

Community Development among Ethnic Minorities in Northern Parts of Vietnam

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ABSTRACT

Agricultural Development Denmark Asia (ADDA) has since 2007 been running a community development project in Northern Vietnam with the goal to improve the conditions for the ethnic minority farmers in mountain areas. The project is financed by the Danish International Development Assistance (Danida) which is a part of the Foreign Ministry that finances activities that fight against the poverty in developing countries.

The ethnic minorities in the mountain areas of Vietnam have poor educational conditions, low income and small profit. In fact these areas are among the poorest nationwide. ADDA aim to help these people with knowledge on sustainable agricultural practices and to make them realize that it is fertile to meet and discuss problems and together find solutions that will affect the local society. The project has trained 15.412 maize farmers in six different provinces through the participatory Farmer Field Schools (FFS) where they were taught improved cultivation techniques and the benefit of collaboration.

In a recent study, data from 300 randomly selected farmers, 50 from each province, were collected. The farmers were among other questions asked of the yield of their fields after they have participated in FFS. The aim of the current project is to examine the data from before and after the FFS started to investigate the possible success based on extra maize harvested and how the success depends on province specific factors.

The raw data indicates that there is a significant disparity before and after the farmers participated in FFS. They have reduced their amount of seed and yet they have a larger yield. Furthermore data shows a tendency of difference between the provinces measured on the basis of use of seed, size of maize fields and yield. A linear mixed-effects model with farmers as a random effect will be able to reveal which variables that describe the variation of yield per ha and if any interesting interactions among the variables are significant.

From the results of the analysis it will be possible to assess the impact the FFS have had on the ethnic minority farmers and thereby if it reasonable to make future investments in similar projects using the same strategy.