People, Pulses, Poultry, Pigs, Prawns and Poverty – Evaluating the impact of agricultural research
Outline

Overview of ACIAR as part of the Australian Aid Program

Background to ACIAR’s impact assessment program

Methods and Approaches

Challenges and efforts to improve evaluation
ACIAR – Who, why and what

• Statutory authority within the Australian Government’s Foreign Affairs and Trade portfolio
• Part of Australia’s Aid Program
• A research funder and manager
• Develop projects with Australian and partner country R&D institutions
Purposes for ACIAR Evaluation

- Governance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Impact
- Sustainability
- Appropriateness
- Priority setting and project development
Purposes for ACIAR Ex-post Impact Assessment

- Governance
- Effectiveness
- Efficiency
- Impact
- Sustainability
- Appropriateness
- Priority setting and project development
Impact Assessment Program

Impact pathway analysis of ACIAR’s investment in rodent control in Vietnam, Lao PDR and Cambodia

ACIAR IMPACT ASSESSMENT SERIES 83

Research that works for developing countries and Australia

ADOPTION OF ACIAR PROJECT OUTPUTS 2013
Strategy logic in research projects – Impact Pathways

WITHIN THE RESEARCH PROJECT

OUTCOMES
IMPUTS
OUTPUTS
ACTIVITIES

Responsibility of project
Utilisation of project results
Development impacts
Impact

Research outcomes
Next users
End users
External influences

Hanks et al, unpublished
Impacts of ACIAR Research

- Independent impact assessments of 156 ACIAR bilateral projects have estimated:
  - total benefits, A$12.3 billion attributable to ACIAR
  - total expenditure on all ACIAR projects since 1982, A$2.5 billion (in 2012 dollar values)
  - benefit:cost ratio (BCR), 5:1
Pig production in Vietnam

• Productivity
  – Reproductive performance
  – Increased weight
  – Higher lean-meat percentage
  – Reduced feed cost

• Benefits (Present value)
  – $A2,093m
  – BCR 118:1

• Capacity building of animal scientists and feed mill staff
Evaluation of Impact on Poverty
Refining Evaluation Methods

• Incorporating more Mixed-methods within the evaluation task
  – qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis
  – reinforcing each other to evaluate R&D projects within complex environments
Evaluation of Impact on Livelihoods
Evaluation of Impact on Capacity Building
Lessons learned from Impact Assessments

• Importance of adoption
• Effect of local industry and policy conditions
• A project champion
• Capacity building
• Challenges in implementing policy outcomes