Why a Case Study Competition?

A case study is a stand-alone record of the evolution of an organization, project or situation over time that is designed for use as teaching material in classrooms or workshops. Students and practitioners in the field of innovation platforms should be able to understand the key challenges and solutions explored in a particular case, which should also provide enough new and important trends, lessons and frameworks to generate a lively classroom discussion. There is a lot that we can learn from the experience of Innovation Platforms. The case study competition was conceived as a way to tap into this valuable learning resource and record these lessons for our future benefit. Authors in the competition were encouraged to reflect candidly on their innovation platform’s achievements and failures, to refine their articulations of what works and what does not, and to provide insights and lessons from other similar initiatives.

A Writeshop to Bring it All Together

Ultimately twelve authors were chosen to document stories of innovation platforms from various countries in the developing world. A facilitated writeshop held at the Nairobi headquarters of the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) enabled participants to spend a week focused on writing-an often complex, challenging and isolating process. The writeshop gave them the opportunity to engage with other writers and encouraged discussion, reflection and feedback. This collaborative process helped them to work together to produce stronger, more reflective and more cohesive cases.

A Humidtropics CRP Legacy Product

Published by Routledge (Taylor & Francis group), the final product of the competition is the book titled ‘Innovation Platforms for Agricultural Development: Evaluating the mature innovation platforms landscape’. It features winning case studies from Central Africa, Ethiopia, India, Kenya, Nicaragua and Uganda. This publication and forthcoming training materials based on it will be an important legacy product for the Humidtropics CRP as multi-stakeholder platforms play an ever increasing role in research for development. Selected to highlight system trade-offs, scaling up agriculture, handling multiple commodities, and learning from failure, the case studies can be expected to be a useful learning resource for practitioners worldwide.

For more information contact: Dr. Iddo Dror, Head of Capacity Development, ILRI
i.dror@cgiar.org ● Box 30709 Nairobi, Kenya  ●  +254 20 422 3030
Nairobi, Kenya  ●  ilri.org
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