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**Beyond economic impact: towards a
holistic framework for impact
assessment of agricultural research for
development in remote and culturally
diverse regions of Vietnam**

HUU NHUAN NGUYEN, ELSKE VAN DE FLIERT & OLEG NICETIC

Centre for Communication and Social Change,
School of Communication and Arts, The University of Queensland

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The 59th AARES Annual Conference

Beyond economic impact: towards a holistic framework for impact assessment of agricultural research for development in remote and culturally diverse regions of Vietnam



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INTRODUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Research Objectives



1

- Review existing impact assessment approaches to agricultural research projects in the Northwest Highlands of Vietnam

2

- Discuss limitations of these existing impact assessment approaches to agricultural research projects

3

- Develop and test a holistic impact assessment framework for impact assessment of AR4D projects underpinned by participatory communication to sustainable impacts

THE NORTHWEST HIGHLANDS



- Natural area: 5.07 million ha
- Population: 4.15 million people
- Ethnic groups: over 30
- Household poverty: 26%
- Limited access to markets and extension services



AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH PROJECT IN THE NORTHWEST HIGHLANDS

❖ Research oriented:

- Since 1990s by government research organization and international development agencies
- Mainly top-down planning, implementation and evaluation approach
- Single or multi-disciplinary approach
- Direct research output focus

❖ Sustainable livelihood oriented:

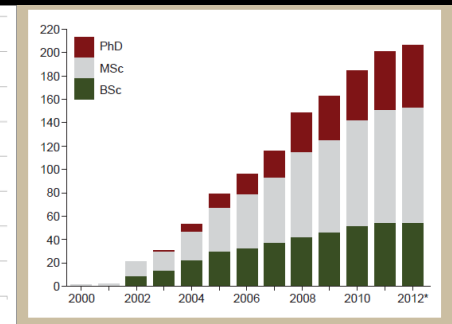
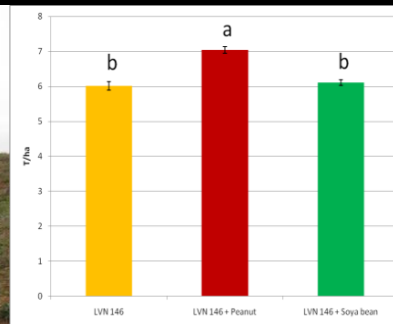
- Initiated in the late 2000s (ACIAR)
- Towards inter- and trans-disciplinary
- Sustainable livelihood focus
- Participatory approach and participatory communication



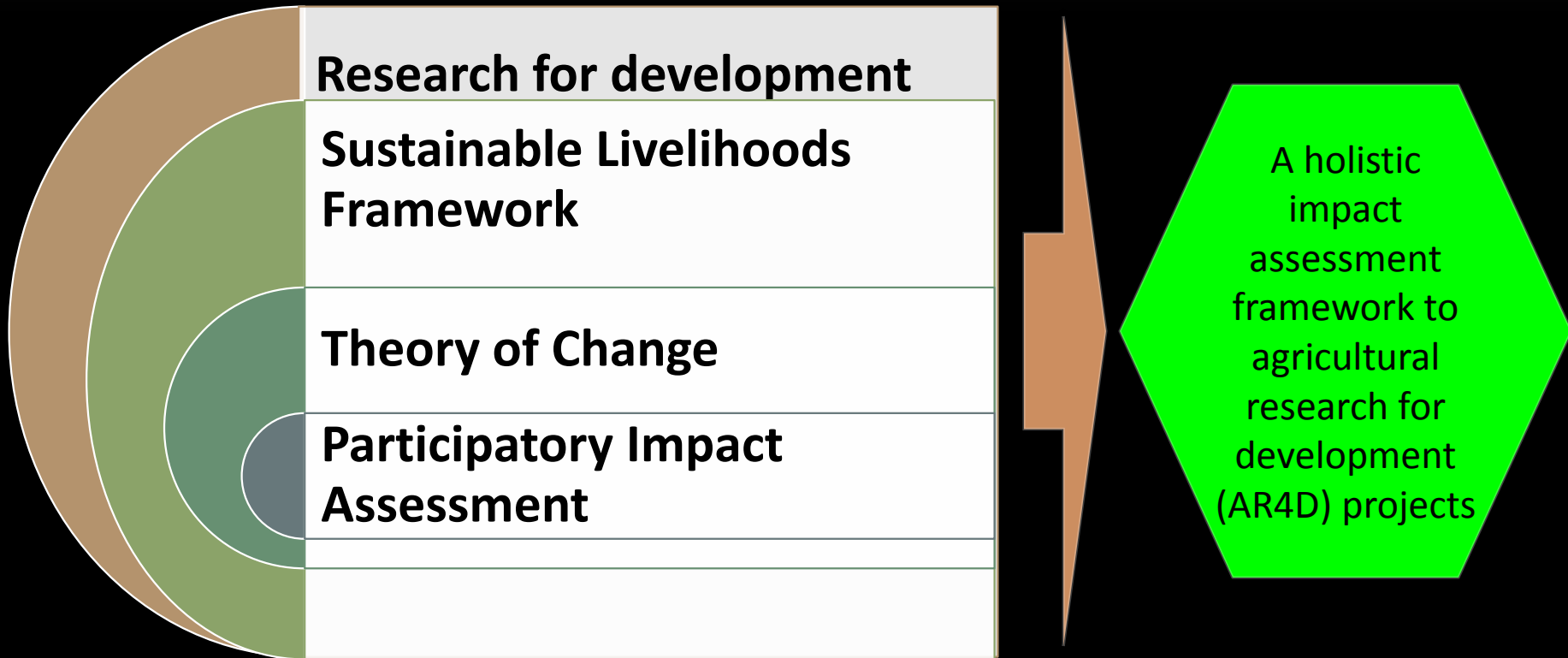
IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

❖ Weaknesses

- Short - term, quantitative, and economic focus
- Donor - cost effectiveness and internal management overemphasis
- Focus on scientific outputs, capacity building and publications
- Top - down communication, gaps in understanding local social diversity
- Little consideration to overlapped synergies
- Lack of clear strategy for assessing long-term impacts of AR4D
- Poor impact sharing and feedback mechanism



A HOLISTIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK FOR AR4D



A HOLISTIC APPROACH TO IMPACT ASSESSMENT OF AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH FOR DEVELOPMENT

INSTITUTIONAL IMPACTS

Vulnerability context:

- Shocks
- Trends
- Seasonality

Structures & processes:

- Policies
- Institutions
- Processes

LIVELIHOOD IMPACTS

Human capital (H)

Social capital (S)

Economic capital (E)

Physical capital (P)

Natural capital (N)

DIRECT RESEARCH OUTPUTS

Outreach capacity:

- Publications
- Training
- Academic degree attainment

Technology development:

- Improved varieties or technologies
- Innovative research processes

SOME EVIDENCES FROM TESTING A HOLISTIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

The ACIAR Northwest Project	The ADAM Project	The NOMAFSI Project
Participatory; transdisciplinary and multi-institutions and PM&E	Top-down; ingle disciplinary and single institution	Top-down, single disciplinary and formal multi-institutions

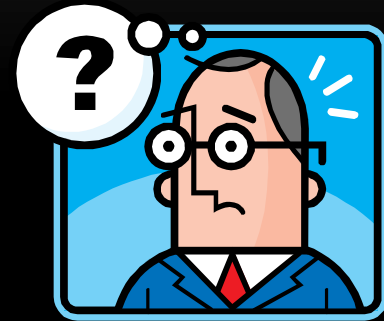
Beyond economic impacts:

- Better impact pathway design could lead to better achievement of impacts
- Participatory and trans-disciplinary approach versus top down disciplinary
 - Partnership and collaboration among research institutions and local partners;
 - Scaling-up and scaling-out methodologies
 - Empowerment of farmers (awareness, knowledge and skills for farmers)
 - Social networks and information systems
 - Natural resource management practice (soil erosion, forest management)
- Technology adaption into different socioeconomic and biophysical context

CONCLUSION

- ✓ A holistic impact assessment framework for AR4D is crucial for sustainable development
- ✓ Participatory and trans-disciplinary research approach could help AR4D generate better livelihood impacts
- ✓ A holistic impact assessment framework needs to adapt into socioeconomic and biophysical contexts
- ✓ We will not achieve impact if we do not design AR4D in a way it can generate impacts

THANK YOU



Comments please!

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