



**- International Fund for Agricultural Development –
- Scouting and Sharing Innovation in Western and Central Africa –**

- The Information and Knowledge Exchange Platform -

I- Background :

1. Name of innovation:

The Information and Knowledge Exchange Platform.

2. Country - Region:

Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Mali, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal

3. Organization:

- International institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA)

4. Who is the innovator?

IITA in collaboration with national agricultural research and extension systems (NARES) through African Cowpea Project (PRONAF)

5. Actors involved:

- NARES, IFAD funded projects, public & private sectors, NGOs, Purdue and Michigan State Universities, British Natural Resources Institute (NRI)

6. Implementation date:

- 2003 to present

7. Type of innovation: (Technological, institutional, policy or knowledge sharing)

- Institutional (organisational and methodological)

II- Key issues :

8. Summary:

PRONAF facilitated the establishment of a regional platform involving public and private cowpea stakeholders, farmers' organizations, NARES, IITA, NGOs and IFAD funded loan and grant-financed programs, and other development partners interested in the cowpea value chain. This platform was intended to coordinate interventions and to promote sustainable cowpea production systems in the target countries through information exchange and development of linkages between research, public and private sector and NGO actors. Key activities include on-going network development and the organization of workshops.

9. What issue does the innovation address?

- Low rate of innovation adoption;
- Strengthened vertical and horizontal coordination of market actors;
- Increasing involvement of policy makers.

10. Key success factors for replication:

- Each innovation or practice responds to farmers' concerns in a specific way (relevance);
- Strengthen demand-driven capacity building;
- Exchange information at all stakeholder levels, including resource-poor farmers and their organizations, IFAD projects, the private sector and NGOs;
- Enhancing capacities and sustainable access to cowpea-based market opportunities and information will result in sustainable income generation, improved food security, and poverty reduction

11. Accessibility: (Poor, gender, youth, migrants...)

- Women farmers and processors actively participate in platform activities

12. Difficulties encountered:

- Lack of equipment (telephone for internet) to communicate through e-mail for networking (NARES and other stakeholders);
- Limited development project staff capacity and opportunities to apply platform-generated knowledge;
- Lack of resources for refresher courses;

13. Financial aspects:

- Effective cost-sharing between stakeholders for platform-sponsored activities

III- Technical Summary :

14.

IV- Follow up :**15. Key contacts:**

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16. Useful web link:

www.pronaf.info

17. Key documents: (Name of the document + Link or Contact or Co ordinates)