ENABLING INNOVATION

A Practical Guide to Understanding and Fostering Technological Change Boru Douthwaite, International Institute of Tropical Agriculture



We live in an age of increasingly rapid technological innovation and diffusion. Yet little is known about the social and human processes involved. Why do some technologies spread successfully while others do not? What are the consequences of top-down diffusion strategies? What is the effect of the private sector? Should the public sector not play a significant role? What are the disadvantages of instant patents and corporate-controlled intellectual property rights? And if users are democratically will the result often be both better technologies and their more rapid adoption?

This book is an engrossing account of some of the disaster, and success, stories around technological development and diffusion from both industrial and developing countries. It tells the story of widely divergent technologies - agricultural appliances, wind turbines, Green Revolution high yielding seeds, the Linux computer operating system, and Local Economic Trading Systems. Douthwaite constructs a highly significant 'how to do it' guide to innovation management that runs counter to many of the top-down, 'big is good', 'private sector is best' assumptions of our age.

'If you want to understand the future you must know about the past. Boru Douthwaite given us a brilliant example of the way in which this can be done' - Flemming Tranæs, The Association of Danish Windturbine Owners

'An original and important book' -Professor Jeff Sayer, Director General, CIFOR

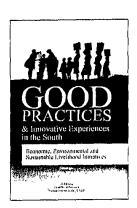
'A breath of fresh air... Hopefully, engineering departments will include it in their courses. And for those already engaged in setting up companies and introducing new products there are useful, practical guides' - Mike Cooley

'A brilliant book... Douthwaite makes a very cogent case' -Richard Jefferson, Center for Applied Molecular Biology to International Agriculture, Canberra, Australia December 2001
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GOOD PRACTICES AND INNOVATIVE EXPERIENCES IN THE SOUTH

Edited by Martin Khor and Lim Li Lin, Third World Network



These volumes constitute a unique, inspiring and practically useful compilation of the rich variety of innovative good practice being pioneered at governmental, NGO and community levels in so many Third World countries. They provide a wealth of information on a large number of particular policies, projects and organizations in Asia, Latin America and Africa. The 50 cases included focus on economic and environmental policy and practice, including community-based sustainable livelihood projects; social policy, the utilization of indigenous and traditional knowledge, and appropriate technology experiences; and innovative social service delivery and education organizations and experiments.

The project is the result of an initiative by UNDP's Special Unit for Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. The process of selection and description has been carried out by Third World Network in Penang headed by Martin Khor, drawing on the detailed knowledge of, amongst others, Claude Alvares of the Other India Press, Roberto Bissio of the Instituto del Tercer Mundo in Uruguay and Berhane Egziabher of the Institute for Sustainable Development in Ethiopia.

The practical importance of this 3-volume collection is to contribute to the process of replication across the South of the best ideas, practice and ways of organizing. These are based on a number of common principles, including respect for local cultures and knowledge systems; genuine harmony with the natural world; quality outcomes of real benefit to local communities and countries; and equity and democratic involvement.

In political terms, this richly variegated and inspiring collection shows us all what some remarkable communities, organizations and governments in the Third World are achieving.

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