



INDIA

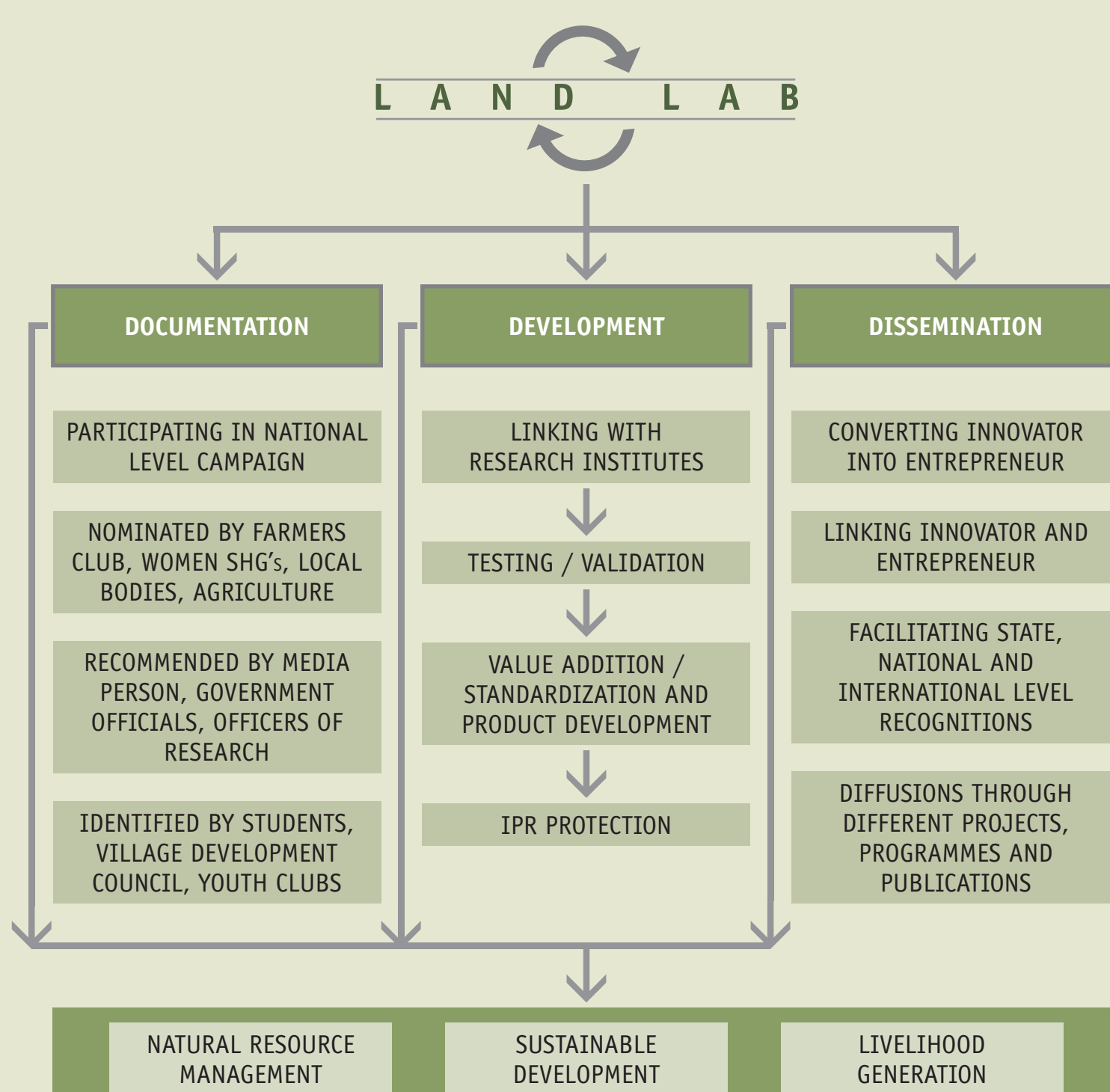
INNOVATIONS IN AGROECOLOGY

LAND TO LAB APPROACH FOR DEVELOPING AND DISSEMINATING LOCATION SPECIFIC INNOVATIONS

The needs of rural and high-risk areas are diverse and location specific. As the market is limited, the private sector is not interested in developing technologies for high-risk areas, and the government sector often bypasses or ignores their needs. Identifying area-specific needs and developing specific solutions are key for sustainability. Farmers' innovations are based on specific local needs, local resources, local knowledge and technology. However, farmers' abilities to develop location-specific innovations and adaptations to maximize their local resources have been largely unrecognized, underestimated and underutilized.

DESCRIPTION OF THE INNOVATION

The Land to Lab programme is a novel approach, initiated by the core scientists of Peermade Development Society, for the documentation, development and dissemination of farmer innovations and indigenous knowledge, with the partnership of various stakeholders. Farmers' innovations from different parts of Kerala have been documented, and have provided support to farmer innovators to develop their innovations, and have also facilitated the dissemination of these innovations by establishing local enterprises. The disseminated farmer innovations include plant varieties, farm implements, farm machineries, cultivation practices, and pest and disease management practices.



DESIGN AND SHARING OF THE INNOVATION

Land to Lab approach for developing and disseminating location-specific innovations:

Documentation

- » Strategies for scouting innovations include organizing campaigns, competitions and melas; and identifying innovative farmers by nomination or recommendation by farmers' clubs, women's self-help groups, media personnel, government officials, innovators, and so on.
- » The documentation process involves collecting technical details, specialties of farmer innovations and scientific comments.

Development

- » We partnered with various R&D institutes and other stakeholders to test, refine, improve and develop innovations.

Dissemination

- » Facilitating the dissemination of innovations through various strategies;
- » Helping rural innovators to convert their innovations into enterprises;
- » Linking rural entrepreneurs and rural innovators to start village-level enterprises;
- » Diffusing and disseminating farmer innovations through various projects, programmes and local publications.

OUR PARTNERS

National Innovation Foundation, Government of India, Science & Society Division Department of Science & Technology, Honey Bee Network, ITPGRFA -FAO, CEE-UNDP, NABARD

BENEFIT FOR FAMILY FARMERS AND FOOD AND NUTRITION SECURITY

Farmer innovations have been revived and propagated through women's self-help groups to ensure food, nutritional and livelihood security. Farmers have also identified and propagated drought resistant cassava, yam, vegetables, cowpea, pepper, cardamom and nutmeg varieties. Moreover, the capacity building of women's groups helps make value added products and recipes from local and farmer developed varieties.



SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Many farmer innovators and their innovations have been recognized and supported, with fifty-four farmer innovators receiving national awards.

Rural enterprises based on farmer innovation have been established, contributing to sustainable conservation, livelihood promotion, employment generation, and food security – 11 innovators converted their innovations into enterprises.

Rural enterprises by rural entrepreneurs have been established based on farmer-developed varieties: nine rural entrepreneurs started enterprises based on farmer innovations and benefit mechanisms between innovative farmers and entrepreneurs. Materials and seeds for farmer-developed varieties have been made available. All of the above have served to inculcate entrepreneurial culture and spirit in farmers.

LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Multi-stakeholder involvement and participation play a key role in the various processes of the Land to lab approach.