

Day 1 – Plenary 1 – 2.15 pm – “presentation of PROFEL survey analysis”

Day 2 – Plenary 3 - 9.15 am – “lessons learnt from PROFEL, newsletter”

## **PROFEL AND PROFAV INITIATIVES: FOCUS ON TOOLS**

Christelle MONIER<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Agronomist and business development representative at CIRAD, French research centre working with developing countries to tackle international agricultural and development issues.

Key words: participative approach, operational tools, exit strategy, communication

As a supporting organization to the FAO/WHO initiative on the promotion of fruit and vegetables (F&V) for health, CIRAD has been involved in the implementation of the French and English-speaking countries workshops (PROFEL, 2007; PROFAV, 2010). CIRAD’s expertise was in particular mobilized on data creation, strengthening links and information dissemination. Indeed, to make such a long-term initiative sustainable and efficient, it is recognized that regular exchanges and participative networks are essential. So, two tools were discussed and defined in order to provide (i) a common and consensual starting level of information dealing with the horticultural issues, from farm to fork (**PROFEL survey**) and (ii) a participative and regular vehicle for sharing progress (**Bulletin PROFEL**).

**The PROFEL survey** was launched before the workshop, to bring people from the different sectors together and to establish national horticultural states of the art. **It is a way of co-learning**, (i) to defend a knowledge-based approach (**baseline**) for planning and formulating future relevant interventions, (ii) to promote a bottom-up collaboration (**demand driven**), and (iii) to support the follow-ups considering the national specificities (**efficiency**). The questionnaire was filled out by three representatives per country from the agriculture, health and education sectors of 15 countries. It appears that the consumption of F&V is logically linked to **seasonal fluctuations of production** and **geographical and social localization**. Moreover, the results underline the issue of post-harvested losses (from 15 to 75%) especially on perishable vegetables productions. The role of processing and value-chain organization and the need of technical support and advice were identified as means to reach market demands (standards, quality...).

After horticultural meetings and workshops, it appears that a newsletter, as a more regular virtual meeting point, is an essential counterpart for sharing information and strengthening links. **The Bulletin PROFEL**, launched in 2009 (five editions), was sent monthly by email to approximately 500 persons. It was built as a participative newsletter, based on stakeholders’ contributions dealing with their countries’ horticultural concerns.

Despite lacks of statistics (recurrent issue of irregular or incomplete data that require extrapolations), both the good rate of answer to the PROFEL survey (89%) and pertinent main lines have been emphasized.

As a simple and efficient way of exchanges (5/6 pages, clear messages), a newsletter is easy to appropriate and disseminate at national level to convince and inform (i.e. Policy makers, Ministry...). However, maintaining and enhancing the links require a long-term action plan, including exchanges platforms, exit strategy... And time.