towards developing a trustworthy source of knowledge on bananas
On this website you will find

**About ProMusa** explains the objectives, structure, working mechanisms of the global community for banana R&D.

**InfoMus@** provides news and information about banana. It is also a space where people can post their opinions. Registered users receive a quarterly email alert.

**MusaTalk** is a space where people can join in debates on banana R&D. It is organized in three discussion forums.

Welcome to the ProMusa portal

In its constant search for increasing the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of the global banana* research and extension efforts, ProMusa, in alliance with the International Society for Horticultural Science-is offering this portal for sharing knowledge on banana and discussing the latest banana news.

This site is primarily intended for people in the research-and-development community who are working to meet the needs of the smallholder farmers who grow most of the world's bananas. We also hope to promote interaction between scientists, extension workers, NGOs, donors, government officials and journalists.

Maintained by Bioversity International's banana and plantain group, this website draws on the group's experience in coordinating the ProMusa research network and facilitating access to information on banana and plantain.

This portal is open to all who wish to contribute. Let us know how we can better meet your needs by sending us your ideas and suggestions.

*The term 'banana' is used throughout the portal to include banana and plantain (Musa spp.).
Why a knowledge resource center?

A huge amount of information is out there (some of it contradictory) and more is being produced at an increasing rate. A KRC can help:

- Better utilize existing information
  - by providing access to unused data and results
- Reduce information overload
  - by extracting relevant information and synthesizing it
- Facilitate uptake of research findings
  - by highlighting results and putting them in context
User-centered approach

- Process used to ensure that the final product responds to both our objectives and the needs of the users

**User research**
- Interviews
- Surveys
- Field studies

**Segments**
- Goals
- Attitudes
- Criteria

**Personas**
- Key traits
- Prioritization

**Scenarios**
- Using the website

**Task analysis**
- Activities breakdown

**Feature design**
- Design choices
- Technical issues
• Identified key groups of users:

  – **Primary user groups**
    - Scientists and technicians from research centers and universities with limited access to resources (e.g. journals, online publications, …)
    - Students
    - Development organizations and local private sector

  – **Secondary user groups**
    - Scientists and technicians from advanced research centers and universities
    - Extensionists
    - Farmers/Farmers’ organizations
• Identified a number of users by group, geographic location and level of engagement within the community

• 12 people were interviewed to better understand their goals, needs and attitudes
Access to resources and limited needs
Scientists, Academics

Lower access to resources, specific needs
Scientists, Academics

Limited access, wide range of needs
Development org., farmers

Limited access to resources, need for basic knowledge
Students
• “I would like a site where all the knowledge and information is there, organized and systemized.”

• “I know the knowledge is out there but I need help finding it.”

• “A knowledge center should be linked to other resources as well.”

• “The problem with Internet is the reliability of the information. It would be great to have all the relevant and validated content in one website.”
The ivory tower scientist

PAULA
Expert who works for a research institute that provides her up-to-date information. She has an established group of contacts and cannot invest time online.

“My strength are my colleagues.”

The struggling academic

ALBERTINA
Experienced professor; her access to scientific information is limited. She is keen on open-source and free access online resources. She also needs dissemination material, even in Spanish, for her work.

“Bring the lab to the field.”

The field agronomist

FREDDY
He’s an advisor following many aspects of the farm. He is passionate about his work but has very little time and limited resources.

“I need information from every angle.”

The technological farmer

TARIKA
She works in a family farm. She relies on her traditional experience but is open to test innovative solutions. She would like to interact with other farmers to find common solutions.

“We need clear, timely information.”

The budding scientist

MASA
He is a university student, avid for reliable information. He strives for being accepted in the scientific community and spends a lot of time online looking for updates.

“Bananas are confusing.”
• How personas interact with the website
• 1-2 scenarios for primary personas
• Scene – Goal – Challenge – Solution – Consequences
A few principles for the wiki

- Needs to be comprehensive on Musa
- Organized by themes. Information comes from different sources, is transformed into knowledge and put in context (compiling, summarizing, re-writing, …)
- Step-by-step approach: build based on strategic priorities
- Reviewed by experts – reliable
- Multiple languages
Components

- A wiki – Musapedia (www.promusa.org/musapedia)
- Bibliographic database – Musalit (www.musalit.org)
- Image bank – Musarama (www.musarama.org)
- Contacts database – Musacontacts (www.musacontacts.org)
- News – Infomus@ (www.promusa.org/infomusa)
- Guidelines, manuals, … – Tools
- Discussion forum
At ProMusA, we care about bananas, the farmers who grow them and the scientists who study them. We set up this web space for exploring the world of bananas because we believe in the power of exchanging knowledge, ideas and experiences, and drawing lessons from these.
Musapedia

The banana knowledge compendium

As a crop whose origin goes back to the early days of agriculture, bananas have been observed and experimented on by countless farmers, scientists and banana enthusiasts. Musapedia is an effort to tap into that vast collective knowledge and to make sense of it through concise and clearly written texts that can be edited by anyone with information to share.

To ensure that the information is reliable, experts will periodically be asked to review contents related to their field of expertise. It is only through a sustained effort of sharing information and critically examining contributions that Musapedia will become an up-to-date and trustworthy source of knowledge about bananas.

The banana plant

The banana plant is not a tree (it does not have any woody components), but a perennial giant herb. It is an herb because its aerial parts die down to the ground after the growing season. It is a perennial because an offshoot growing at the base of the plant, the sucker, replaces the aerial parts that have died. Read more

A growing threat

Better known under the acronyms BXW or BBW, Xanthomonas wilt is a devastating disease caused by the bacterium Xanthomonas campestris pv. musacearum. Before 2001, it was found only in Ethiopia, where it affects bananas and its close relative enset (Ensete ventricosum). It has since spread to the Great Lakes region of East Africa, where it poses a threat to food and income security. No resistant cultivars have yet been identified, but some cultivars possess characteristics that make it harder for the bacteria to infect the plants. Unlike most other diseases, which mainly reduce yield, it affects the fruit and eventually kills the entire plant. Bacteria-laden exudates provide the means of transmission to new plants by insects and contaminated tools. Read more

Did you know that...

... there might be as many as 1000 different types of bananas?

... Xanthomonas wilt is found only in Eastern Africa?

... bananas have a unique nomenclature system?

... the bunch on the ProMusa logo is a Fei banana?

... Hawaiians call the nectar in the male flowers of *thelena bananas* pilai?
Workshop objectives

• Increase familiarity with the various features of Musapedia

• Collect feedback for improving the website

• Identify thematic priorities

• Develop strategy
Workshop overview

- 15:30 – 15:45: Demonstration of Musapedia features online
- 15:45 – 16:15: Participants explore Musapedia online
- 16:15 – 16:30: Feedback on different components
- 16:30 – 16:45: Individual reflection on thematic priorities
- 16:45 – 17:00: Collect feedback on thematic priorities
- 17:00 – 17:30: Discussion in small groups on strategic development of Musapedia
- 17:30 – 18:00: Groups report back to plenary