

How to enable public-private engagement in order to support farmer adoption of new technologies

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Abstract

This paper is based on experiences in the agricultural production sector and draws on a range of project work – both publically available and unreleased materials. It draws together a set of proposed Key Success Factors that support agricultural industry adoption of new technologies that arise from publically funded R&D work. It does so using case studies to illustrate these concepts in action.

A set of Golden Rules are proposed:

- A strong Vision based on clear objectives with measurable performance indicators provide clarity of purpose and agreed direction
- An Evidence Based Approach using data acquired to robustly demonstrate progress in meeting objectives and to support timely decision making
- Clear lines of Communication using a range of structured methods across and between varied levels of partners
- Ensuring the Purpose of the partnership remains pre-eminent to the Processes of managing the partnership, recognising the cultural drivers of each partner.

Introduction

In general the agricultural research and development (R&D) and extension and adoption (E&A) functions are regarded as separate yet linked elements of the research continuum. Much R&D is still undertaken by the public sector whereas there has been a transition in which the private agribusiness adviser sector now has the primary function for E&A. Two case studies address the public-private linkages in E&A.

Both the R&D and E&A functions are being adversely affected by a skill shortage that will reach critical levels in agriculture in 5-8 years time when current senior personnel aged 50 years or over commence retirement or depart the industry for varied reasons (Russell et al, 2006). One case study deals with actions to address these shortages.

The key proposition

In agriculture the Key Success Factors and Golden Rules for a public-private partnership that can support the adoption of R&D outcomes include: a Shared Vision; a strong Culture of Engagement and focussed communication; the Delivery of Outcomes against key performance indicators; and one of Continuous Improvement in the relationship. A Monitoring and Evaluation Strategy allows for a process of 'checking-in' and Reporting on progress of meeting the objectives, as well as defining potential problems along the way.

The concepts in this paper are developed based on the author's experience with establishing a number of public-private partnerships.

Context

The agri-foods and fibre industries of Australia are based on a value chain where commodities such as grains, meats, etc are produced, processed and transported before being consumed in a range of settings in the domestic and export markets. This presentation relates primarily to the food production end of the value chain.

In Australia there are some 130,000 farmers. In context of data from the 2007 ABARE reports, of these only some 15-35,000 fit the profile of the larger more profitable, quality

focussed enterprises. These are known, according to the author's experience, to have a more businesslike approach with an attitude that more readily embraces change.

Until the 1990's the responsibility for both the publically funded R&D and E&A function in Australian agricultural production resided primarily with the state agriculture and related departments. However in the late 1990's a transition commenced which is now largely complete with those departments removing much of their core funding of the education, training and advisory functions to farmers. This transition was largely complete in the early 2000's and there are now varied approaches by state agencies to strategic E&A.

As a result private sector advisers (called agribusiness advisers in this paper) including large national companies, regional companies, private consultants – and grower groups (publically and privately funded) – have stepped into this void. This demonstrates market forces at work. It is known (Stone 2009) that these advisers acquire the R&D results via a number of methods and synthesise the results for delivery to their clients using a range of methods, particularly using a one-to-one basis. Generally the use of the results is 'personalised' to the needs of specific client or clients groups.

Market forces means that farmers access the results of publically funded R&D work in a number of ways:

- Those who are prepared to pay to acquire their information in 'raw form' or 'synthesised form' via direct fee for service to the agribusiness adviser organisation
- Those who prefer to do so acquire it when bundled into farm input products as part of their product purchases
- Those who prefer to attend farmer groups acquire it at varied fee levels
- Still others prefer to acquire the information themselves on an ad-hoc basis. This remains possible as many publically funded organisations continue to provide 'awareness type information' in the form of media materials, publications and fact sheets that are distributed direct to farmers or information accessed by searching the web. However this process lacks the 'synthesis' and 'personalisation' function provided by the agribusiness sector or involvement in a group
- Many farmers acquire their information using more than one of these strategies.

In Australia a significant proportion of the publically funded agricultural R&D work is managed through 15 Rural Research and Development Corporations (RDCs). Their annual budget is some \$490 million annually (Productivity Commission 2010) that is a joint investment from rural industry levies and federal government funding. In a joint program focussed on capacity building, nine RDCs sought to understand the private sector engagement and its focus on both R&D and E&A. The author undertook two projects for this program, including one which concluded in 2008 and examined cultural issues associated with engagement of the public and private sectors (Stone 2009) and is reported below.

The grains industry also sought to strategically engage with the agribusiness sector – to seek input to R&D priorities as well as to support the E&A function. This initiative occurred through the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) and the author was contracted to investigate how to create an engagement strategy and to commence its delivery (Stone 2007). He has been subsequently contracted to do the same for the cotton industry (and for the natural resource management sector) although this industry is yet to commence a similar process of formal engagement that has been underway in the grains industry since 2008.

Three case studies will be used to demonstrate varied public-private partnerships in action. The first covers a project where a range of RDCs sought to understand the factors affecting how a public and industry funded R&D agency could engage with the agribusiness sector. The second discusses a process whereby one RDC has successfully engaged with the agribusiness sector. The third discusses how a public-private partnership between a range of publically funded, industry funded and agribusiness organisations have engaged to deal with a strategic industry issue.

Case Study 1

An examination of the culture of public and private sector engagement in agriculture

As noted above it became apparent to a number of RDCs that some form of engagement with the agribusiness sector was required to support their delivery of R&D results to farmer levy payers and beneficiaries of the R&D work that had been undertaken. The author undertook a cross-RDC project to investigate this issue and sought a detailed understanding of what would be required to facilitate such engagement.

Key factors in engagement

The across-RDC study (Stone 2009) included an initial phase of seeking input on key relevant issues confronting farmers (as ultimate beneficiaries of R&D work), agribusiness advisers (as the conduit to farmers) and RDC personnel (as R&D managers and funders) regarding the development of some form of a management system to facilitate delivery of R&E results to farmers. The purpose of the management system was to facilitate direct engagement between the RDCs and the agribusiness sector.

So a key question became *'why would agribusiness want to engage with the industry?'* A key interim finding to emerge from the research was that 'streamlined access to information' was a priority for agribusiness advisers. As a result the project focused stronger attention on how the RDC sector could effectively engage 'directly with agribusiness' in order to support better access to publically funded R&D information by farmers.

Key Success Factor

A primary motivator for engagement emerged as wanting 'streamlined access to information'.

It was noted during the research that a key issue for the agribusiness sector was the ... *'perception of the difficulty in accessing knowledge stored in researchers' heads or their filing cabinets'*. Accordingly an Information Repository that focussed on a search engine based strategy, known as FarmPlus – see www.rdsee.com.au – was located during the project.

It was established that the purpose of liaison between RDCs and Agribusiness was to:

- Build relationships
- Open lines of communication
- Determine key significant issues of interest that have cross-RDC relevance – and relevance to agribusiness
- Establish overall consistency in approach
- Consider collaboration on the basis of identifying key cross RDC projects
- Consider undertaking direct liaison on more specific issues on a RDC / sector direct to agribusiness basis
- Transfer value from RDCs to Agribusiness and onto Growers
- Foster longer-term direct RDC-Agribusiness relationships.

A range of the specific issues to be considered with regard to the application of a suitable Information Repository included that it must:

- Link to a value proposition for all stakeholders
- Consider issues of knowledge exclusivity
- Consider commercial in confidence issues
- Consider agribusiness as a client of the Repository
- Promote the Repository as a place where ... *'agribusiness can get access to unprocessed knowledge and summarised information – that directly meets your needs'*.

Key success factor

A value proposition common to all stakeholders, with a range of defined elements, is crucial to facilitate engagement.

How to best facilitate engagement

These considerations caused a further key issue to emerge – *how to engage the culture of the RDCs with the culture of agribusiness*. It was considered essential to understand these cultural differences in order to fully engage interested RDCs in a strategic agribusiness relationship development process.

'Culture' was defined in the following way:

"RDCs and most R&D providers are government managed or government funded. Government has a strong and focussed priority on accountability, transparency, systems, annual budget cycles, strategic plans, action plans, management systems, defined delivery paths, consensus and political awareness. The R&D provider culture can be described as being accountability and process focussed.

Agribusiness as the name suggests is focussed on doing private business and creating a private return on investment for shareholders from private and public resources. In order to achieve those returns, agribusiness is very focused on generating an income. While all the characteristics of government operate in business too, they are less of a priority than getting the job done, meeting clients needs, creating profitable products and services. This includes rapid delivery of products and services to clients who are profitable and this will in turn contribute to the agribusiness bottom line. It is notable that community good and altruistic motives are included in the decisions of agribusiness although with a different emphasis to the RDCs. The agribusiness culture can therefore be described as one of client based action focussing on income and profits for the immediate, short and longer term."

It became apparent that a disconnect between these two cultures had emerged.

<p>Key success factor</p>

<p>A crucial element of engagement is an understanding of the cultural issues that might support engagement or cause a disconnect between parties.</p>
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This is particularly evident in the notion of agribusiness .. *'making money out of information delivery, creating money making products and use of industry-funded IP'*. The notion that agribusiness' primary role is to facilitate farmers or RDC levy payers maximising their income through the use of industry funds (and tax payer funds) – proved a difficult concept for many RDC personnel to grasp. Equally agribusiness had difficulty grasping the extent and complexity of the accountability process of publicly focussed organisations.

It became evident that this was a similarly difficult concept for other R&D provider personnel to grasp also. This in turn led to an awareness that the concept of 'terms of trade' would become pivotal during this project, to ensure that R&D providers have some understanding of these concepts, so that when RDCs collaborate in practice with agribusiness, they can 'speak the same language'.

Issues relevant to 'terms of trade'

The issue of 'terms of trade' between agribusiness and RDCs also proved to be one of diverging cultures with issues of relationships and collaboration proving to be central to 'doing business'.

During the project the following needs and drivers of the two groups were identified in priority :

Agribusiness Stakeholders Drivers/Needs	RDC Stakeholders Drivers/Needs
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Long term, high profit client relationships 2. Meeting client goals and drivers 3. Access to information 4. Delivery in terms growers relate to, in language relevant to them – detailed / simple / practical 5. Ability to synthesise – into advice / products 6. Relationships = profits = \$ change hands. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Industry survival 2. R&D strategic planning & management of aggregated investments of public monies 3. Manage R&D delivery 4. Show benefits and ROI to stakeholders – especially levy payers 5. Extension, Adoption and Practice Change 6. Increase \$ returns to growers 7. Triple Bottom Line.

Factors that influence the relationship from the view point of Agribusiness were determined as:

- Agribusiness is time poor
- Agribusiness is client focused – because pay off is fast and failure is quick
- Agribusiness is closely aligned with client wants and needs – based on relationships and it is unlikely to step beyond boundaries
- Agribusiness has specific needs – focussed on regions, sectors, levels of its expertise, types of information delivery – to meet client needs
- Agribusiness focuses on Client Change – to meet client goals – to increase their profitability
- To focus on Client Change – Information must be converted to advice – that is practical and relevant – and is dollar focussed – to facilitate practice change
- There is limited time for liaison with RDCs so every interaction has to be a win:win.

With regard to Agribusiness segments and *terms of trade* the following issues were identified:

- Building relationships is crucial
- Open lines of communications are crucial
- Partnerships can elicit real financial / in-kind support from agribusiness to match real funds from RDCs
- Understanding each other's culture and drivers – and those of the growers is crucial to support strong relationships.

It was concluded that a crucial action to diminish the effects of these cultural differences and foster collaboration, is to determine the 'Terms of Trade' for the relationship. Establishing 'common ground' is a key issue and is helpful for the interaction.

Key Success Factor

Defining, understanding and acknowledging the 'terms of trade' and common ground between agribusiness and R&D providers were identified as key factors in building the relationship.

It was agreed that 'common ground' does exist between Agribusiness stakeholders and RDCs with regard to their joint requirements. There is a common need for:

- Information to ensure access to information and delivery of relevant information to growers
- Practical and relevant R&D outputs to be made available to growers via agribusiness
- The meeting of varied grower's needs (in terms of target audience segmentation – according to their industry sector / geographic location) is crucial
- Achieving practice change – where relevant / required / sought by growers – creating financial benefits for individual enterprise and wider industry / community
- Impacts on future priorities for R&D
- Engaging agribusiness and growers in trials / R&D.

Key Success Factors (KSFs) in public private partnerships from Case Study 1

The following KSFs of Case Study 1 can be summarised as being:

- A primary motivator is necessary to focus engagement between the parties
- A value proposition common to all parties, with a range of defined elements, is crucial
- An understanding is required of the cultural issues that might support or cause a disconnect between engaging parties
- Defining, understanding and acknowledging the terms of trade and common ground between parties are key factors in building strong relationships.

Key elements of implementing these KSFs can be articulated as being to:

- Build relationships
- Ensure open lines of communication
- Determine key significant issues of interest that have cross-party relevance – and may have relevance to affected key stakeholders
- An overall consistency in approach is important
- Define the type of collaboration that will be beneficial
- Define what will be necessary and crucial to foster longer-term direct relationships.

The second case study illustrates a public-private partnership that is currently successfully operating – and is based on the implementation of many principles that emerged from the first case study.

Case Study 2

Improving GRDC-agribusiness interaction

Establishing an interaction strategy

In 2006/7 the author undertook a project for the grains industry through the Grains RDC. Its purpose was for GRDC to more formally engage with the grains agribusiness sector – in all its forms – to facilitate stronger GRDC engagement with grain growers. The project included interviews with graingrowers and a representative sample of the grains agribusiness sector along with members of the GRDC industry advisory panels. This process in turn facilitated creation of a scenario to guide the formal interaction of the grains agribusiness sector and GRDC.

The project aim was to create a mutually beneficial partnership and feedback loop to and from growers via agribusiness to the GRDC. The focus of this process was on supplying contemporary technical information to graingrowers through this conduit and to support grower adoption of R&D outcomes. Further it was to ensure the agribusiness sector became a defined client group of the GRDC.

A significant project output was to ensure an understanding of the influencing factors of such engagement and to commence initial engagement with key agribusiness representatives.

Key Success Factor

The input of all stakeholders to the development of an interaction scenario provided a strong sense of ownership and understanding of the key objectives of engagement.

The key findings of the initial project phase were:

- That there was a need for a group of key national senior management personnel representing the major national and regional agribusiness companies and private consultants to be convened to represent the industry needs in a roundtable forum with the GRDC. The focus of this National Agribusiness Reference Group or NARG would be on discussing strategic industry issues, considering the effectiveness of varied industry initiatives, providing input and feedback on current and potential initiatives and providing contacts and conduits into the agribusiness sector.
- That the NARG should be supported by three Regional Agribusiness Reference Groups (RARGs) consisting of field personnel associated with the NARG representatives. The

RARG role was to consider and undertake on-ground implementation of a range of the issues that had been considered by the NARG and to support the operationalisation of delivering R&D findings to growers.

The NARG and RARG process was implemented the following year in the practical interaction phase.

Key Success Factor

The influence of both senior and field personnel from 'member organisations' ensured strong and open lines of communication and feedback from the field and policy / strategy level and vice versa.

This was based on the GRDC seeing its role as an honest broker supplying and managing factual information to the grains industry based on managing a national industry focussed R&D portfolio. It was noted that an important industry role was to foster highly cost effective communication. A range of key issues on which the GRDC and the agribusiness sector would interact were identified and grower respondents and the panels endorsed the role of the agribusiness sector as a key information conduit. Varied methods of information delivery to and from GRDC were canvassed.

A strategy implementation process over 5 years was defined as including an initial relationship building phase, leading to a consolidation phase and then a mainstreaming phase where these activities ultimately become an integral part of the GRDC activities.

Key Success Factor

The creation of a strategy implementation process over 5 years provided a vision of the future and a common direction for all stakeholders.

The author managed the subsequent Year 1 of the delivery of the engagement strategy in 2007/8 through the operationalisation of the NARG and RARG process. At the conclusion of that year the project management was put out to tender in accordance with the procurement policies of GRDC. A 12-month hiatus in the project ensued.

The author maintained contact with key NARG representatives during that period and became aware that the agribusiness representatives became increasingly concerned with the hiatus. They noted that the procurement process was diminishing project continuity and was reducing the organisational and personal commitment to the undoubted value of the project.

Key factor for consideration

The internal procurement process resulting in a significant project hiatus caused diminished commitment of key personnel to the project continuity.

While subsequently the project was managed by another organisation, the author was able to seek feedback on key issues associated with the project in the intervening time from key NARG and GRDC personnel.

Managing the interaction strategy

During the first year of the implementation a range of key issues were identified for attention over the project life including:

- Ensuring the NARG and RARG was reactive to emerging industry issues
- Defining and agreeing on a value proposition / measures of success / outcomes for the program, including its strategic positioning, its resourcing, data on which to measure success, operational protocols and recognising the future barriers that might arise
- Defining the internal and external communication processes
- Defining appropriate methods of R&D outcome delivery to growers and how to best increase the rate of grower adoption of new technologies
- Dealing with structural grains industry issues, such as where will future industry personnel be sourced, terms of trade issues including the payment by growers for advice, role of

extension and adoption of R&D results as being a critical 'under-considered' issue in the industry, an understanding of grains industry social systems, the need for and value of a farming systems approach to create an holistic system, considering industry professional standards, environmental planning issues, etc

- Understanding of the key R&D projects that had been undertaken in the industry that related to highly topical industry issues
- Having awareness of key industry issues such as chemical use and weeds management
- Ensuring that the program gets 'runs on the board' to demonstrate its effectiveness.

Key Success Factor

An annual operating plan that is clearly focussed on an agreed purpose, ensuring program relevance, ability to measure success in meeting objectives and value for money to the participants and the industry, is a crucial element of a professionally run public-private partnership.

The year concluded, after three national meetings, with a review of the program to ensure it was on-track to deliver against its objectives. Some reflections occurred on the successes to-date and led to consideration of the extent to which the current focus was appropriate.

A renewed focus was agreed for the period to end of 2010. This included a focus on:

- Creating a strategic industry discussion forum on crucial issues that is well managed on professional lines
- Ensuring the program remains relevant to the industry personnel
- Focusing the program on clear objectives and outcomes
- Creating open lines of communication across the industry and in particular from NARG members to the GRDC and vice versa
- Continuing to address key strategic and policy issues including maximising the effectiveness of the grains R&D effort across the whole industry
- Focusing on supporting faster adoption of new technologies by graingrowers
- Supporting the enhancement of the role and function of the agribusiness sector
- Undertaking collaborative projects.

Key Success Factor

An annual review of success provides a key element of the annual operating plan and in turn a focus for the future.

The author is aware via personal feedback from key NARG members that these initial reflections currently remain generally valid.

From GRDC's perspective it is apparent that the program is progressing effectively. They are pleased with their engagement in the program, which has expanded into additional initiatives including influence on their GRDC internal management and investment processes. It has increased the GRDC understanding of industry issues especially those influenced by the agribusiness sector. The GRDC notes the program has a strong engagement with industry technical issues.

From personal communication with several NARG members their perspectives are similar and they applaud the concept – particularly its strong collaboration. One representative reports a common response 'that the real test will be over the next 18-months as we are yet to deliver on our key outcomes and although this is highly likely I am continually surprised at how much collaboration is required to get things done'. He also noted the danger of focussing on day to day issues at the expense of strategic issues.

Key Success Factor

Crucial elements of the grains public-private partnership are to maintain a focus on collaboration and communication, a focus on strategic vs. operational issues and achieving measureable outcomes against the key program objectives, so as to facilitate reporting against them.

Key Success Factors in public private partnerships to emerge from Case Study 2

The following KSFs of Case Study 2 can be summarised as being:

- An interaction scenario that summarises key objectives in context of what is proposed to be achieved over 5-years provides a common vision; and ideally this common vision is best created in collaboration with all partners and parties
- The interaction scenario is best linked to annual operating plans where incremental progress on meeting objectives and outcomes can be assessed
- A distinction between strategic and operational issues is important
- Both senior and field personnel are best engaged in the interaction so all are focussed on meeting objectives and outcomes and that information, etc can flow from senior to junior level and vice versa – and similarly across partners
- Open lines of communication to support collaboration are critical
- Ensure the operational systems support the strategic engagement rather than the systems becoming pre-eminent.

The third case study focuses on a national strategic program to attract young people into agriculture. This is a public-private partnership of a different nature – with a range of organisations having become stakeholders over time. While publically and industry funded agencies varying from universities to state departments and RDCs are partners, so are national agribusinesses and local businesses. Many have become longer term partners in the program.

Case Study 3

The Primary Industry Centre for Science Education

The PICSE concept

The Primary Industry Centre for Science Education (PICSE) is a national collaborative partnership between the Commonwealth Government, universities, regional primary industries, national R&D Corporations, Cooperative Research Centres (CRCs), national agribusiness, regional research institutes, government authorities, local community organisations, schools and State Government Departments (www.picse.net). Its focus is to create an entry point to the supply chain of bright young people entering professional careers in Australia's increasingly vibrant, globally focused and quality conscious food and fibre industries.

PICSE aims to attract an increased supply of high quality young people to these industries through engagement with them during school years and early university. To do so, PICSE provides an established program and strategy that includes science class activities, teacher professional development, student camps, industry placement and ongoing teaching resources. Collectively, these activities build strong and sustainable relationships with employers, science practitioners, educators and students (both primary and secondary with continued engagement at tertiary level).

Key Success Factor

The 'seeing is believing' nature of the program supports direct engagement of all stakeholders and facilitates strong communication and feedback.

'The PICSE goal is to attract the brightest and most creative minds to ongoing science education and primary industry careers' (Russell et al, PICSE Scoping Study, 2006). The PICSE program and strategies deliberately employs an evidence base approach making all aspects of the science underpinning sustainable agricultural production, processing and quality management a key priority through use of current research and industry examples. PICSE's integrated program is well researched, tested and evaluated over a 10-year period. The outcomes of the PICSE program are further supported by research that indicates the

significant benefits of building long term relationships in order to affect changing attitudes and perceptions amongst students, teachers, industry and the broader community.

In 2011 PICSE operates from nine Activity Centres (AC) located at universities or in industries in every state of Australia. It is strongly focussed on its government and industry relationships that have been built by the 12 PICSE Science Education Officers (SEO) nationally; these are fundamental to the success and sustainability of the program. PICSE has a very strong monitoring and evaluation program that supports internal continuous improvement as well as robust progress reporting to partners and investors. QualDATA has managed the monitoring evaluation and reporting program for PICSE since 2008.

Key Success Factor

The strong evidence based origins, plus a strong monitoring, evaluation and reporting program, provides robust data on successes to report to investors and supports internal continuous improvement where it is required to facilitate innovation.

Its origins

The PICSE program had its origins in Tasmania in 1998. It emerged out of a desire by the University of Tasmania to secure a stream of entrants from school into its tertiary agricultural science courses. To do this the program focussed on direct engagement by students and teachers with handpicked professional local primary industries focussed businesses.

This had the effect of showing the contemporary, global and professional operations of these businesses in a 'show and tell' setting where these potential employers demonstrated the breadth of exciting careers on offer. This direct engagement with students and science teachers remains a key factor in its success today.

Key Success Factor

Direct engagement of teachers and students with handpicked employers demystifies the breadth of primary industries careers on offer.

The GRDC supported the expansion of the program to Western Australia in 2003 to determine whether the Tasmanian experience could be replicated in a varied setting. The GRDC remains a significant funding partner as does the University of Western Australia.

In 2005 the Federal Government commissioned a Scoping Study to determine the feasibility of national expansion of the program. A key focus of this study was to create a suitable vision and operations for the program to 2014 and determine how to establish key partnerships with industry investors, state governments and businesses. Engagement with governments, RDCs and business investors during the study revealed the need for a Business Case which the federal government subsequently funded.

A key outcome of the Business Case was consideration of how to adequately report suitable measures of return on investment and measures of success to convince investors that outcomes were being achieved and money spent effectively. The creation of the business case was instrumental in a number of the RDCs being prepared to invest in PICSE and gave confidence to other investors, including universities, that a rigorous market research and business development process had been undertaken.

Key Success Factor

Preparation of the Scoping Study and Business Case provided confidence to investors by demonstrating a clear vision for the future and an articulation of expected key measures of success.

Engagement

While both the Business Case and Scoping Study provided an evidence based approach to engaging investors and stakeholders, personal engagement from the PICSE senior management team over time, since these studies, provided the opportunity for potential investors to understand fully the vision and objectives of the program plus the operations.

The development of a Network newsletter that is regularly forwarded to all current and potential investors and interested parties provides a further engagement mechanism. This supports regular 'drop-in' meetings and formal update briefings with investors.

The whole process provides the opportunity for partner and investor input and for them to 'have a say' that also influences planning and continuous improvement. The provision of data regarding outcomes via the Reporting process also gives them confidence in the program. This further supports their understanding of the 'what's in it for me'. It provides the PICSE team with an understanding of the key drivers of individual investors and an understanding of the motivations of certain investor segments such as RDCs and global and national agribusiness.

When investors agree to support the program an MOU is created, based on PICSE committing to deliver key outcomes based on Performance Indicators against which success can be judged. These translate into personalised touch points for the program with investors that have operational and strategic ramifications.

Key Success Factor

A defined personal and non-personal engagement strategy between PICSE senior management and investors, partners and interested parties has facilitated the development of strong relationships and an understanding of, and ability to report against, key performance indicators.

Key Success Factors in public private partnerships to emerge from Case Study 3

The following KSFs of Case Study 3 can be summarised as being:

- A strongly articulated vision and business case demonstrates clarity of purpose
- Practical understanding of key issues is important for partner decision making
- Strong personal engagement of senior partner representatives is crucial to build relationships and support understanding of strategic issues
- Strong evidence based reporting to partners is critical and a robust monitoring and evaluation system must support this process.

Key Success Factors

These three case studies reveal a number of common key success factors (KSFs). They are:

- Information on which to base decisions is sought by partners, investors and stakeholders, particularly in context of the motivation to engage – or specifically the Purpose(s) for engagement that are best defined in Outcomes terms
- Definition of a value proposition, ideally in a strategic context such as a business case or scoping paper or study, with clear vision, time based objectives, key performance indicators and an appreciation of the 'what's in it for me' of the individual stakeholders or investors / investor sectors, is essential
- Strategic plans are best linked to defined annual operating type plans to ensure the strategy can be achieved over time in an incremental manner and in a professional way that is based on achievement of / reporting against annual measurable performance indicator based outcomes against strategic objectives
- Recognition that in a public-private partnership, the cultures and priority issues within the cultures, particularly of the public sector vs. the private sector, are pivotal to making the partnership work
- Acknowledgement that these cultural issues and their relative priorities for the respective partners must translate into real terms of trade with public and private partners, including the perceptions and realities of how the parties 'do business'.
- These terms of trade also relate to the relative importance of client engagement and meeting client needs – and the relative importance of Purpose vs. Process or Outcomes

vs. Accountability and also defining common ground and common terminology of engagement

- The development of strong relationships is pivotal. Key elements of relationship building include – open lines of communication, regular engagement, personal contact, attention to key issues of relevance / concern, a consistent approach and process for engagement / doing business, including defining how collaboration is best undertaken.
- Within the relationship building process it is apparent that defining the key stakeholder groups and individuals based on a defined interaction scenario that provides a strong sense of ownership and focus on common objectives is crucial
- Where senior management and field personnel have key areas of responsibility, strong engagement and open lines of communication is important across both levels of the partner organisations to ensure that policy / strategic communication and operational lines of communication are crucial.

Condensing the Key Success Factors into key Golden Rules

Based on these key success factors the following Golden Rules for an agriculturally focussed public-private partnership are proposed:

1. A strong Vision based on clear objectives with measureable performance indicators provides clarity of purpose and agreed direction amongst partners. A longer term vision such as over 5-years is best complemented by annual operating plans that can demonstrate incremental change in meeting those objectives
2. The demonstration of Progress in meeting Objectives is best undertaken using an evidence based method of acquiring the necessary data so that progress can be reported unambiguously and timely decisions made on the basis of robust data
3. Clear lines of Communication and a range of methods of engagement and communication are crucial. Personal communication at senior and junior levels is a key element of a successful partnership – particularly where partners are provided with the opportunity to see for themselves the progress being made or tangible examples of success
4. Purpose vs. Process is a key issue – the strong vision supports declaration of a Purpose for the public-private partnership. However systems and processes are required to manage any such partnership. It is important for the systems and processes to meet the needs of the purpose rather than vice versa.
5. The Culture of operations and engagement in the public and private sectors are significantly different. Each is best to understand the others perspective and mode of operation. This is an important element of establishing a culture of communication and engagement.

In summary, these characteristics of public-private-partnerships are remarkably consistent across the three case studies. Personal communication with key informants outside agribusiness has revealed consistency with these experiences. Accordingly the Golden Rules and KSFs could be considered as core elements to canvass for those R&D organisations seeking to develop or engage in a public-private-partnership.

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