

Community-led Innovations for Sustainable Land Use

Lessons from the Association of Indigenous and Peasant Producers of Riosucio in Colombia (ASPROINCA)

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CASE STUDY

Case Study

ASPROINCA has been working for almost 20 years with around 400 community members in the following fields of sustainable land use [1]:

- Sustainable agricultural practices
- Recovery of native varieties
- Biodigesters
- Water catchment protection

Research objective

To analyze and understand the structural configuration and management framework (promoters' program) under which specific technical innovations (biogas technology) are successfully implemented in the case of ASPROINCA.



Photo 1: Biodigester installation by a member and promoter of ASPROINCA

ANALYSIS

Methods

- Participant observation (4 weeks' field work with promoters) [2]
- Data gathering through questionnaires to members: farmers and community groups
- Expert interviews with member farmers, ASPROINCA staff and other stakeholders
- Application of TAF (Technology Applicability Framework) [3]

Findings

Biogas technology can be understood as a boundary object which, despite the differing views and appraisals of various stakeholder groups assessed through TAF, mediates the interactions between users (members) and the organization (ASPROINCA). Those interactions appear to shape 'virtuous' circles, in which technology provision is assured by the organization, the sensitization and performance of family farms are improved, mutual learning between farmers and promoters is ensured and the credibility and stability of the organization are sustained.

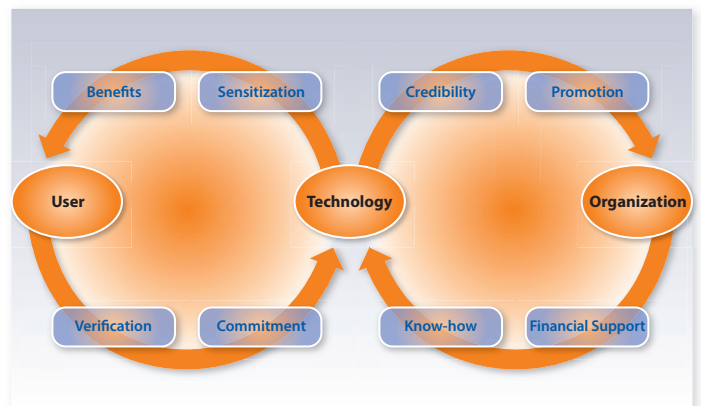


Figure 1: Virtuous cycles demonstrating technology as a boundary object

RESULTS

Conclusion

The following lessons can be learned from the field research of ASPROINCA:

- Biogas technology is highly accepted and esteemed by the user group, whereas ASPROINCA demonstrates a much more critical and varied appraisal of the technology (TAF).
- This divergent view does not affect the technology as a boundary object; in contrast, it strengthens relationships and processes by fostering an ongoing discourse between organization and individual users.
- Technology is a central boundary object that brings together the user group with the organization and enables exchange, development and mutual learning between those two groups, guaranteeing a stable platform for future interactions.



Photo 2: Exchange meeting between ASPROINCA and community members



Photo 3: ASPROINCA member farmers discussing information provided

Reference

1. United Nations Development Programme. 2012. Association of Indigenous and Peasant Producers (ASPROINCA), Colombia. Equator Initiative Case Study Series. New York, NY.
2. Atteslander, P. (2003): Methoden der empirischen Sozialforschung. 3. Technology Applicability Framework (2015), retrieved from <http://washtechologies.net/en>.