

Sustainable development of supply chains through public-private partnerships: evaluating university project contributions

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Abstract

Partnerships based on sharing complementary skills and resources have long provided a range of proven benefits to development initiatives. These have often been broad-based partnerships including university collaboration with government, NGOs, multi-national organisations and/or business – to bring ideas, expertise and energy together for mutual benefit and to deliver common goals. These partnerships have the capacity to address challenges that no one partner can easily resolve alone. The significance of the private sector to future success and long-term business sustainability can be particularly beneficial for rural development initiatives. Private partner intervention can provide additional funding for longer-term investment and their expertise in organisational development, management and technology transfer is often crucial for successful rural development. While the contributions of the private sector to agribusiness project development have been discussed, the contributions that university partners can also bring to such collaborations have not been recognised nor is it as well understood. The aim of this paper is to better understand, for future adoption, the value and contributions of universities to public-private partnership cooperation for stimulating enterprise and longer term sustainable development success. Through case study examples from Asia, Africa and South America, the contribution that universities can make to stimulating an enterprise culture and rural agri-food business development will be explored.