

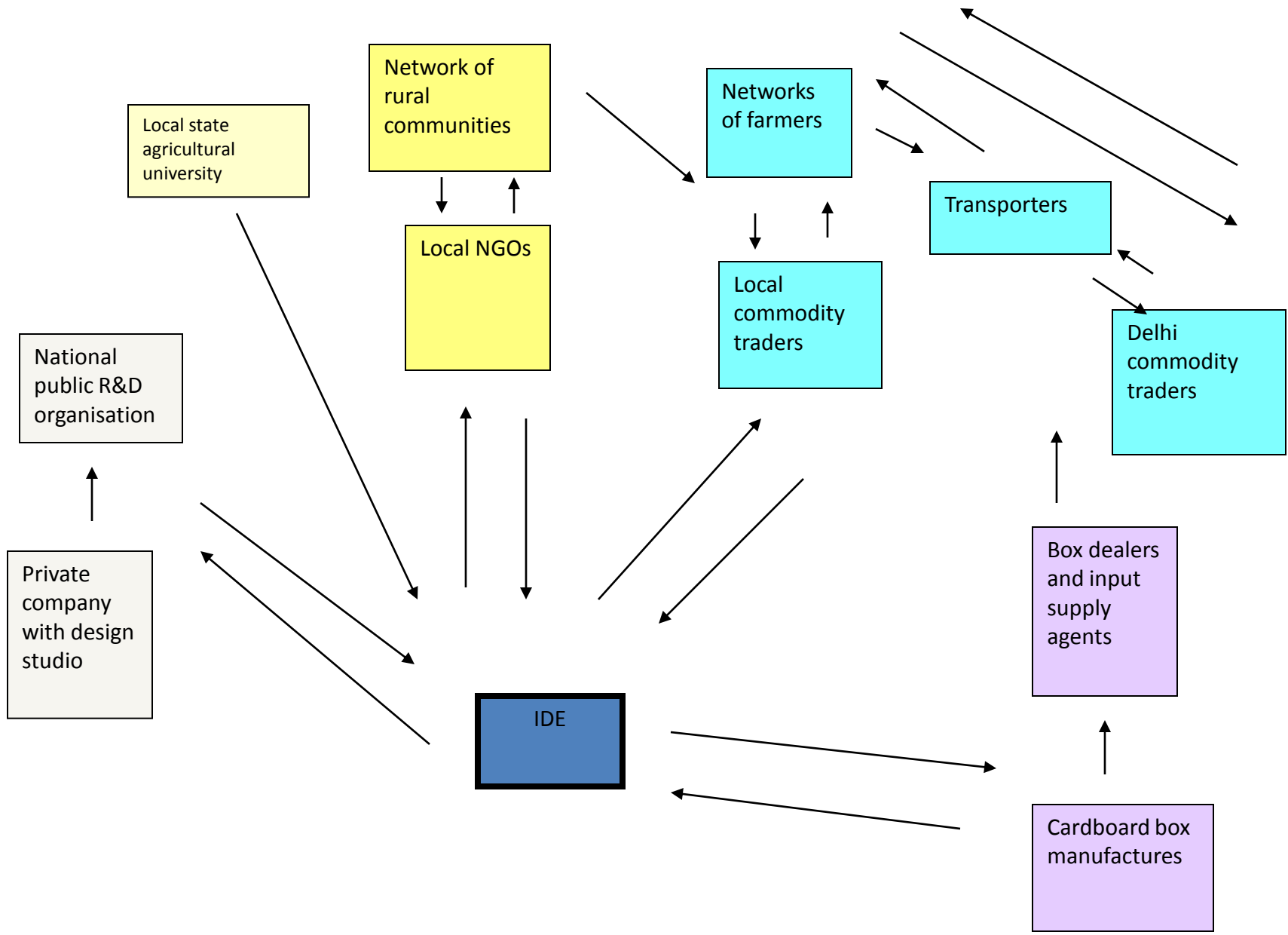
Partnerships in agricultural innovation systems: who puts them together? and what comes next?

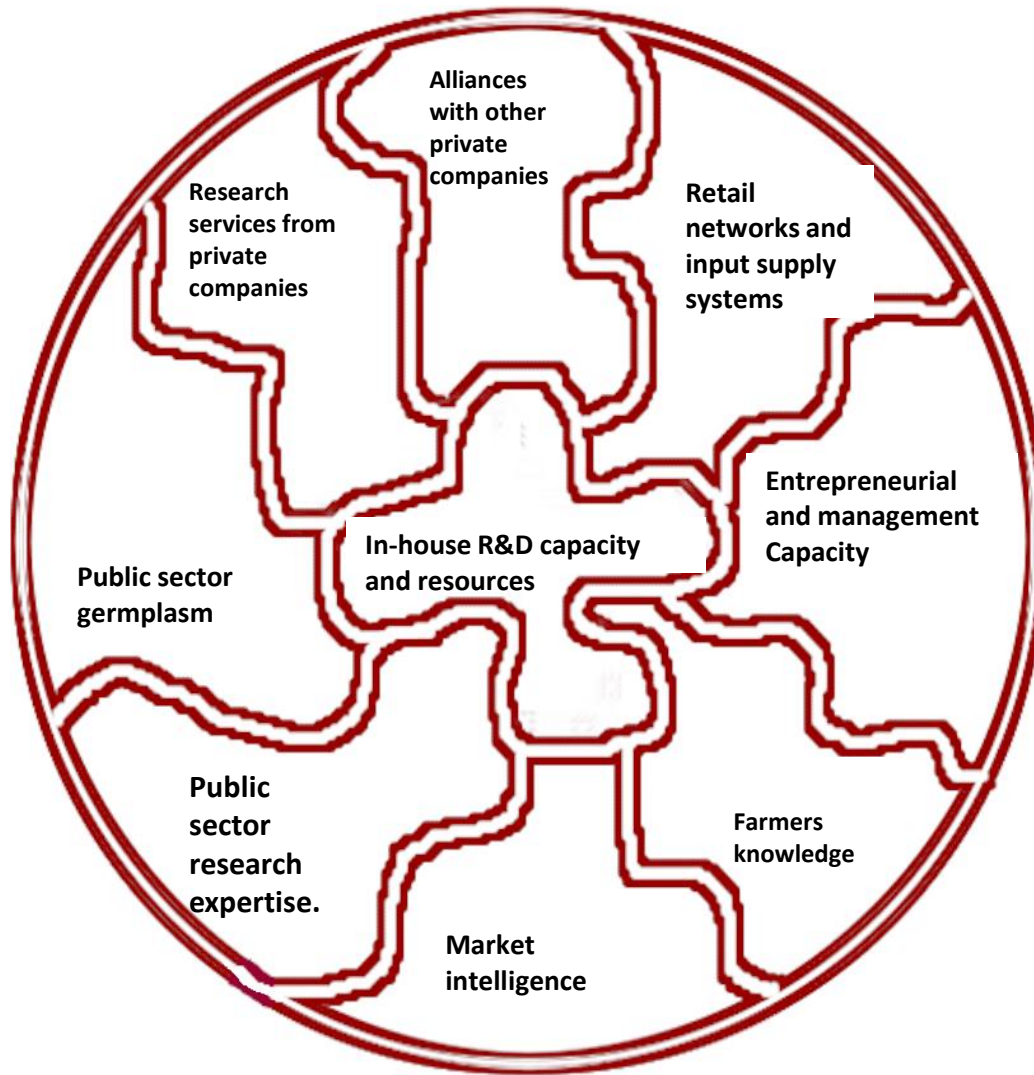
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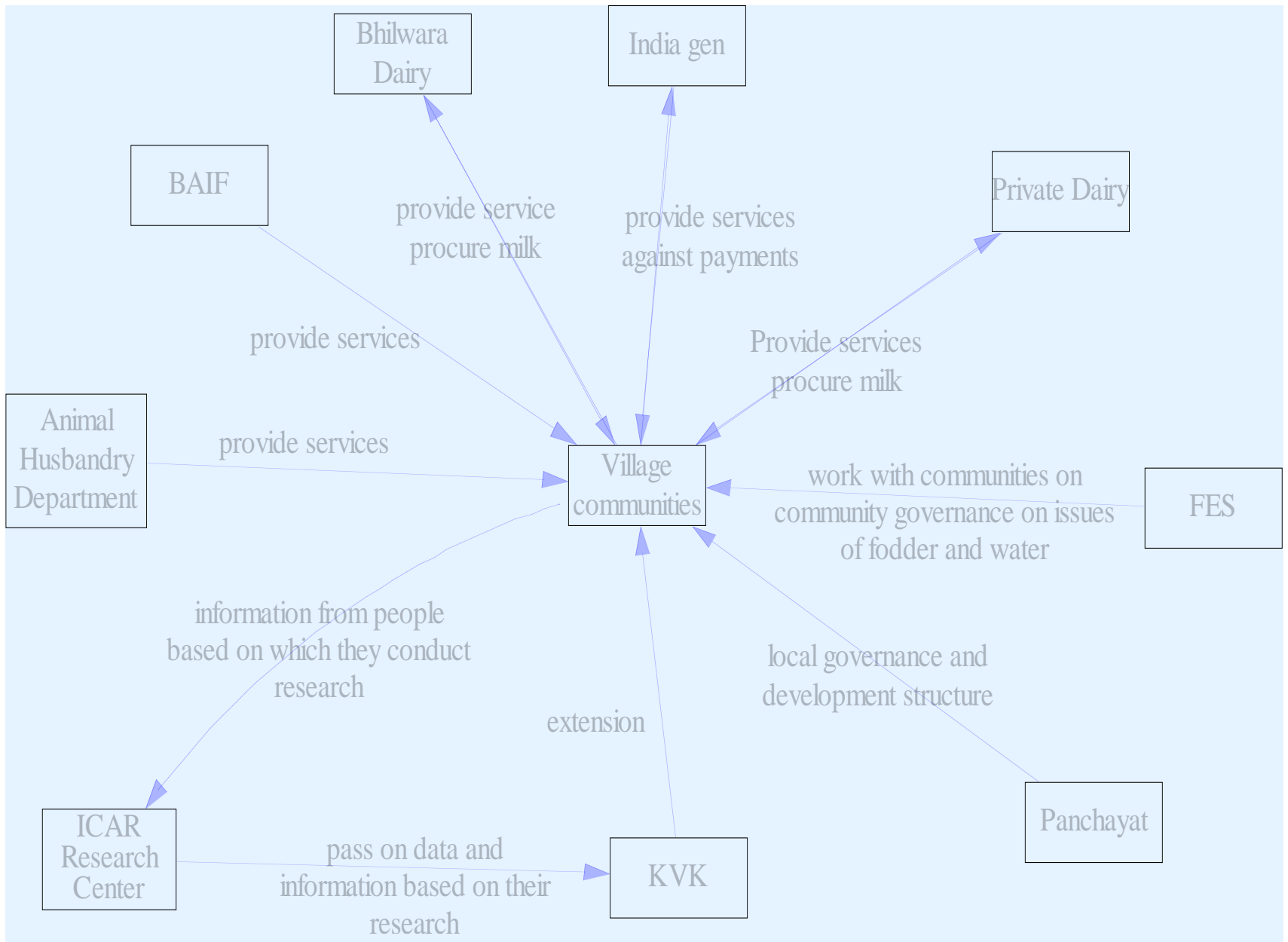
Why the shift from research to innovation in agriculture?

- Increasing results orientation among funders of research.
- Shelves of technology, poor uptake, weak demand orientation
- Increasingly complex agenda, food, environment, poverty reduction, fuel, changing consumer demands.
- New players and more prominence for private sector
- Improved understanding of how ideas and technology come into use

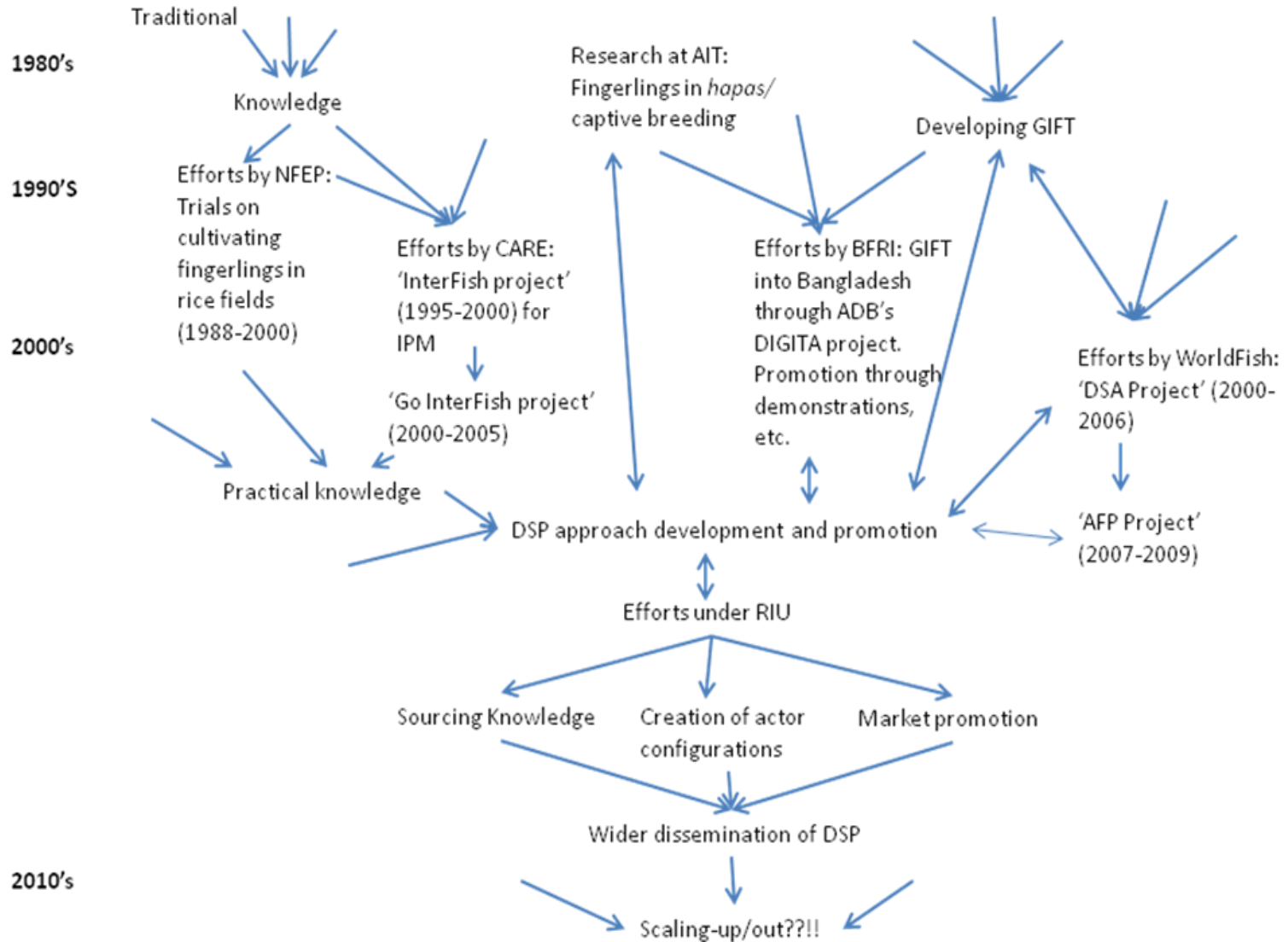




Elements of innovation capacity in the seed industry



Time line



Key ideas

- Innovation seems to emerge from a network of some sort involving formal and informal alliances.
- Research part of a wider process and assumes greater importance at different times
- Context matter and a diversity of innovation configurations exist.
- Alliances with the private sector important, but local firms not necessarily multinationals
- Huge institutional inertia holds back partnership and network development development
- Innovation includes adaptation of enabling environment.

Innovation brokers

- “a role that is neither involved in the creation of knowledge nor in its use in innovation, but one that binds together the various elements of an innovation system and ensures that demands are articulated to suppliers, that partners connect, and that information flows and learning occurs.” Klerkx et al 2010
- Operate at different levels in the innovation system.
- Private and civil society, but often with public money
- Shaped by historical settings

History of RIU

- DFID US\$300 million investment in agricultural research through the Renewable Natural Resources Strategy. Mainly UK science-led (1995-2005)
- Terminal evaluation: Good research, but limited impact
- DFID US\$50 million investment in RIU put research into use at “significant” scale and learn how to do this. (2006-2011)
- Assumed that there were as many as 30 technologies that with “one more push “ could achieve large-scale impact

3 Main Elements

- **Asia challenge fund projects.** Modest scale as a stop gap when no obvious blockbuster technologies found in RNRRS legacy. Logic: Expand partnerships around existing research groups with a view to scale-out. (India, Bangladesh, Nepal)
- **Africa country programs.** Innovation platforms and other interactive, multi-actor arrangements. Relaxed rules on RNRRS research products. Logic: Build capacity to use research (products). (Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Rwanda, Tanzania, Malawi, Zambia)

3 Main Elements (Cont.)

- **Best Bets.** Quasi venture capitalist selection process of business models that combine innovation and development relevance. Logic: Supporting entrepreneurial activity around promising new technology, “Bottom-up, bottom-line” models more than technologies for large markets of poor people.

4 types of brokering role in country programmes

- Sierra Leone. Brokering change in the enabling environment. (embedded in public sector)
- Nigeria. Bridging between new innovation practice and policy (embedded in public sector)
- Malawi. Facilitating technology supply chains (civil society organisation)
- Tanzania. Building new enterprises (private consulting company)

Brokering in Best Bets

- 1. Policy brokering for regulatory change:** Company producing and selling bio-control agents for striga. Medium RNRRS content (Kenya)
- 2. Consortium management.** Public-private sector consortium promoting migratory pest prediction and bio-control. Medium RNRRS content. (Tanzania)
- 3. Linking farmers to private companies and research organisations.** Nonprofit company promoting small seed and fertilizer packs. Questionable RNRRS content. (Kenya)

Brokering in Asia

Value chain brokering. Establishment and strengthening of micro-entrepreneurs network to distribute fish seed of improved variety

Bridging policy and practice. Brokering between community-based groups of forest users, eco-enterprises and policy-makers on natural resource management land use policy

What is really inside the RIU projects?

- RIU has generally bought into long-term trajectories of innovation; some with research origins, some with development and enterprise origins and usually a blending of all three.
- Not using research products necessarily. Using research expertise, but in combination with a highly sophisticated set of innovation management activities/ innovation brokering roles
- Brokering sometimes as pragmatic tactic to achieve goals in a development or enterprise setting, sometimes in the orchestrated way of the country programs [table]
- Prominence of hybrid market social entrepreneurs [diagram]

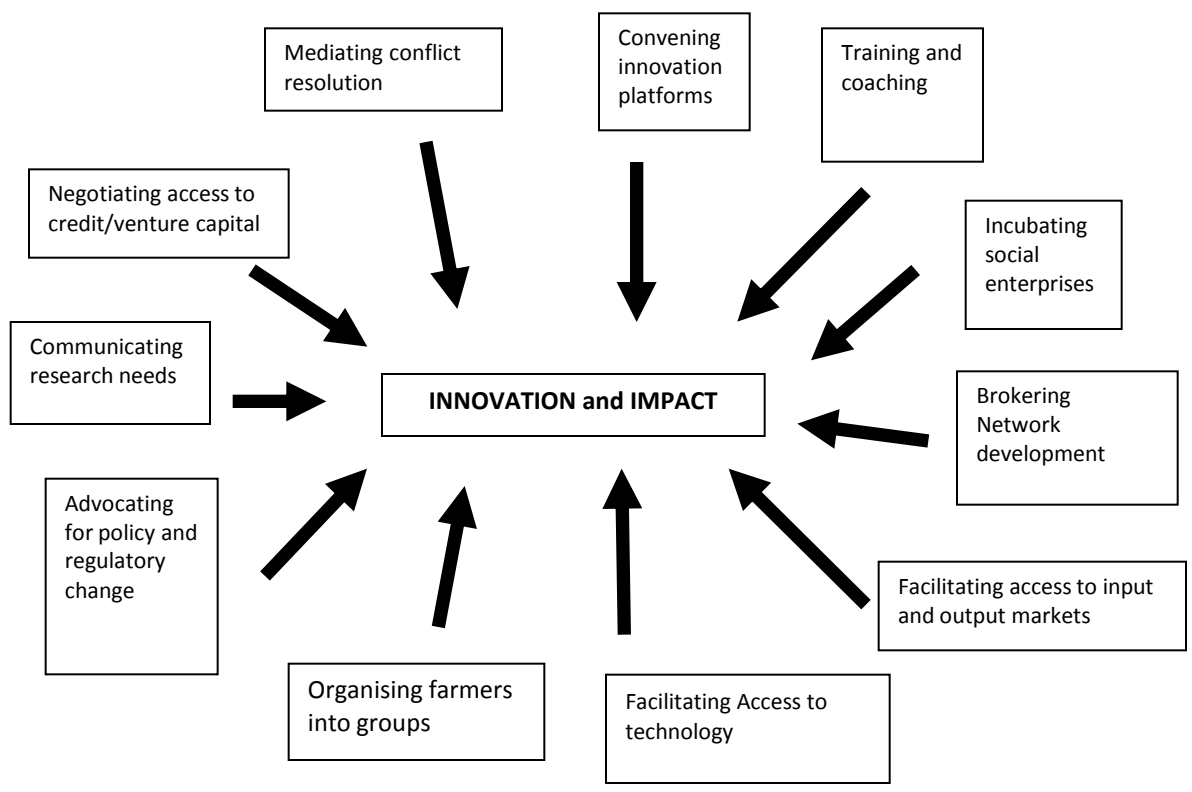
- **Functions**

- Network development
- Organisation of producers and consumers into groups
- Access to technology, expertise, markets, credit, inputs
- Advocacy for institutional and policy change
- Technical and field practice support for policy formulation and policy learning
- Training on new approaches and ways of working
- Articulation of research and technology demands of users
- Organising foresight and vision exercises
- Conflict resolution
- Reflective learning

- **Organisational formats**

- Research organisations
- Specialist intermediary / innovation management / brokering services
- Civil society organisations
- For-profit and hybrid companies
- Industry/ producer/ user associations and other sector coordinating bodies
- Think tanks
- Third-party technology brokers
- Social venture capital funds
- Information portal/ specialist media/ e-commerce

Figure 1 Innovation management tasks (Sulaiman et al 2010)



Tentative lessons

- **What puts research into use?** Combining technology access, demand articulation for research with a suite of other innovation management tasks performed by brokers
- **Who is managing innovation?** Brokering is pervasive. Varying scales of reach, but often localized. Specialized agencies also work. Hybrid enterprises important new trend.
- **Who pays for innovation management?** Enterprise-led maybe market but usually blended revenues. Specialist public services mainly public funding. Investment opportunities may exist for private capital where IM used to develop business models that tap large markets of poor people.

Four linked investment options

- **Strategic research fund.** Support to conventional research on broad development topics.
- **Innovation demand fund.** Research funds governed by non-research agencies and interest groups including enterprise and development sector. Agenda also to build link between research and non-research actors
- **Innovation management services fund.** Support to specialist innovation management services provided by public and or private sectors. Network building, negotiating, navigating.
- **Hybrid enterprise support fund.** Support to development coalitions and hybrid enterprises initiatives with high innovation management content. Collaboration potential between development, social and market venture capital. Nurture pragmatic network building, negotiating, navigating

Remaining challenges

- Benchmarking innovation capacity
- Establishing empirical link between new innovation process and productivity and social outcomes.
- Governance in multi-stakeholder arrangements, private sector using public money to broker enterprises.