



Agricultural Innovation: Common understanding the upcoming SOFA 2014



Content

- ✓ Definition and common understanding
- ✓ Conceptual and analytical frameworks
- ✓ Learning and change
- ✓ SOFA key message and examples



**Innovation is the process by
which social actors create value
from knowledge**

Engel, 2009



Definition and common understanding

- ✓ **Innovation: The process of creating and putting into use combinations of knowledge from many different sources**
- ✓ **This knowledge may be brand-new, but usually it is new combinations of existing knowledge.**
- ✓ **Process of constant learning and adaptation**
- ✓ **Occurs through interaction between multiple stakeholders.**
- ✓ **For an invention to become an innovation, it has to be used by farmers !**

Hall, 2001



Farmers are innovators

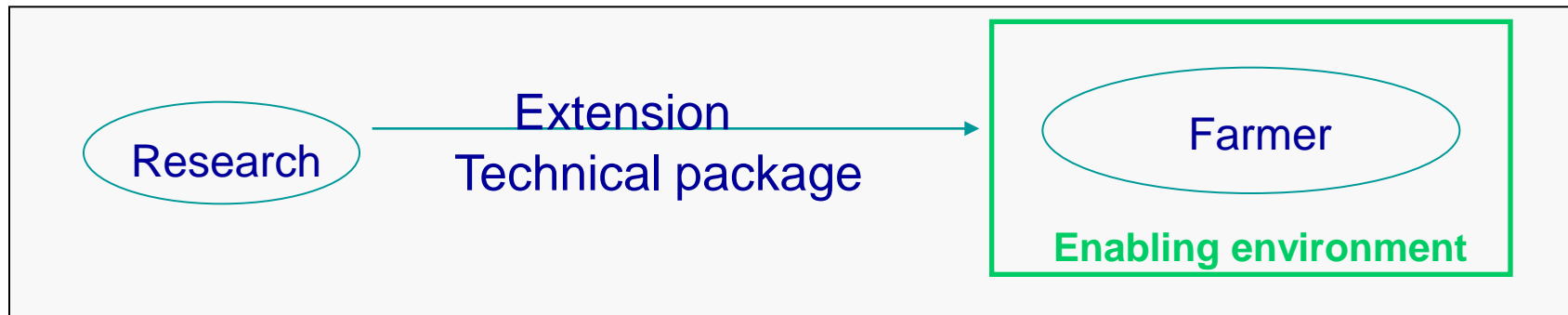
- ✓ **Small farmers are innovative, they cannot afford not to be**
- ✓ **From the 70s until now we gradually moved from**
 - **Production system approach to Farming system**
 - **From Farming system to farmers first and participatory approaches**
 - **From participatory to a broader knowledge system (AKIS) approach**
 - **From AKIS to innovation**

Each step acknowledges the complexity and non linear nature of the attempted change and introduced new factors (socio economic, cultural, institutional and political) to understanding the drivers of changes

- ✓ **Farmers do not need a package of practices but a basket of choice**

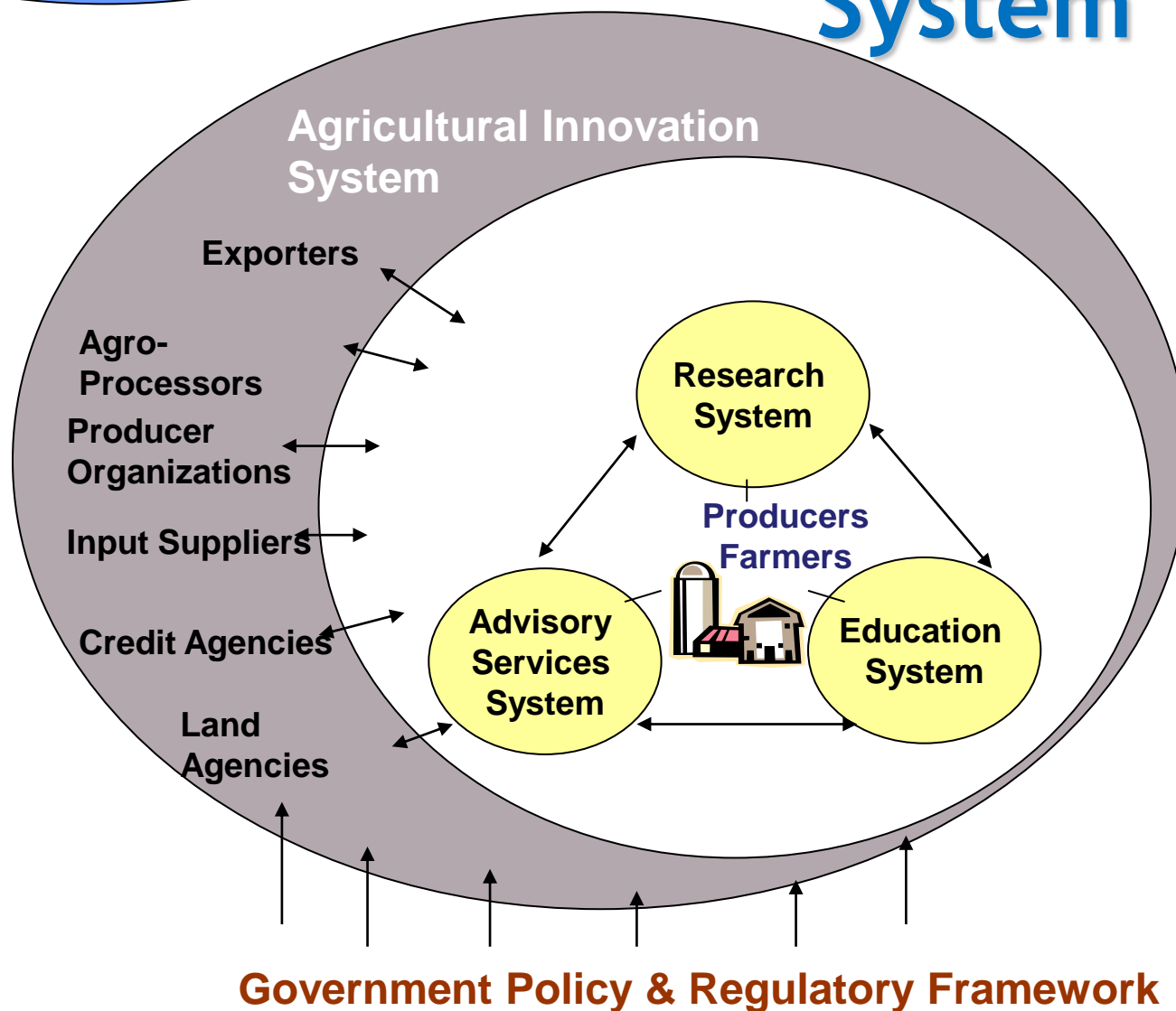


From a “Linear” view of technical change



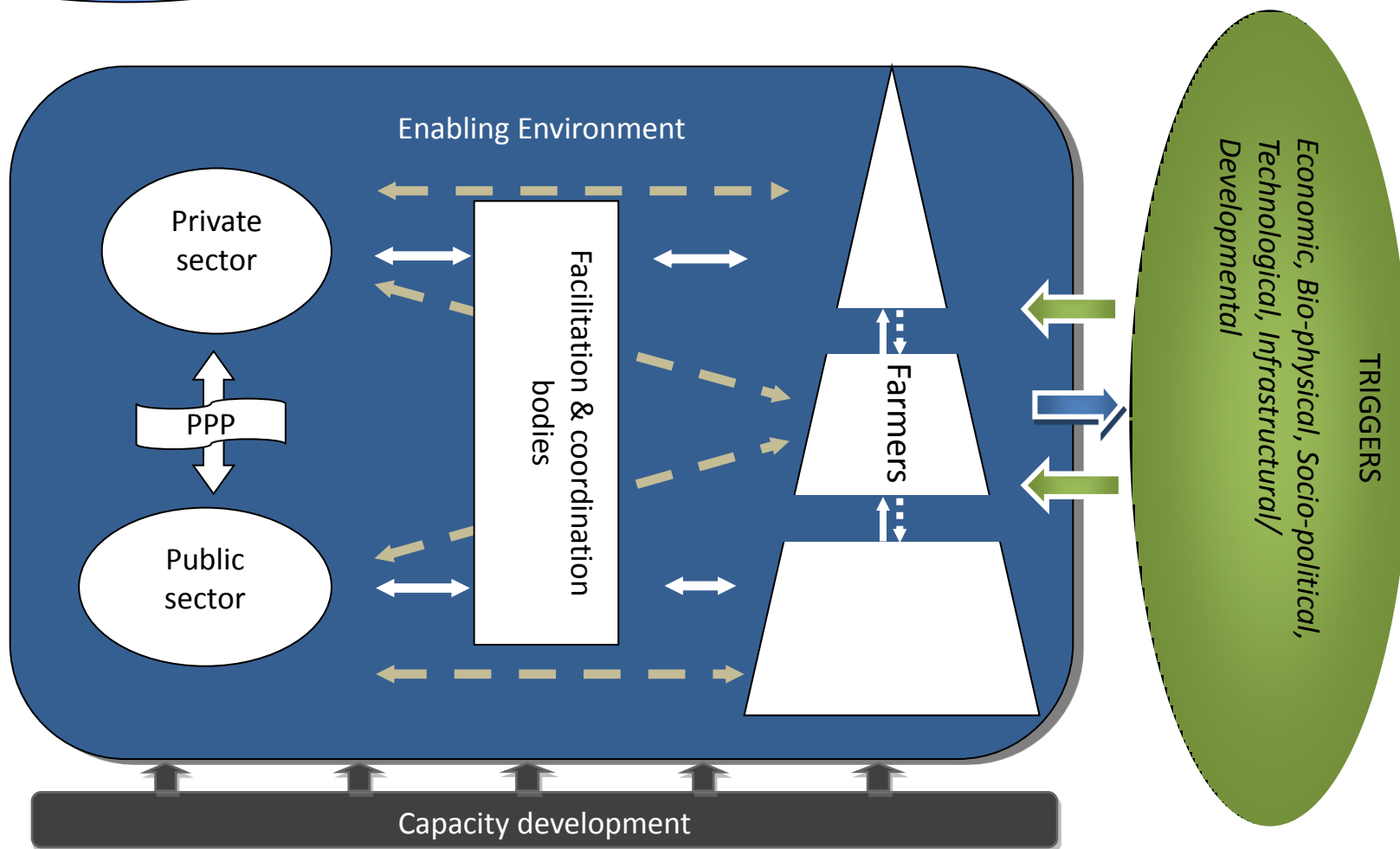


...to an innovation System



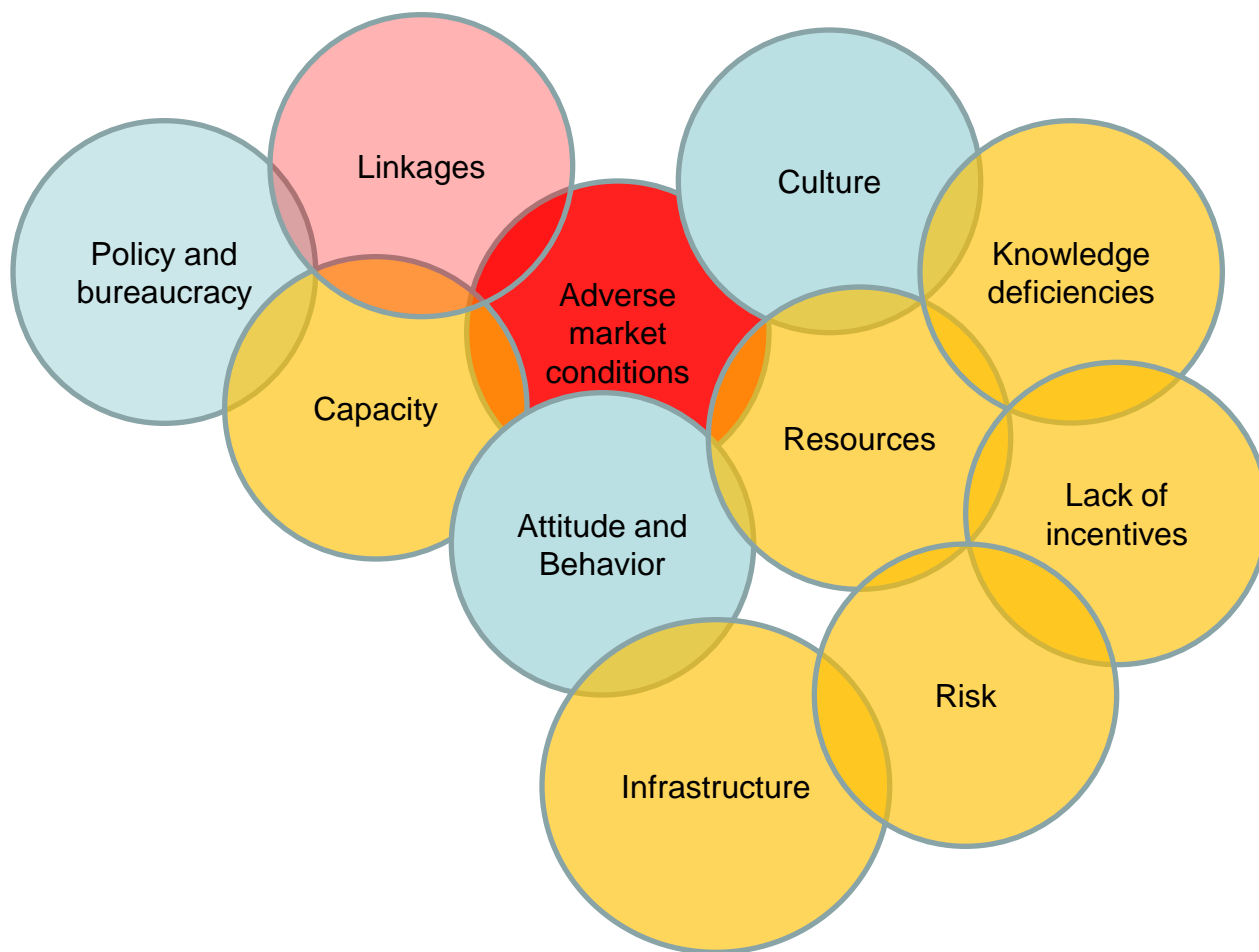
Modified from:
Birner et al. 2006

Analytical framework





Barriers to innovation





Who has to change ?

- ✓ Realizing the potential for innovation in Family farms is not about changing farmers practices... It is about changing the behavior and attitude of the other actors in the system - us included - and how the enabling environment support farmers ability to innovate !

Innovation leads to things being done differently in unpredictable ways.



Key message SOFA 2014

Capacity for agricultural innovation is vital to improve the livelihood and well-being of family farmers and goes beyond technological development

Innovation capacity can be collective and individual and has four elements

- 1. Individual and organizational expertise**
- 2. Attitudes and routines developed through training and trial and error**
- 3. Communication and networks that allow individuals and organizations to access a wide array of ideas and expertise for innovation**
- 4. Policy environment and the way it shapes the first three elements of capacity**

The challenge we face today is how to build the capacity for innovation to ensure profitable and sustainable family farming.

PISA Bolivia

