Dynamic impact assessment frameworks and their role in changing development contexts

Andrew Alford - Impact Assessment
Evolving strategic objectives

ACIAR's strategic objectives:
• Food security and poverty reduction
• Natural Resources Management and Climate Change
• Human Health and Nutrition
• Gender Equity and Women’s Empowerment
• Inclusive Value Chains
• Capacity Building

Consistent with:
• Australian government’s aid policy
• Partner country priorities
• 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
Impact Assessment Methods

Historically strong emphasis on economic impact assessment

Independent impact assessments of 156 ACIAR bilateral projects have estimated:

- total benefits of A$13 billion attributable to ACIAR
- benefit:cost ratio (BCR), 5:1

Examples:

- Parasites in goats, Philippines (BCR 5:1)
- Fisheries, Indonesia (BCR 52:1)
- Australian trees, Vietnam (BCR 79:1)
- Breeding and feeding pigs, Vietnam (BCR 118:1)

Beyond economic impact analysis ...
Capacity building

• Previously addressed in economic impact assessments

• Recent review highlighted the limitations of this approach
  • Mentoring, learning by doing, short courses during projects, represents 10% - 40% of total value of project investments
  • Formalised training – scholarships program
  • Impacts extend well beyond life of project
  • Links between individual capacity building and organisational capacity
Organisational capacity building

• framework for organisational capacity assessment  ISNAR (International Service for National Agricultural Research) Lusthaus et al 1995

1. The external environment
2. Organisational motivation
3. Organisational capacity
4. Organisational performance
Policy

• Addressed in economic impact assessments
  • Eg. analysis of domestic grain policy in China with attribution of some benefits arising from changed grain-marketing policy as the research outcomes led to advancing the pace of market reform between 1994-2004 (BCR 33.5:1)

• Dependent on mapping the impact pathway of research outputs and capacity building through the policymaking process – attribution often difficult
Policy - Knowledge systems & RAPID

- Examine link between knowledge production and actions by next users and final users – farmers, communities, policy makers
- RAPID – context, evidence and communication, External elements
- Boundary organisations – facilitate sharing of knowledge
- Quality of knowledge
  - credible: perceived adequacy & quality of the research
  - salience: research outcomes reflect needs of the decision makers
  - legitimacy: perceived inclusiveness of the research process (scientists, policy makers industry)
- Context – external elements: economic, social, environmental

Davila et al 2016, IAS 92
Gender Equity and Women’s Empowerment

• Not been addressed in a comprehensive manner within ACIAR Impact Assessments.

• Issues have been highlighted:
  • Differential workloads in cultural contexts such as Tibet dairying projects
  • Newcastle disease in chickens in southern and eastern Africa
    • Disease control increases women’s incomes, evidence in some instances where increasing income sees men take control of chickens.
    • Community vaccinators - additional incomes and community status

• Exploring application of suitable frameworks and data to evaluate impacts - impacts on women involved in mabé and the pearl industry, Fiji.
## Progress towards women’s empowerment among spat and mabé producers - Fiji

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Empowerment Domain</th>
<th>Indicators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Capacity Development: Skills and Knowledge</strong></td>
<td>Training is available to women and girls in spat and mabé production</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Women acquire new knowledge and technical skills in spat and/or mabé production</td>
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<td>Women are able to apply skills and knowledge to practice independently</td>
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<td>Women gain increased confidence and recognition in community</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Access and control of productive assets and income</strong></td>
<td>Women have access to/ownership of resources/assets to engage in production.</td>
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<td>Women derive income as a result of production.</td>
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<td>Women have control over how to spend earned income.</td>
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<td>Women purchase new resources/assets from pearling activity income.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Decision making and leadership</strong></td>
<td>Women are involved in decisions about production</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women are involved in leadership in production</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Women are involved in leadership in community</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Workload and Time</strong></td>
<td>Women’s work hours and conditions are manageable</td>
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Mikhailovich (draft)
Refining Impact Assessment Methods - mixed methods

• Combinations of quantitative and qualitative methods to better assess our impacts on complex development challenges
  • Impact pathways
  • Capacity building analysis frameworks
  • Frameworks to capture the context for the research and its outputs (eg. RAPID/Knowledge systems)
  • Social analysis tools (eg. WEAI)

• Leading to broader and deeper understanding of impacts and learning for research for development investments