024, which was attended by Yohannes Gebremichael who presented a poster. Tezera Getahun, a member of Prolinnova Ethiopia, participated in the ESA-Subregion Prolinnova Platform (ESAPP) coordination meeting held virtually on 31 October 2024.

### **3.7 PROLINNOVA-GHANA**

Hosted by the Association of Church-based Development Projects (ACDEP), the Ghana CP was active in 2023, especially with regard to the two ongoing projects ELI-FaNS and Ethnoveterinary Research & Development (Ethnovet), both funded by Misereor. Through the ELI-FaNS project, 16 local innovations were identified and widely disseminated among farmers in the action-learning sites and other stakeholders including through local radio, farmer innovation fairs, community sharing sessions and farmer exchange visits. Seven cases of LI were considered for PID processes. The local MSP members were trained at three action-learning sites on relevant topics; this built their capacities to continue supporting, promoting and mainstreaming LI and PID processes and the PID approach. Policy dialogue was continued with three targeted institutions, namely Bongo District Department of Agriculture, University for Development Studies in Tamale and the Animal Research Institute's Nyankpala Station near Tamale. The second phase of the Ethnovet project was launched in a 2-day inception workshop in September. In terms of resource mobilisation, the CP was able to secure funding from Misereor for the second phase of the project, which will run up to April 2026. Other CP-level fundraising efforts through writing proposals to supplement and sustain LI/PID activities related to ethnoveterinary medicine were not successful, such as a multi-CP (Benin, Ghana, Senegal) proposal to the Darwin Initiative in partnership with the Africa Biodiversity Network (ABN). The CP's governance and technical support bodies have grown stronger and a meeting of the NSC, held on 19 May in the ACDEP Conference Hall, Tamale, was well attended. Franklin Avorny, a very active and key member of the Ghana CP and former member of the NSC for many years, was elected as WCA subregional representative in the POG for a 3-year term from June 2023 to May 2026.

During 2024, 16 local innovations, in the domains of local nutritious foods, crop preservation, soil fertility, agro-processing, social and environment conservation, that were identified in the previous year, were extensively disseminated and promoted in 2024, reaching 3,500 farmers and institutional

stakeholders. Three innovations underwent PID with support of a food nutrition expert and two formal scientists respectively and through the LISF – administered by the MSPs at the learning sites, 10 women, 25 men and two women groups were provided with inputs/materials to develop their innovations. A five-day PID training, co-facilitated by two IST members, was held in Tamale, to strengthen capacities and knowledge of 22 participants. In terms of networking, and policy dialogue, four articles were also documented by ACDEP and lead NGOs on PID / LI success stories and shared with Prolinnova partners in Ghana and published in *Appropriate Technology Magazine* series and Prolinnova website; three key staff of the Animal Research Institute who are involved in Prolinnova/ELI-FaNS activities are changing their research approach to be more farmer-led and participatory and one staff member is focusing his PhD thesis on LI. In terms of resource mobilisation, the CP partnered with Prolinnova Kenya and DITSL-Germany to submit a proposal to BMEL in Germany on territorial markets for agroecological innovations and was still awaiting the results at the end of 2024. The main challenge was that Ghana had not had a CP coordinator since the resignation of the individual in the first quarter of 2024, affecting project and networking/ learning activities. This highlighted the need for a junior staff member of ACDEP to be employed and mentored to support the network. The self-assessment indicated good performance with regard to NSC regular functioning, and the communication between and among partners.

### **3.8 PROLINNOVA–KENYA**

Much of the activities undertaken in Prolinnova-Kenya during 2023 were part of the ELI-FaNS project and involved identification of local innovations and implementation of farmer-led joint experimentation. During 2023, the country coordinator, Vincent Mariadho completed a training offered through the UNDP Crowd-funding & Investing Academy. He also participated in a number of events locally and internationally where he shared the CP's experiences in PID, including:

- The UN Conference of Parties 28 (CoP-28) on climate change in Dubai, where he was a panellist in two separate panel discussions: 'Innovative Solutions for Community Resilience: A partnership between the Doers and the Funders (Climate Action stage)' and 'Global Innovation Hub of the United Nations Climate Change stage'. He used this opportunity to emphasise the need to embrace and promote local innovation as a means to support locally led adaptation measures and community resilience.
- The Global Forum for Agricultural Innovation and Research (GFAiR) webinar on whether higher education better meets the needs of the rural agricultural communities.
- The Africa Union's Africa Climate Summit 2023 (ACS 2023) convened in Nairobi.

In terms of institutionalising PID, Prolinnova–Kenya continued to engage with Jaramogi Oginga Odinga University of Science & Technology, Maseno University, Machakos University and University of Embu, after Maseno University already incorporated the PID concept in its curriculum.

Some successful fund raising took place during 2023 and allowed Prolinnova Kenya to go ahead and plan for the IFIF-C the following year, thanks to resources from 11<sup>th</sup> Hour. In addition, Prolinnova Kenya submitted a proposal to the UNDP for the second round of funding on the Innovation Small Grants Aggregator Programme project.

In 2024, Prolinnova–Kenya continued to promote the 11 local innovations identified under ELI-FaNS, as well as other local innovations identified in past projects. Five local innovations were engaged into farmer-led joint experimentation, and the process continued in both Busia and Makueni action learning sites.

Prolinnova-Kenya hosted three major international networking events that took place back-to-back, namely, the IFIF-C 2024, the ELI-FaNS partners meeting, and the AfPW meeting, all of which took place

in Kikuyu, Kiambu County, from 7–10 April 2024. Cumulatively, 33 local innovations and five posters were exhibited during the IFIF-C and Vincent Mariadho and Brigid Letty published an article on the event in the *Appropriate Technology Journal*. (<https://prolinnova.net/?s=International+Farmer+Innovation+Fair%3A+a+platform+for+promoting+local+innovation>). The one-day ELIF-FaNS annual partners meeting involved the five participating countries but was open to all the African CPs as a means of sharing and learning about the project. This was followed by the AfPW, where the CPs shared their activities, lessons learned and challenges faced.

Prolinnova-Kenya also participated at the Farmer Research Network meeting in October 2024, organised by the McKnight Foundation. More than 100 individuals and organisations with experience and interest in participatory, inclusive research for agroecology drawn from Eastern and Southern Africa, West Africa, the Andes, USA, Asia and Europe participated in the event. This workshop provided an opportunity to build meaningful connections and facilitate collective action among researchers, farmer representatives, civil society actors, donors, policymakers, and others. It was also a platform for learning and sharing experiences on supporting agroecological transitions through engagement in practical co-creation. The Kenya CP Coordinator (Vincent Mariadho) was a panellist on the topic, 'How have farmers been involved in building knowledge for agroecology transformations', during which he highlighted the PID work of Prolinnova in Kenya. The CP was also represented at PELUM Kenya's First National Agroecology Symposium in Kenya in November 2024 at the Kenya School of Monetary Studies, Nairobi, on the theme, 'Advancing Agroecology for Climate Resilience and Food Sovereignty'.

Lastly, agroecology is gaining momentum in Kenya which launched the National Agroecology Strategy for Food Systems Transformation in November 2024, which emphasises that innovations based on co-creation combining science with local knowledge of producers (including farmers) will contribute to the sustainable transformation of Kenya's food system, thus ensuring food and nutrition security. This approach is key to Prolinnova's work, and PK can leverage it to promote the PID approach.

### **3.9 PROLINNOVA–MALI**

Prolinnova–Mali worked in 2023 mainly within the framework of the PROFEIS and FaReNe projects. LIs were identified and characterised and documented in reports. A catalogue of farmer innovations was started. Several partners were trained on the Prolinnova approach, including the documentation of LIs, farmer-led research, etc. They were also made aware of the LIs identified and characterised with a view to their scaling. As of end 2023, 58% of elected officials trained at the level of local authorities had integrated five farmers' innovations into their Social, Economic and Cultural Development Plans (PDSECs) while 10% of the teacher-researchers trained had introduced a module entitled "Farmer initiatives" in the teaching of Life and Earth Sciences. The Mali CP took part in the IPW in Polokwane, South Africa, in October. The CP management worked well, as each structure fully played its role in implementing the activities of the two projects. The CP secretariat provided by ADAF-Gallè compiled the results of the two projects and prepared the annual activity report, which was submitted to the other members of the CP for improvement before sending it to Prolinnova SRC. The planning and implementation of project activities continued to be carried out through a multi-actor partnership involving all the CP's organisational members. Monthly meetings were held to discuss the PROFEIS and FaReNe projects.

In 2024, Prolinnova-Mali continued to work within the framework of the PROFEIS and FaReNe projects. The main activities supported through the FaReNe project were: evaluating intercropping techniques in Cinzana-Gare and Konobougou; demonstrating food preparation formulae with women of childbearing age (cowpea soup, cowpea dumpling, enriched porridge based on cereals and legumes). For the PROFEIS project: the PROFEIS website was updated: [www.profeismali.ml](http://www.profeismali.ml); farmers from the

Ségou, Mopti and Dioïla regions took part in a workshop on climate change; people, including from 20 new action-learning villages received training in the construction and use of the banco oil incubator, and the use of potash solution made from millet stem ash. In the area of networking, policy dialogue and institutionalisation, 50 agricultural advisors were trained in PID and the Mali CP was also present with two representatives, namely the CP coordinator and the innovator for the use of *Physalis minima*, at the IFIF&C and AfPW in April in Kenya. The CP self-assessment revealed a high level of commitment on the part of both internal and external actors to the smooth running of the network. Despite the country's difficult security context, the Prolinnova partners in Mali continue to promote the LI/PID approach.

### **3.10 PROLINNOVA–MOZAMBIQUE**

Prolinnova-Mozambique, even without funded Prolinnova projects, continued to implement networking and PID activities during 2023 and 2024. For example, they held their NSC meeting and two other partner networking meetings and also sent two representatives to the IPW in 2023 in Polokwane, South Africa.

During the ESA-SRC backstopping visit, the CP's local partners held two meetings: a preparatory meeting with the members of the NSC, and a meeting with the Gaza Province NGO Forum (FONGA) in Xai-Xai. They also made a courtesy visit to the Tchemulane Association in the Gwemulene Community. During these interactions, the team learned about the strategies and collaborations of these organisations and forums in promoting Prolinnova's PID activities. The team also participated in the ACTIVA Assembly, during which the ESA-SRC, Jacob Wanyama, gave a brief speech on Prolinnova work in Mozambique.

Prolinnova Mozambique faced challenges related to having the NSC being coordinated by someone (i.e. the Country Coordinator) who is not an employee of the host institution. Furthermore, members of the Prolinnova task force are all very busy with the activities of their employers, who are not necessarily members of Prolinnova-Mozambique), which gives them virtually no time for Prolinnova activities. The platform is also facing difficulties in raising funds to implement planned activities

During 2024, Prolinnova–Mozambique partners continued to promote farmer innovation. For example, the Tchemulane Association of Chibuto District, in the Gwemulene community, continued to use the grass vessel innovations, expanding the Eucalyptus and Casuarina plantations on the slopes of Gwemulene. However, it is regrettable that during the political demonstrations, the nursery was invaded and set on fire by a group of thugs, resulting in the loss of the greenhouse itself, 580 seedlings, 36 adult plants, two low-cost cisterns and one brick kiln. The setback was enormous, but the association is working to devise strategies for a return to activity. The risks of planting Eucalyptus seedlings, given the high water requirement of these trees, has been discussed with the innovators. Uniao Nacional De Camponeses (UNAC)'s Uniao Provincial Dos Camponeses De Marracuene (UCAMA) submitted a report in October 2024, through its association in the Marracuene District, as part of its activities regarding the construction of improved granaries for eight associations in the Moamba District. CTO, a member of Prolinnova Mozambique, organised a series of six theatre performances in the Namaacha and Boane districts to raise public awareness of the importance of climate change adaptation innovation, with an emphasis on the Gwemulene grass vessels innovation.

The CP Coordinator, Gilda Fafitine, participated in the PID training in South Africa in June 2024, during which she learned more about Prolinnova, local innovation, partnerships, innovation commercialisation, documentation, and sharing on PID, as well as the institutionalisation of PID and participatory approaches. She also joined other participants in a field visit to an innovator of chicken coops. Representatives from Mozambique also attended the IFIF-C in Nairobi in April 2024. These included innovator, Veronica Siteo, from Gaza Province, and an NSC member, Alvim Cossa, from

Maputo Province. Together, they showcased Veronica’s innovation on the manufacture and use of grass pots for the production of seedlings, a sustainable solution for ecological agriculture. Since the materials for making the vessels were not allowed to be brought into the country, Jacob Wanyama – the SRC – arranged for local women in Kenya to make the vessels for the event.

### **3.11 PROLINNOVA–NEPAL**

Prolinnova–Nepal has been trying to re-establish and re-activate itself after a new host organisation (RIMS Nepal) was identified at the beginning of 2022 and a new NSC was formed. The new host, RIMS, later withdrew from the platform, and Ruparantaran Nepal, another NGO, accepted the role. However, they too withdrew, citing their inability to spare time to lead Prolinnova with limited human resource and funding capacity. LI-BIRD, the first NGO to host the CP, accepted to take on the role of host organisation later in 2024. Despite this gap, individual members of the CP such as Basanta Rana Bhat, Suman Manadhar and Ram Krishna Shrestha (Chair, NSC) took their own initiative to organise activities related to Prolinnova-Nepal such as meetings and webinars. In the meantime, Sharad as the Regional Coordinator for Asia continued to play a coordination role in the CP in the absence of an active host organisation. LI-BIRD was not able to continue with hosting Prolinnova-Nepal and the Nepal Permaculture Group (NPG) agreed in September 2024 to be the new host organisation. Prem Thapa, Executive Director of NPG, is the CP coordinator and Suman Manandhar is an additional focal person for the CP. Following its induction, NPG coordinated a virtual meeting of the CP on 18 October 2024. 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.

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 Prolinnova and IIRR Philippines during which Basanta made a presentation on local innovation integrated into organic farming systems.

### **3.12 PROLINNOVA–PHILIPPINES**

The host organisation of Prolinnova-Philippines, the International Institute for Rural Reconstruction (IIRR), continued to play a key role in managing the Prolinnova website and monitoring its use. In addition, the CP continued to engage in farmer-led joint experimentation in the work of IIRR and partners, and contributed towards promoting LI/PID initiatives by taking part in and hosting relevant events and workshops. IIRR hosted a 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.

### **3.13 PROLINNOVA–SENEGAL**

Prolinnova–Senegal brings together research/training (Universities of Dakar and Thiés), extension (*Agence Nationale de Conseil Agricole et Rural*), NGOs (*Agrecol–Afrique*, *GREEN Senegal*, *AgriBio Services*) and farmer organisations (*Fédération des Organisations non Gouvernementales de Développement du Sénégal*, *Fédération de l'Agriculture Biologique* and *Réseau Nationale des Organisations de Lu/e contre la Soudure et l'Endešement*). During 2023, the CP conducted or participated in various activities related to its mission: participation in development and submission of a proposal for the new phase of the Proli-GEAFaSa project; participation in two series of Prolinnova international webinars; participation in the subregional launch workshop of the Proli-GEAFaSa project; meetings with the NSC; participation in the IPW 2023 in South Africa; Informing stakeholders about the new phase of the project; conducting a training workshop for local partners in new action-learning sites; identification of local innovations. The second phase of the Proli-GEAFaSa project started in July

2023. The inception workshop was held in September, and engagement of the local partners through information about the new phase and training in PID and LI was started in the learning sites in Burkina Faso and Senegal. Initial characterisation of the local innovations for the new phase was also started. Prolinnova–Senegal initiated a process to set up an agricultural water observatory in Senegal. A concept note was drafted and submitted to Misereor for support. This observatory was to be a forum for political dialogue on the issue of agricultural water in Senegal; a forum for the exchange of experience and ideas on family farming and agricultural water in Senegal in particular; and a forum for the mobilisation of financial resources for developing projects and programmes likely to contribute to better agricultural water management in Senegal. In December 2023, CP representatives attended the IPW in Polokwane, South Africa. Prolinnova–Senegal faced a number of difficulties such as: i) low involvement of research institutions/universities in the CP activities; and ii) insufficient results in mobilisation of financial resources. However, through the Proli-GEAFaSa project, the CP noted good progress in the understanding and ownership of the CP by the members. The CP continued to be well governed. The NGO Agrecol–Afrique did an excellent job concerning the activities of the CP, particularly in holding meetings and providing its assets (meeting room, car, etc.). Overall, Prolinnova–Senegal's activities augured well for the future, despite the difficulties associated with the lack of initiative on the part of some members in organising activities and mobilising funds for certain events.

In 2024, Prolinnova – Senegal's main activities fell within the scope of Phase 2 of the Proli-GEAFaSa project. These included characterisation and documentation of local innovations; production of four radio programs and design of two videos to disseminate local innovations; setting up and monitoring-evaluation of two joint experimentation schemes; organisation of and participation in two webinars on the Proli-GEAFaSa project for Misereor's French-speaking and English-speaking partners respectively; organisation of and participation in the Proli-GEAFaSa webinar for Misereor's English-speaking partners; participation in the Misereor partners' meeting in Senegal and organisation of the Forum on Water Management that formed part of the celebration of Farmers' Innovation Day. The CP was also present at the IFIF-C and the AfPW in April in Kenya. The difficulties encountered by Prolinnova-Senegal included the unavailability of certain members of the national steering committee; low involvement of research institutions in the platform's activities; and poor results in terms of mobilising financial resources. Nevertheless, in terms of resource mobilisation, the CP was a partner in the submission of the Proli-SAM ('Strengthening farmer-centred multi-stakeholder platforms for local innovation and sustainable agroecological markets in the Sahel') in collaboration with a German university, South Westphalia University of Applied Sciences, and the Burkina Faso CP; the outcome was still awaited at the end of 2024. The CP self-assessment reported good governance and the commitment of players to the progress of the network's national, regional and international initiatives.

### **3.14 PROLINNOVA–SOUTH AFRICA**

During 2023 and 2024, Prolinnova-South Africa has benefited from being part of the ELI-FaNS project, with learning sites in Limpopo and KwaZulu-Natal provinces. The project has allowed for the identification of local innovations and implementation of PID. During 2024, the Prolinnova South Africa team expanded the ELI-FaNS PID activities to one more site at Ozwathini, supported by a partner NGO, Mahlathini Development Foundation.

In South Africa, the Prolinnova Limpopo Task Team has become strong, holding seven stakeholder meetings in 2023 during which they were able to identify innovations and network. In addition, three members of Prolinnova South Africa participated in the ELI-FaNS project inception workshop in February 2023, in Accra, Ghana. These included: Richard Chuene (Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development), Brigid Letty and Thabo Makhubedu (Institute of Natural Resource Management) and Ernest Letsoalo (University of Venda). Prolinnova South Africa – in particular the

Limpopo Task Team - hosted the Prolinnova IPW in Polokwane in October 2023. The event allowed participants to engage in policy dialogue with local leaders and supervisors from Limpopo Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (LDARD) and Universities of Limpopo and Venda and interacted with innovators and in Tjiane Village.

During 2024, platform members participated in one national and one international networking event showcasing local Innovation and PID. At the national level, three members of the Limpopo Prolinnova Task Team attended and presented two posters at the South African Society for Agricultural Extension (SASAE) Conference in August 2024, in Bloemfontein, South Africa. The posters featured farmer-led participatory innovation in the use of locally sourced plants for treating wounds in livestock, as well as collaborative partnership towards promoting local innovation in agriculture, in Ga-Mphahlele, Limpopo Province, South Africa. At the global level, five representatives of the platform participated in the IFIF-C in April 2024 in Kenya, namely Richard Chuene and Thabo Mahlobogoane (LDARD), Brigid Letty and Thabo Makhubedu (INR) and Ramoroaswi Gladys Mathabatha (Tjiane farmer innovator).

In South Africa, the platform hosted a capacity-building workshop under the ELI-FaNS project from 10 to 14 June 2024, at the African Enterprise Centre in Pietermaritzburg. It was attended by six officials from LDARD, four staff from INR, three representatives from Ithembaletu Multi-purpose Centre which is the local NGO at the KZN site that is hosting the local innovation support facility (LISF), two representatives from Amathuli Organisation – a community-based organisation (CBO), two staff of the NGO Mahlathini Development Foundation, one member of the SA branch of the Eastern and Southern African Smallscale Farmers Forum (ESAFF-SA), three officials from KZN Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (KZNDARD), three Postgraduate students of the University of KwaZulu-Natal, one lecturer from the University of Venda (UNIVEN), one member of Prolinnova Mozambique, the ELIFaNS project coordinator from ACDEP (Ghana) and the SRC-ESA.

The Limpopo platform successfully organised a farmers/innovators' information sharing day on 24 July 2024 at Mashite village, facilitated by LDARD, University of Limpopo (UL), UNIVEN and ESAFF SA. The event brought together stakeholders to learn about various innovative solutions that farmers have developed to improve their livelihoods. They included 34 farmers, 10 UL postgraduate students, 16 LDARD officials (8 extension officers, six scientists, and two scientific managers), 1 UL lecturer, and 1 UNIVEN lecturer. Members of the Platform in KZN were invited to share the preliminary findings of its PID cases related to animal husbandry at a Livestock Information Day event, organised on 23 October 2024 by the KZNDARD at Ndlebembuzi, Swayimane. Members of the platform educated a wide range of stakeholders about innovations and PID processes.

In terms of documentation, Prolinnova South Africa has produced and published several articles on its work. In Limpopo, the platform uploaded two articles on the Prolinnova website: 1) Policy dialogue in South Africa towards recognising local innovation and institutionalising participatory innovation development as an approach for agricultural development; and 2) Innovation by rural women: two cases from the Tjiane Drop-In Centre, Ga-Mphahlele, Limpopo Province, South Africa. In KwaZulu-Natal, the ELI-FaNS team documented and published some of their PID processes in an article titled "Finding new ways to improve household poultry production" in the March edition of *Appropriate Technology* (<https://prolinnova.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/ProlinnovaAll.pdf>)

### **3.15 PROLINNOVA–SOUTH INDIA**

Prolinnova–South India was formed in February 2020, initiated by 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). The CP constituted an NSC for spearheading its

activities. During 2024, two innovators from South India, Joshy Joseph and Jose Chacko, had the opportunity to showcase their innovations via video at the IFIF-C 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, while 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. During 2024, Prolinnova-South India offered to host the 2025 IPW at Idukki, Kerala. This event will serve as a platform to celebrate grassroots innovations and knowledge exchange among Prolinnova partners, farmer innovators, researchers, other development practitioners and policy makers.

### **3.16 PROLINNOVA–SUDAN**

During 2023, Prolinnova–Sudan continued to face challenges due to the ongoing political instability, some members including the Coordinator had to flee the country. Although the majority members of the Prolinnova platform are exiled outside of the country, the National Coordinator, Mawahib Ahamed, continued to network with potential stakeholders in Egypt where she is as a refugee. She initiated a discussion with a number of stakeholders who were interested in starting a Prolinnova platform in that country. During 2024, Mawahib Ahamed participated in the ESA-Subregion Prolinnova Platform coordination meeting held virtually on 31 October 2024.

### **3.17 PROLINNOVA–UGANDA**

In Prolinnova Uganda, there was little activity at secretariat level during 2023, partly because the secretariat had gone through restructuring and transition of leadership at Environmental Alert. A new CP coordinator, Jacinta Nekesa - who is also the current Executive Director at Environmental Alert where the secretariat was maintained, was appointed. A technical focal person, Rachel Kasaija, was also appointed, to allow for quick follow-up on platform activities. They received support from the NSC Chair, Daudi Ssentogo.

While Prolinnova-Uganda did not have any funded projects to support its activities during 2023, the CP members continued to engage in networking activities. It engaged in several events organised by its members, such as the national agricultural shows organised by Uganda National Farmers' Federation and the Ministry of Agriculture, Animal Industry and Fisheries (MAAIF), the Agroecology Week led by PELUM Uganda, farm clinics led by the National Agricultural Research Organisation and several workshops and conferences on farmer innovation and natural resource management. Prolinnova Uganda reported on 'The farmer learning and Innovation cycle project', which was implemented by the Uganda National Farmers Federation and MAAIF, and which ran from November 2023 and to October 2024 to support the identification, profiling, documentation farmer-led innovations and to scale best farmer innovations.

Prolinnova-Uganda was represented at the IFIF-C in Nairobi in April 2024 by NSC chairperson, Daudi Ssentongo, and a farmer innovator who exhibited an innovative method of locally propagating clean and disease-free banana suckers. The CP Coordinator, Jacinta Nekesa, participated in a 3-day PID training in Kisumu, Kenya, in November 2024 and acquired more knowledge that enabled her to become more grounded in the Prolinnova approach and process.

### **3.18 PROLINNOVA–UNITED KINGDOM**

The Farmer-Led Innovation Network (FLIN) in the United Kingdom (UK) was accepted in April 2020 as the first Prolinnova Country Platform (CP) in the Global North. FLIN was set up in 2018 to share knowledge and experiences and provide a collective advocacy voice for farmers directly involved in

these initiatives. Its main aim is to understand, learn from and “power up” farmer-led innovation initiatives in the UK. With Lisa van Dijk no longer being based in the UK, there has been limited networking with FLIN, however in the first of the three webinars about linking with university and research actors in promoting the Participatory Innovation Development (PID) approach, which took place in April 2023, Lisa van Dijk shared a presentation ‘Powering up farmer-led research through linking with research and innovation organisations in the UK and the European Union (EU)’.

## **4 MULTI-CP PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES COMPLETED & ONGOING**

### **4.1 NAVINUT**

This project titled ‘Enhancing women’s agency in navigating changing food environments to improve child nutrition in African drylands (NaviNut)’ ran from 2020-2023. The lead organisation was German Institute for Tropical & Subtropical Agriculture (DITSL) and it was funded by BMEL. It was implemented in Benin and Kenya. The project took a transdisciplinary research approach: co-creating knowledge across different scientific disciplines and stakeholders. It investigated food systems in the drylands of northern Kenya & Benin to enhance women’s roles in human nutrition & health and strengthen their capacity to adapt to change. It sought to identify and build on “positive deviance”: innovation by women who were using locally available resources to feed their children better than did other women in the same area. It integrated the knowledge of mothers, processors & sellers of traditional foods, local health workers, consumers & different scientific disciplines. DITSL collaborated with CRDD (Center for Research & Development in Drylands, Kenya), University of Parakou (host organisation of Prolinnova–Benin) & University of Abomey-Calavi in Benin, Tropical Institute of Community Health & Development (TICH) and Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology (JKUAT) in Kenya, South Westphalia University of Applied Sciences in Germany, and Prolinnova through Agrecol. During the period 2020-2021, a start-up workshop was held in December 2020, and fieldwork began in Jan 2021, continuing through 2022. This included making a typology of mothers and other caretakers; mothers’ child-feeding practices; identifying joint research topics and holding child food. In the period 2021-2022, project teams explored mothers’ indigenous knowledge about local foods and their value for small children amongst other research activities, identifying women perceived to be positive-deviant mothers.

During 2023, the researchers, including postgraduate students studied mothers’ goals in child nutrition and how they try to achieve them, problems they had and how they try to solve them. Further innovative foods and practices were documented mainly in video and lab analyses were made of the foods to assess their nutritional quality. Various other aspects such as social arrangements (i.e. food sharing practices) and medicinal value of child foods was explored. Through a call for proposals, local women were encouraged to apply for “action funds” to explore ways to improve child feeding. BMEL made an additional budget available for this. In March 2023, the annual NaviNut meeting and mini-conference was held in Parakou, Benin. The teams organised activities that allowed women involved in the project to share knowledge with younger women, as well as supporting the production of convenience products based on highly nutritious traditional foods. Towards improving governmental child-nutrition & healthcare packages, the project explored mothers’ opinions and expectations for improving nutrition training and developed communication messages to promote better child nutrition based on local knowledge and innovation.

Several project partners presented papers or posters (in person or online) at the Tropentag conference in Berlin in September 2023, and Patricia Kiprono (Kenya) spoke in a panel on “Leveraging human rights-based action towards equitable food systems” hosted by BMEL. She argued for promoting inclusive decision-making, using context-specific approaches, leveraging local knowledge and culture, and measuring impact holistically. At a regional conference in Togo during 2023, a Benin researcher

presented a paper on understanding women's child-feeding behaviour. At the International Congress on Hidden Hunger in Germany, a Kenyan researcher presented a poster on benefits of the traditional practice of fermenting porridge flour. During 2024, the Benin team developed a curriculum based on analysis of experiences made during NaviNut and the difficulties women encountered in implementing the nutritional recommendations. The curriculum covered seven categories: breastfeeding, complementary feeding, hygiene, family health, care, feeding myths and assessing a child's nutritional status. The action funds enabled several women's groups to plan and implement business activities to generate income and improve child nutrition. They used the funds for: exchange visits to learn from existing child food processing enterprises, experimenting with enhanced child foods, developing business plans for their processing enterprises, receiving training in marketing or investing in processing equipment. These activities created a fertile environment to encourage women's entrepreneurship and innovation. Videos have been made on how the women used the action funds, including participatory videos after relevant training of local women in Kenya. The NaviNut researchers from the University of Abomey-Calavi made a video on good child-nutrition practices by positive-deviant mothers in north Benin and posted it on YouTube. The last six months of the project were devoted to finalising documents as well as to facilitating and reporting on activities supported by the action fund. An article about peer learning by women in northern Kenya – proposed by the local women through the action fund – was published in *Appropriate Technology* (Sept 2024): "We share knowledge until one becomes an expert" – learning through the eyes of local women experts in child nutrition in Kenya", by Patricia Kiprono et al. The closing workshop "Together for Better Child Nutrition", which included a food festival, was hosted by CRDD in Marsabit in November 2024. The Kenyan & German researchers & local Kenyan women involved in the project shared their results with various other stakeholders in research & advisory services.

## **4.2 PROFEIS**

The programme titled 'Promoting Local Experimentation and Innovation in the Sahel (PROFEIS)' is being implemented in Mali, and the current phase will run from 2024-2027. This action-research programme explores how embedding research and extension within farming communities enables a constructive exchange of experience and knowledge between farmers, advisors and researchers. Relevant local innovations are identified, supported and jointly improved and disseminated to contribute to increased food production and sustainable natural resource management. Phase 5 of PROFEIS–Mali includes a new action-learning site in Dioïla Region, where information is being disseminated about farmer innovations already identified in the Ségou and Mopti Regions. With a view to institutionalising the PID approach within ARD, PROFEIS–Mali is carrying out a new "Programme de Développement Economique et Culturel" (PDSEC; Economic & Cultural Development Programme). The project collaborates with the Comité National des Utilisateurs de la Recherche (CNU; National Committee of Research Users), the Comité National de la Recherche Agricole (CNRA; National Committee of Agricultural Research) and the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique et Technologique (CNRST; National Centre for Scientific and Technological Research).

The project was launched in July 2021 and major activities included material support to poultry farmers; MSP meetings in Oct 2021 and Mar 2022; a knowledge-sharing visit in October 2021 to enrich the poultry farmers' knowledge and develop links between PROFEIS and the "Economic Integration of Rural Youth" project, an experience-sharing visit was held in Oct 2021 in 2 villages; Conducting socio-economic and nutritional surveys of households and conducting a diagnostic study for entrepreneurship; training of farmers in business management; arranging community sessions on local recipes for enriched cereal & legume-based porridge, cowpea-based soup, cowpea-based dumplings, millet laro (traditionally sorghum, peanut powder, fish & condiments), potato purée & fish soup; training of technical service agents and NGO & FO members in PID in Oct 2021; training of farmers in

constructing and using banco incubator and potash solution from millet & fonio (local innovation); Conducting joint experimentation on local ways to combat striga & sorghum smut, improve rice productivity, and produce powder from local fruits & vegetable leaves.

During 2023, the team developed a catalogue of 58 farmer innovations and 45 presentations on 11 farmer innovations were made. Results of joint experiments were shared with farmers and two policy briefs were drawn up and 1000 copies printed on 2 farmer innovations: an oil-fired banco incubator and the use of the "Potokolonimbo" solution.

During 2024, an additional four policy briefs were produced on "Building multi-actor partnership and governance of the PID process", "Mutual learning between researchers and farmers through joint experimentation"; "Sustainable increase in tomato producers' incomes through the development of value chains based on farmers' innovations" and "Networking approach between innovators and communities in Mali". The project achievements documented included increases in household income, and improved diets; some extension agents from technical services and NGOs trained had integrated certain farmer innovations into their activities; two of the 20 teacher-researchers from higher education institutes trained had introduced a module entitled "Peasant initiatives" into the Life and Earth Sciences curriculum in the teacher training college in Bamako, with the example of farmer-led experimentation on the local innovation of using millet stalk ash to combat high guinea fowl mortality.

More PID was undertaken in the second half of 2024 to capacitate government officers and advisors, and members of committees of users of research results and farmer innovations. Two joint experiments conducted on 2 farmer innovations combined with agroecological practices through evaluation of effectiveness of Ficus or Torogongon fruit powder and Zôgnè leaves to treat sorghum seed treatment to increase production in two cropping systems: Sorghum monoculture and sorghum/cowpea; the 2 trials were conducted by 12 farmer-experimenters, including 6 from Ségou Region and 6 from Dioila Region.

#### **4.3 PROLI-GEAFASA PHASE 2**

The project 'Promoting local innovation in water management in family farming in the Sahel Phase 2', started in 2023 and will run until 2026. It is coordinated by Agribio Services and implemented in Senegal and Burkina Faso. The project aims to extend and consolidate an approach to research and innovation led by small-scale farmers in agricultural water management. It seeks to strengthen the innovative capacities of small-scale farmers, particularly women, women's groups and young people, in collecting, conserving, storing and efficiently allocating water in farming to improve food and nutrition security and strengthen community resilience; support CP partners in promoting local innovation and co-designing and facilitating PID processes; make the Prolinnova subregional platform in WCA functional and dynamic; and strengthen national and subregional policy dialogue on the contribution of local innovation and PID processes to agricultural water management in the Sahel.

Prolinova-GEAFaSa Phase 2 aims to promote more efficient use of agricultural water, boost food security and improve the incomes of small-scale farmers. A subregional workshop to launch this phase was held from 11–16 Sept 2023 in Thiès, Senegal. An analytical framework was drawn up to analyse local innovations identified in Phase 1 and the country-level teams made baseline analyses at the new action-learning sites in Burkina and Senegal. The teams also took part in the IPW held in October 2023 in South Africa.

During 2024, the teams set up and capacitated MSPs at each of the 4 new action-learning sites; and identified, characterised and validated new innovations in Burkina and Senegal. Sabine Dorloechter-Sulser from Misereor visited the project in Senegal in early Mar 2024; On her recommendation, a series of webinars were arranged – the first was in French and was held on 30 May. Members of both

technical teams took part in the IFIF&C and AfPW in Kenya in early April. Seven joint experiments were initiated at the action-learning sites. Other activities included 2 field visits for policymakers and other ARD stakeholders, training of farmers in farmer-led documentation, radiobroadcasts and production of a video on water-management innovation processes in Burkina Faso. A forum on water management in agriculture took place as part of celebration of International Farmer Innovation Day in November in Senegal.

#### **4.4 ELI-FANS**

The project titled ‘Expanding the promotion of local innovation for food security & healthy nutrition to strengthen resilience, with a focus on women (ELI-FaNS)’, is coordinated by ACDEP, funded by Misereor, and implemented in five CPs (Ghana, Burkina Faso and Kenya from before, with Benin and South Africa being new). This follow-on project to SULCI-FaNS (Scaling up local capacity to innovate for food and nutrition security) and Prolif-FaNS (Promoting local innovation for food and nutrition security) aims to improve food and nutrition security and livelihoods of rural communities by mainstreaming participatory farmer-led approaches into organisations mandated to support farmers, thus allowing the communities to adapt to challenges they face through co-developing of technical, social and institutional innovations.

The inception workshop took place in Accra on 20–24 February 2023. The original CPs finalised their documentation products from SULCI-FaNS and shared them at the inception workshop. Paul Jimmy from Benin was engaged as the new SRC for WCA as of 1 March to replace Abdel-Karim Ali Mahamane, who resigned in May 2022. In April–May, the CP teams held inception meetings to introduce the project and share key concepts (e.g. local innovation, PID, policy dialogue, institutionalisation and MSPs), before sharing with farmers at the sites about the key concepts and approach.

The IST and POG members Violet Kirigua and Lisa van Dijk started organising a series of three webinars for the Prolinnova network to share experiences in linking with university and research actors in promoting & institutionalising PID (first webinar in April 2023). During 2023, 60 innovations were documented and promoted, and 24 priority innovations were jointly selected for PID to commence in 2024.

During 2024, the project team initiated the implementation of a comprehensive training and backstopping process. All 5 CPs selected and profiled their targeted number of innovations in the action-learning sites, and initiated joint experimentation, including establishing LISF structures and systems to disburse funds, materials and inputs to farmers and groups to support local innovation and PID processes. PID training for the CPs in Burkina (July), Ghana (August), Kenya (October) and SA (June) took place. This also enabled visits by the trainers and participants to action-learning sites to meet innovators and local MSP members. The trainers also met the NSC in each country to discuss their work in networking, policy dialogue, fundraising and capacity support to the CP. All CPs continued to facilitate PID processes with farmers on selected local innovations.

#### **4.5 FARANE**

The project ‘Supporting and strengthening farmers’ research networks to improve local innovation in Burkina Faso and Mali (FaReNe)’ is implemented in Mali and Burkina Faso, and funded by McKnight Foundation. It started in 2019 and will run through to 2025. The project seeks to strengthen research networks led by farmers in order to facilitate the development and evaluation of agroecological intensification options. It aims to understand farmers’ innovations and evaluate their economic performance. Joint experimentation started in 2020, testing intercropping (cowpea x sorghum; cowpea x sesame) as well as the use of LISFs in Mali. Up until May 2022, several agroecology options were tried out in Mali but poor rainfall led to disappointing results. The first phase of FaRaNe ended

mid-2022, and was followed by FaReNe 2. In terms of project partners, ADAF-Gallè is the project holder, Diobass and Réseau MARP (RMARP) are the implementing partners in Burkina Faso.

During 2023, workshops were held in Mali in March to review results of the joint experiments; nutrition demonstration sessions on preparing enriched cereal and legume-based porridge and cowpea-based soup and dumplings were held in several villages in March; and joint experimentation related to sheep-fattening activities continued. In Burkina Faso, Diobass and RMARP organised meetings for participatory planning of joint experiments in February 2023. The project team was represented at the 16th annual meeting of McKnight Foundation's West African CoP in March in Niamey, Niger.

Workshops for developing and validating joint-experimentation proposals took place in Burkina in March 2023 and MoUs were signed with Farmer Research Groups (FRGs) on implementing and monitoring activities in April in Toéghin, which then unlocked funds for experimentation.

Farmers in Mali conducted trials on crop combinations (millet/ cowpea, sorghum/cowpea, sesame/groundnuts) and the project coordinator and researcher took part in research method support workshop on agroecological transition in Koulikoro, organised by the McKnight Foundation regional team in December 2023. In Burkina Faso, there was a project team meeting with researchers for scientific documentation of joint experiments led by FRGs and setting up M&E and scientific documentation in collaboration with agricultural service agents. The 2024 experiments in Burkina resulted in good harvests of watermelon, soya, sorghum and maize, despite dry periods during the growing season.

#### **4.6 ETHNOVET PROJECT PHASE 2**

The second phase of the Ethnovet project, formally known as 'Promoting ethnoveterinary medicine for sustainable animal husbandry practices in northern Ghana, is running from 2023 to 2026. It is hosted by ACDEP and funded by Misereor. It is implemented in partnership with 4 key stakeholder institutions in 4 districts in 3 regions (Upper East, North East, Northern) of Ghana. It targets 1200 small-scale livestock farmers (at least 30% female) and 60 ethnoveterinary medicine (EVM) practitioners, including 20 new ones, and community animal health workers (CAHWs) in 20 communities (at least 15% female). It also involves 50 formal veterinary staff and agricultural extension officers (at least 15% female), including 21 additional officers compared with Phase 1.

The objectives are to jointly generate scientific evidence on EVM treatments; increase the use of EVM to complement veterinary treatments; and advocate for support of EVM as an integral and complementary part of Ghana's veterinary system.

During 2023, a one-day principal stakeholders' planning meeting took place, which included Animal Research Institute (ARI), University for Development Studies (UDS), Central Veterinary Laboratory, Centre for Plant Medicine Research (CPMR), and Veterinary Directors in regions where the project works. A 2-day inception workshop was then held, which involved a broader stakeholder base including Heads/Deans/Principals of national institutions, followed by sensitisation of farmers and EVM practitioners and district-level stakeholders. Joint experiments led by farmer innovators were planned on 2 EVM treatments to prevent and treat Newcastle disease in poultry: i) a herbal preparation from *Bombax costatum* (silk-cotton tree) and *Evolvulus alsinoides* (dwarf morning glory); ii) a preparation from Aloe vera, bitter kola (*Garcinia kola*), pepper, garlic, ginger, cloves and distilled wood-ash solution.

During 2024, five selected EVM preparations were tested against microbial activities including bacteria (gram +ve, gram -ve), yeast and mould as well as helminths/trematodes and protozoa in the CPMR and Swiss TPH labs; four of the preparations showed activity on all organisms tested. Fieldwork and data collection for the innovator-led on-farm trials was carried out from January to May 2024 and data

were being analysed by the research and development team. From 45 EVM practices identified, 17 were selected for profiling and the innovators were interviewed for comprehensive information on their EVM practices. The project team conducted monitoring and backstopping visits to farmer innovators with medicinal plants/gardens to support them with the right technical skills to protect the plants from wild fires and help them withstand heat and moisture stress in the dry season.

#### **4.7 PIPA-DAC**

Prolinnova-Cameroon is implementing the 'Promoting farmer innovation & participatory approaches in development processes in agricultural value chains & adaptation to change (PIPA-DAC) project from 2022 to 2025, which is funded by Misereor/KZE. The project aims to contribute to innovation development by small-scale farmers in the Central Region of Cameroon while improving the farmers' access to basic services, while also supporting farmer-led joint experimentation.

This project works with farmers and government agricultural services in nine divisions in the Region and involves the CP host organisation COSADER, IRAD (National Institute for Agricultural Research and Development) and ODECO (Organization for Development of Study, Training & Advisory Services). An interdepartmental workshop on PID was held 21–23 Feb in Yaoundé. The constituted project team organised workshops on Cameroon Government subsidies and funding opportunities in January and February 2023, with participants from FOs, women's and youth associations and people working in the rural development sector of the four departments. During visits to government services, the team explained the concept of farmer innovation. The services provided names of organisations where innovators could be identified. The team invited 16 FOs, women's associations and youth associations to take part in the workshops, where farmers presented their local innovations. From the 60 presentations, the team selected 15 innovations related to nature conservation, preserving biodiversity, adapting to change, animal production and health, and plant production and protection for wider sharing. In March to May 2023, the local MSPs characterised 13 of these innovations. Four local innovations were selected: making biofertiliser from cassava peel ash & herbs; domesticating butterflies for conservation, scientific & tourism purposes; producing white grubs from a substrate made from palm wine, lemon & pineapple skins; and using pig manure in adapting cocoa trees to drought.

Documentation of local innovations and PID processes was achieved through theses by four internship students for their agricultural engineering diploma from the National Polytechnic School at the University of Maroua; A document describing the joint research process within the framework of PID; and a description of the 13 farmers' innovations validated for sharing within the community. During the second half of 2023, visits were made to University of Dschang and links strengthened with University of Maroua in order to prepare for arrival of a new group of students in January 2024.

During 2024, 20 of the innovations selected during 5 earlier workshops were described and another interdepartmental PID workshop was held on 27–29 Feb in Yaoundé to prepare 15 small-scale farmers and students from University of Maroua, University of Dschang and its antennae of Bafia to engage in joint research on 6 local innovations selected by participants. Seven student interns wrote theses for their agricultural engineering diploma from National Polytechnic School at University of Maroua and Faculty of Agronomy & Agricultural Sciences of University of Dschang and its campus in Bafia on local innovations. During the second half of 2024, the seven PID processes finalised with stakeholders and the students defended their theses; and a catalogue of the 11 cases of PID implemented since beginning of the PIPA-DAC project was finalised and posted on Prolinnova website. During 2024, 12 workshops were organised, 11 at the level of FOs to share PID results and one workshop including advisory services and other farmers from other localities of the District.

## 4.8 UNDP LOFODA PHASE 1 - PHASE 2

Prolinnova Kenya won a grant from UNDP's Innovation Small Grants Aggregator Project (ISGAP) for an 18-month project that aimed to build resilience to climate change in households through better dairy-goat husbandry, building on local farmers' ingenuity. The first phase, titled 'Building resilience to climate change in households in Nyando Community, Kisumu County, through increased dairy-goat keeping by developing Locally Formulated Dairy Goat Meal (LOFODA-G-Meal) innovation, ran from 2022-23 and Phase 2, titled 'Promoting dairy-goat farming for enhanced community resilience through commercialization of LOFODA-G-Meal' ran until the end of 2024. The project involved World Neighbors (administrative & financial issues), KALRO; Kisumu County DoA, Nyakach Sub-County; Prolinnova Kenya NSC (general backstopping) and CP Coordinator (project management).

During 2022, a A team comprising the CP coordinator and members from KALRO, Dairy Goat Association of Kenya (DGAK) and Nyando Basin Lofoda Enterprises (NBLE) mapped the dairy-goat farmers in the 15 sites and identified and documented other local innovations. The farmers were trained in business skills and dairy-goat husbandry, and CP Coordinator, Vincent Mariadho, arranged for NBLE and WN staff to have a series of sessions with Kenya Bureau of Standards (KEBS) to discuss possibilities of certifying the LOFODA-G-Meal.

In 2023, KALRO Naivasha did further research on the product ingredients and Master of Business Administration (MBA) students from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) jointly undertook a business survey with NBLE; the report with recommendations was shared with Joe Ouko (farmer innovator) and his team. KEBS trained the key project stakeholders in the certification process and procedures and NBLE prepared the required documents to apply for certification. Prolinnova -Kenya used the project to reach out to additional government departments to institutionalise the PID approach and made links with ICIPE (International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology) to discuss its possible involvement in the LOFODA-G-Meal innovation. Nelson Barasa of Unga Feeds Ltd offered to help the LOFODA team refine the feed based on the certification thresholds and requirements, and has already helped do an analysis of the feed. Two staff members of WN attended a meeting of participants from 44 projects sponsored by AFCIA through the UNDP, held in Manila, Philippines. The team also submitted a proposal for a follow-on project (Jan–Dec 2024) for scaling the innovation.

During 2024, the second phase was initiated and targeted smallholder farmers and resource-constrained communities of Nyakach, Kisumu County; focus on scaling LOFODA-G-Meal and promoting dairy-goat farming as an alternative source of livelihood. An officer from the Ministry of Livestock, Pasture and Fodder Management Division advised the NBLE Executive Committee about good feed-formulation practices, business development in the dairy goat value chain, financial management and general opportunities in dairy goat farming. The project team jointly selected 45 cluster leaders to champion dairy-goat farming and trained them in dairy-goat husbandry and the 45 cluster leaders, together with the NBLE Executive Committee, mapped additional clusters. During the second half of 2024, the feed was further refined and KEBS collected a new sample for certification. For NBLE, the project bought a plot of land from a local community member for setting up a LOFODA-G-Meal factory and NBLE was registered as a CBO to facilitate membership in DGAK. Inputs into policy dialogue

Policy-dialogue and outreach activities at national and subnational level are reported mainly under the headings of the different CPs. Other activities at regional/international level are briefly described here.

## 4.9 GFAiR

Prolinnova was involved in a number of events organised by the Global Forum for Agricultural Innovation and Research (GFAiR), formally known as GFAR.

### 4.9.1 GFAiR Talks: Can higher education meet farmers' needs?

In the GFAiR Talks session online on 1 March 2023, Vincent Mariadho from Prolinnova–Kenya explained Prolinnova's perspective on how universities can meet small-scale farmers' needs by integrating the approach of recognising local innovation and facilitating farmer-led participatory

research, engaging university students and staff. Vincent discussed with Jim French, Secretary General of GCHERA (Global Confederation of Higher Education Associations for Agricultural and Life Sciences); the moderator was Sayed Azam-Ali, CEO Crops For the Future. The recording of this GFAR Talk can be found [here](#).

#### 4.9.2 GFAiR Higher Education Collective Action

The Collective Action (CA) on Transforming Higher Education in Agriculture, formally launched on 14 September 2023, aims to promote and accelerate the transformation of higher educational models of learning through improved technical and practical skills and effectiveness of agricultural professionals to increase their employability, agricultural entrepreneurship, innovation and ethical leadership within their countries' agricultural innovation systems (AISs).

The CA is facilitated by the GFAiR and coordinated by the Asia-Pacific Association of Agricultural Research Institutions (APAARI), working closely with GCHERA, Africa's Regional Universities Forum for Capacity Building in Agriculture (RUFORUM), the Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services (GFRAS), the Prolinnova international CoP and the European Forum on Agricultural Research for Development (EFARD) in alliance with the Czech University of Life Sciences. Another close partner is the Office of Innovation of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) through its Tropical Agriculture Platform (TAP).

The CA, which focuses on four regions – Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe and Latin America – completed its first stage during 2023, achieving the following outcomes:

- Completed stocktaking exercise that included an assessment of the status of transformation of agricultural higher education (global survey report);
- Documented successful innovative models of education based on experiential learning, ethical leadership and participatory curricula development that are being systematically integrated into education systems (ten case studies);
- Documented discussions of four regional e-conferences that engaged key stakeholders to build a common understanding on the process of transformational learning, and created ownership and support (global report on the regional e-conferences);
- Consolidated outputs aiming to reach relevant donors, stakeholders and other potential partners, to collectively work on a full project design and build commitment to scale up the identified transformational education practices and learning models.

Overall, the CA is envisioned to inspire and guide enabling, structural, functional and sociocultural changes that are needed to facilitate the global transformation of agricultural university education and learning systems in order to proactively respond to the challenges of an ever more complex and dynamic agri-food system so that it positively impacts on family farmers, small-scale producers and rural communities. The focus is on the need to equip students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that would enable them to grow into qualified graduates with the professional, entrepreneurial, ethical and social capacities needed to engage effectively in the collaborative management of innovation processes with farmers, rural communities and other stakeholders in agriculture.

For more information, see: <https://gfair.network/content/collective-action-transformation-higher-education-agriculture>.

At global level, Prolinnova is represented in this CA by Prolinnova Oversight Group (POG) member Violet Kirigua and POG co-chair Lisa van Dijk.

#### 4.9.3 GFAiR Family Farming Collective Action

In October 2023, Brigid represented Prolinnova in a meeting in Rome that was organised as part of GFAiR's Family Farming Collective Action that was being led by the World Rural Forum (WRF). The event, which took place on 4 October 2023, explored the question 'What is needed for successful

participatory research?', with participatory research being seen as the most effective way of supporting family farming.

#### 4.9.4 GFAiR Agroecology Collective Action

Brigid submitted an expression of interest, on behalf of Prolinnova, to participate in GFAiR's Agroecology Collective Action. Prolinnova was selected to be one of the organisations/networks supported, but there was no funding available during 2024 to support specific activities. The CA is seen as another way of supporting our involvement within the Agroecology Coalition.

### 4.10 AGROECOLOGY COALITION

The Agroecology Coalition (AEC) was set up in 2023 in order to accelerate the transformation of food systems through agroecology. Oliver Oliveros ([o.oliveros@agroecology-coalition.org](mailto:o.oliveros@agroecology-coalition.org)), long-time Friend of Prolinnova, is the coordinator of AEC and heads its secretariat. AEC has a number of functions including the co-creation and exchange of knowledge, seeking to increase investments in agroecology, and seeking political engagement and increased commitment to the agroecological transformation. The AEC has a secretariat and steering committee and it is structured around a number of working groups (WGs): (1) Research, innovation and education; (2) Policies; (3) Finance and Investments; (4) Communications; and (5) Implementation.

Given that Prolinnova has always had a focus on local innovation related to **ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resource management**, this is a space where we believe our network can play an active role and make a meaningful contribution. Thus, we have signed up as a member of the AEC and joined several WGs.

Prolinnova has been given the opportunity to be a member at global level as well as at CP level in the different regions. Thus, any CPs that wish to become members of the AEC and join one or more WGs, in their own right, can make direct contact with the AEC secretariat ([secretariat@agroecology-coalition.org](mailto:secretariat@agroecology-coalition.org)). The CPs in Kenya, Mozambique and South India have already joined the AEC.

At global level, Prolinnova is represented by Djibril Thiam, CP Coordinator for Prolinnova–Senegal and Director of Agribio Services, while Brigid Letty, Franklin Avorny and Peter Gubbels have joined the Research, innovation and Education WG and the Implementation WG.

More information about the AEC is available at [www.agroecology-coalition.org](http://www.agroecology-coalition.org). The presentation given by Oliver Oliveros at the 2023 Prolinnova International Partners Workshop (IPW) is available at <https://prolinnova.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Agroecology-Coalition-Overview.pptx>.

### 4.11 GRASSROOTS INNOVATION ASSEMBLY

The 11th Hour Project of the Schmidt Family Foundation is supporting the creation of a new network on grassroots technological innovation in agroecology, now called **Grassroots Innovation Assembly in Agroecology (GIAA)**. On behalf of the international Prolinnova CoP, Makonge Righa from World Neighbors, East Africa, the host NGO of Prolinnova–Kenya, is involved in supporting this new network and bringing in the concept and experiences of farmer-led participatory research and innovation.

Righa represented Prolinnova in the first international convening of GIA on grassroots technological innovations for agroecology in Italy on 18–21 October 2023, organised by Farm Hack, Schola Campesina and Cooperative for ecological local agriculture (CAPE) with support from the 11th Hour Project of the Schmidt Family Foundation.

### 4.12 AFAAS

The 6<sup>th</sup> Africa-Wide Agricultural Extension Week (AAEW 2023) was held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 5–11 November, co-hosted by the Nigerian Federal Ministry of Agriculture & Rural Development and the Nigerian Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (NIFAAS). The AAEW is a biennial flagship event of the African Forum for Agricultural Advisory Services (AFAAS), which brings participants from across Africa and globally to deliberate on strategic issues in agricultural extension and advisory services in

Africa. The theme of the 2023 event was “Harnessing Agricultural Extension & Advisory Services in Scaling Regenerative Agriculture and Nature-Based Solutions for Food-System Transformation in Africa”, and various AAEW activities were pointed out ways to promote and scale this approach.

The Prolinnova SRC - WCA, Paul Jimmy, attended the event on behalf of the Prolinnova network. This was an opportunity to present Prolinnova’s experiences in promoting local innovation and farmer-led PID. He gave an oral presentation based on Prolinnova Working Paper 38 entitled: [Institutionalising Participatory Innovation Development in a nongovernmental and a governmental organisation in northern Ghana.](#)

#### **4.13 FAO**

##### **4.13.1 8<sup>th</sup> Africa Agribusiness and Science Week**

Brigid Letty represented Prolinnova at the 8<sup>th</sup> Africa Agribusiness and Science Week in Durban in June 2023, where she participated as a presenter and a panellist in side-events on innovation and agroecology, respectively.

In the innovation session, she presented the outcomes of the innovation survey conducted amongst Prolinnova members on behalf of FAO, while in the agroecology session, she shared the value of local innovation and PID in this context.

##### **4.13.2 FAO Advisory Group on Agrifood Systems Technologies and Innovations Outlook (ATIO)**

Guided by its Science and Innovation Strategy, FAO has embarked on a new programme centred on agrifood system technologies and innovations to support countries worldwide in their pathways toward transforming their agrifood systems. A key component of this initiative will be the FAO’s new flagship series of publications, the *Agrifood Systems Technologies and Innovations Outlook (ATIO)*. This will appear every two years and will offer a snapshot of current patterns and trends in the landscape of science, technology and innovation for agrifood system transformation.

Prolinnova was invited as one of the relevant stakeholders to join the Advisory Group for the ATIO. The inaugural Advisory Committee meeting was held on 27 September 2023 in FAO Headquarters in Rome in a hybrid format. A member of the Prolinnova IST, Ann Waters-Bayer from Agrecol Association for AgriCulture & Ecology – the Northern Focal Point of the international Prolinnova network – is representing the network in this committee.

Prolinnova was also invited to participate in two writeshops for compiling the ATIO Flagship report. Chesha of the IST participated in a writeshop in September at the Institute of Development Studies in the UK for drafting chapter 2 on “Democratising AgriFood Systems Science Technology and Innovation”. Marta Opondo of Prolinnova Kenya participated digitally in drafting Chapter 3 that was led by Wageningen University, also in September 2024

#### **4.14 UNIVERSITY OF BASEL EVENT**

Brigid attended a small conference at the University of Basel in September 2024, which was organised as part of a project focused on grassroots innovation. The understanding of grassroots innovation differed from Prolinnova’s being more about grassroots organisations initiating activities, and not restricted to developing contexts. Brigid shared an example of a social innovation from Senegal, where women have found a mechanism to support their transition to agroecology.

#### **4.15 AGROECOLOGY TPP DIALOGUE**

Brigid participated in a dialogue about transdisciplinary research that was organised by the Agroecology TPP in July 2024. She was asked to reflect on a framework that had been developed to assess transdisciplinarity related to agroecology and shared views on behalf of Prolinnova.

## 4.16 APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY MAGAZINE

### 4.16.1 March 2023

In the March 2023 issue of the international magazine *Appropriate Technology* (Vol. 50, No. 1), three articles about Prolinnova people and activities were published:

1. [Farmers' varieties mitigate and adapt to climate change in South India](#), by TJ James, Hubby Mathew & Stebin Sebastian from the Prolinnova–South India network (pp18–20)
2. [Promoting women's innovation for food and nutrition security](#), by ELI-FaNS project coordinator Joe Nchor & Ann Waters-Bayer of the International Support Team (p21)
3. [Prolinnova names new Subregional Coordinator for West & Central Africa](#) (pp22–23)

### 4.16.2 June 2023

In the June 2023 issue (Vol. 50, No. 2) of the magazine, two articles appeared in the Prolinnova section:

- [Workshop on promoting farmer innovation in Benin unleashes local capacities for farmer-led research and development](#) (pp 14 – 16); and
- [ILEIA and Compas publications on agroecology digitalised](#) (p 17).

### 4.16.3 September 2023

The September 2023 issue (Vol. 50, No. 3) brought two articles about Prolinnova activities in southern Africa:

- [Rural women in Mozambique innovate to restore their landscape](#), by Romuald Rutazihana, Domingos Tsucane, Gilda Fafitine & Jacob Wanyama in *Appropriate Technology* 50 (3): 42–44
- [Observing local innovation in Swayimane, South Africa](#), by Mzo Mndali, Thabo Makhubedu & Brigid Letty in *Appropriate Technology* 50 (3): 45–46

### 4.16.4 December 2023

The December 2023 issue (Vol. 50, No. 4) brought two articles on Prolinnova activities in promoting local innovation processes in West Africa:

- [Competition for farmer innovators in managing water in Burkina Faso](#), by Hamadé Sigué, Augustin Ouédraogo, Kouété Paul Jimmy & Ann Waters-Bayer, in *Appropriate Technology* 50 (4): 50–52, including a box “Woman farmer’s innovation: growing aubergines in furrows” (p. 52) – French translation: [Compétition pour les paysans innovateurs dans la gestion de l’eau au Burkina Faso](#)
- [Zanguga community in Ghana innovates to restore “Kundunvori” biodiversity](#), by Issifu Sulemana, Joseph Nchor & Samuel Ayamga, in *Appropriate Technology* 50 (4): 53–55.

### 4.16.5 March 2024

In the March 2024 edition (Vol. 51, No. 1), three articles submitted by Prolinnova Country Platforms were published:

- An article about joint experimentation related to household poultry that has been initiated in South Africa
- An article about a national farmers day in Ghana where farmer innovators received awards
- An article from Uganda about how traditional practices reinforce farmers’ capacities to respond to shocks.

All three articles can be found [here](#).

#### 4.16.6 June 2024

Two articles were published in the Prolinnova section of the June 2024 issue (Vol. 51, No. 2):

- **Action funds stimulate mutual learning about child nutrition in Benin** by Paul Jimmy, Honorat Edja, Brigitte Kaufmann & Ann Waters-Bayer
- **Ghanaian experience in helping women farmers improve sales of a local innovation** by Joseph Nchor & Albert Avoka.

Both articles are combined in one file [here](#).

#### 4.16.7 September 2024

The September 2024 issue of the *Appropriate Technology (AT)* magazine features two articles on Prolinnova activities:

- **International Farmer Innovation Fair: a platform for promoting local innovation**, by Vincent Mariadho & Brigid Letty, with photos by Janish Wettasinha (*AT* 51(3): 36-39)
- **“We share knowledge until one becomes an expert” – learning through the eyes of local women experts in child nutrition in Kenya**, by Patricia Kiprono, Hussein Wario, Brigitte Kaufmann & Ann Waters-Bayer, with photos by Zulekha Abdulkadir (*AT* 51(3): 39-41).

Both articles can be found together [here](#).

#### 4.16.8 December 2024

Two Prolinnova articles were published in the December 2024 online edition of *Appropriate Technology*:

- **Replicable Innovation for Rural Farming: A Solution to Cassava Harvesting Challenges in Kerala and Beyond**, by James TJ and Stebin K (*AT* 51(4)). <https://prolinnova.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Replicable-innovation.pdf>
- **Sadia Issifu – farmer innovator and women’s banker in Walewale, North Ghana** by Chesha Wettasinha and Joe Nchor (*AT* 51(4)). <https://prolinnova.net/wp-content/uploads/2025/07/Sadia-Issifu.pdf>

### 4.17 WEBINARS

#### 4.17.1 Integrating PID into education

The Prolinnova international network ([www.prolinnova.net](http://www.prolinnova.net)) initiated a series of three webinars to provide an opportunity for its CoP to share experiences in linking with university and research actors in promoting the PID approach in agroecology and natural resource management. Each webinar focused on a specific aspect of the institutionalisation process.

Webinar 1 (April 2023): “Linking with universities and research institutions in promoting farmer-led participatory innovation development in ecologically oriented agriculture and natural resource management”

Webinar 2 (August 2023): “Building capacities within universities and research institutes to create conducive conditions for stimulating reflection and integrating PID”

Webinar 3 (February 2024): “Networking and resource mobilisation to support the process of integrating PID concepts and practices into universities and research institutions”

#### 4.17.2 Webinar organised by IIRR and Prolinnova–Asia

A 3-hour Prolinnova webinar “Revisiting Farmer-Centred/Participatory Approaches” was organised by the IIRR and Prolinnova on 17 September 2024. Eight cases were presented at the webinar: four from

Asia and four from Africa. Four of the cases were IIRR experiences and four were from Prolinnova and included Nepal, South India, Senegal and Ghana.

The Prolinnova cases included: Success stories in promoting local innovation in Nepal; Land to lab approach in Kerala; Institutionalising Participatory Innovation Development in a nongovernmental and a governmental organisation in northern Ghana and Promoting local innovation in agricultural water management: Experiences of Proli-GEAFaSa in West Africa.

## **5 CONCLUSION**

It is clear from the content of this report, which covers the period 2023 and 2024, that the global Prolinnova CoP continues to promote participatory approaches that build on local innovation. Through funded projects, as well as the activities that network members integrate into their own work programmes, the CoP continues to demonstrate the value of recognising the innovativeness of people in rural (and sometimes urban) communities.

It is also apparent that the work that is being done by Prolinnova partners at various levels in different countries is demonstrating the importance of recognising the local innovations of smallholder farmers as a key in transitioning towards agroecology and more sustainable forms of agricultural research and development. Within the challenges faced by smallholder farming communities due to climate change, economic downturns and even civil strife, the increased capacity to innovate that is stimulated by Prolinnova's approach has proven effective, efficient, equitable and sustainable.