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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II. Background
III. Impact assessment of agricultural research in the Northwest
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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

<table>
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<td>Sustainable Livelihoods Framework</td>
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A holistic impact assessment framework to agricultural research for development (AR4D) projects.
### SOME EVIDENCES FROM TESTING A HOLISTIC IMPACT ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

<table>
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<th>The ACIAR Northwest Project</th>
<th>The ADAM Project</th>
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<td>Participatory; transdisciplinary and multi-institutions and PM&amp;E</td>
<td>Top-down; single disciplinary and single institution</td>
<td>Top-down, single disciplinary and formal multi-institutions</td>
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**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
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.

CONCLUSION
THANK YOU

Comments please!
REFERENCES


