



**13<sup>th</sup>** African Crop Science Society Conference

# Building Africa's Future

Crop Research and Innovation for Agricultural Transformation, Resilience, and Inclusion



## BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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# **ACTION RESEARCH IN ESTABLISHING LOCAL GOVERNANCE: opportunities and challenges based on the prosuli project**

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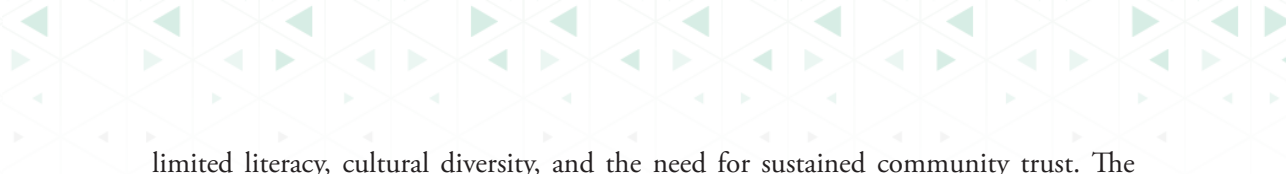
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This intervention addresses the role of action research in establishing effective local governance, drawing insights from the ProSuLi (Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods) in communities within Transfrontier Conservation Areas (TFCAs) project. Action research, characterized by its participatory and iterative nature, is pivotal in developing governance structures that resonate with community needs. The ProSuLi project, with its emphasis on sustainable livelihoods consistent with conservation objectives, offers a practical context for understanding the intricacies of local governance. The experience identifies several opportunities afforded by action research, such as enhancing community engagement, improving decision-making processes, and fostering sustainable development. A key focus is on addressing challenges related to limited literacy within communities, which often obstructs effective participation in governance. By tailoring interactions tools and techniques, communication strategies and capacity-building efforts, the project has managed to involve even the most marginalized groups in governance processes. Furthermore, the research explores the impact of social and cultural contexts on local governance. These factors, deeply rooted in community identity, influence the acceptance and effectiveness of governance initiatives. The project underscores the importance of respecting and integrating local customs and social norms to build governance structures that are both culturally relevant and widely accepted. Community trust is highlighted as a critical element for the success of local governance. The ProSuLi project demonstrates how action research can help build trust by ensuring transparency, inclusivity, and responsiveness in governance processes. However, challenges remain in sustaining this trust, particularly in communities with a history of distrust towards external interventions. The findings suggest that while action research can significantly advance local governance, it must be adapted to address specific challenges, including



limited literacy, cultural diversity, and the need for sustained community trust. The ProSuLi project provides valuable lessons on navigating these complexities to achieve meaningful and lasting governance outcomes at the local level.

**Keywords:** Action research, Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods.