



Producer organizations (PO) in AIS

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POs enable producers to

- Innovate better by pooling resources and participating in innovation networks
- Improve access to markets for inputs and outputs (including better access to information)
- Strengthen producers' voice in policy dialogs, including the design and implementation of policies
- Have a stronger influence on public organizations, including research organizations
- Manage public funds



Innovations in POs should include technical, commercial, organizational and institutional dimensions

Innovations require adaptations not only in the POs, but also in the donors, program managers and government officials

Farmer organizations have succeeded when they could adapt their original “business plan” to unexpected problems and opportunities

What POs can do depends on

The capabilities of their members, especially the leaders

Their ability to work together (organizational capabilities)

The organization's key characteristics (e.g., culture, governance and communications and learning routines)

The enabling environment

Instruments for capacity building in POs have included

- fostering interactions among actors in the AIS (social capital)
- venture capital funds (new financing instruments)
- supporting innovation brokers (innovation “infrastructure”)
- setting up training and mentoring programs (capacity building)
- strengthening the policy framework for innovation (enabling environment)

One innovation (no-till), three different Pos, one AIS

No-till (NT) has revolutionized grain production around the world, especially in the Southern Cone



NT follows the same principles everywhere, but requires substantial local adaptation

NT has been widely adopted only where it was adapted by innovation networks that included specialized POs

NT POs in Brazil

NT was initially developed in southern Brazil in 1970 by an innovation network catalyzed by an agrochemical company, and included other firms, public research organizations and a few farmers



It took 10 years to develop a package but it diffused little because it was comp

In the 1980s three coops decided to organize a foundation to adjust the package and diffuse it



NT POs in Brazil (2)

- Private firms provided limited support to NT POs
- When the price of RoundUp fell in the 1990s, adoption exploded
- Regional associations developed locally adapted NT packages
- Later, the regional associations formed a national association

NT POs in Argentina

Between 1970 and 1989, 15 farmers and researchers worked to develop a NT package

It was effective, but it did not diffuse

In 1989 Monsanto supported the creation of the NT association

After two years, the PO became independent from Monsanto



NT POs in Argentina (2)

- The first president was a very effective communicator and organizer
- The grain area was relatively homogeneous, thus there was one association
- As the technology diffused to marginal areas, local chapters were created
- When the price of RoundUp fell, adoption exploded

NT PO in Paraguay

- In the 1980s and 1990s, Brazilian farmers colonized eastern Paraguay
- They brought their experience with NT and POs
- Research capabilities in the region were very weak
- They created a NT PO to adapt the Brazilian package to their conditions
- They received the support of international aid agencies, neighboring NT POs and CIMMYT

Common features of these NT POS

- They were initiated by farmers and farmers still manage them
- They have federated structures with small groups at their bases
- Their main goal is to improve and diffuse NT
- They participate in and are supported by many partnerships that include private firms, other NT POs and researchers



Thank you