Next-Gen Agricultural Extension

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PROJECT UPDATE

A NEWSLETTER FROM THE NEXT GENERATION AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION PROJECT

Project Mid-Term Review

FROM BRIAN COOK
PHOTO: MAO SOCHEA

Hello/**ជំរាបសួរ** (Chom Reap Sour) from the research team of the *Next Generation Agricultural Extension Project: Social relations for practice change.* This quarter team members have participated in the project's Mid-Term Review with our donor ACIAR in Battambang, Cambodia. The image above is from a capacity building session with our partner Partners for Rural Development. The research team has also been on a writing retreat in Australia. Finally, we welcome Le-Anne Bannan who will be applying GIS techniques in collaboration with the project team to reveal spatial characteristics, patterns and trends between households and farmers.

Project Overview

FROM CAITLIN FINLAYSON

This project aims to produce an innovative model of agricultural extension founded on expanding enabling social relations, which will complement and/or replace existing models of extension based on the provision of technology, capital and information.

Duration: January 2021 to December 2026
Target Areas: Cambodia
Budget: AUD$4.5million
Project Leader: Associate Professor Brian Cook, The University of Melbourne

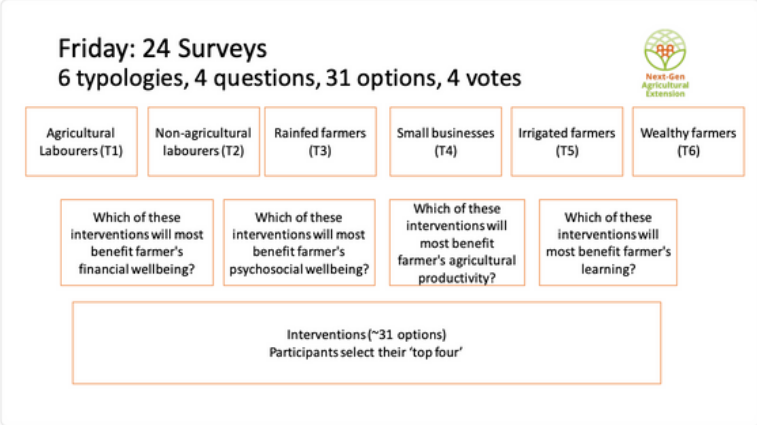
Mid-Term Review

FROM CAITLIN FINLAYSON
PHOTOS: MAO SOCHEA

July 5-7 saw the research team at the National University of Battambang, together with representatives from ACIAR for the project's Mid-Term Review.

The Mid-Term Review highlighted the findings from Activities 1&2, the capacity developed in our in-country team, the interconnectedness of all project activities, and our framework for impact analysis.

A key project achievement has been the completion of Activity 2 data collection. The number exceeded what was planned (*n = 2555*). and the project has established a baseline understanding of smallholder farming households in Northwest Cambodia, with an emphasis on inter- and intra-household experiences and diverse livelihoods differentiated by gender and age across multiple village settings in Battambang and Pailin.



6 typologies have been developed to support subsequent activities. A detailed overview of the household typologies was shared in a presentation by Dr Van Touch (see top image) supported by Dr Ariane Utomo and Dr Nicholas Harrigan. A paper will be published based on the this analysis.

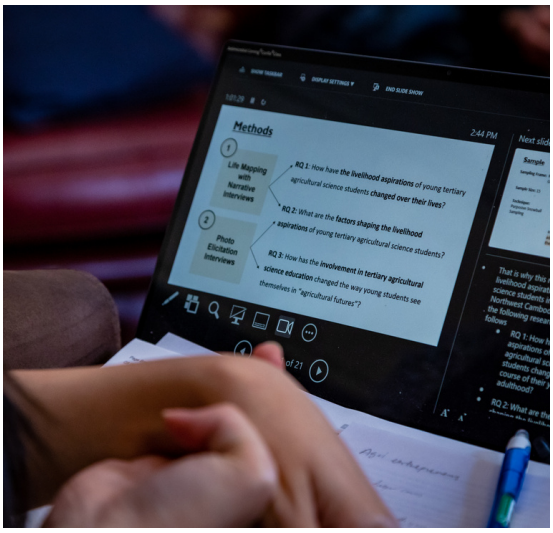
Coupled with the Mid-Term Review, the research team, led by Associate Professor Brian Cook, facilitated a co-design workshop with 24 representatives from 14 different organisations (government, NGOs, commercial and academic) working in the agricultural sector in Cambodia. The workshop explored a number of questions (see middle image) with participants which will fed into the design of Activity 6 in the Next-Gen project.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone (research team, partners, donors, and invited participants) for their participation in this event.

Writing Retreat

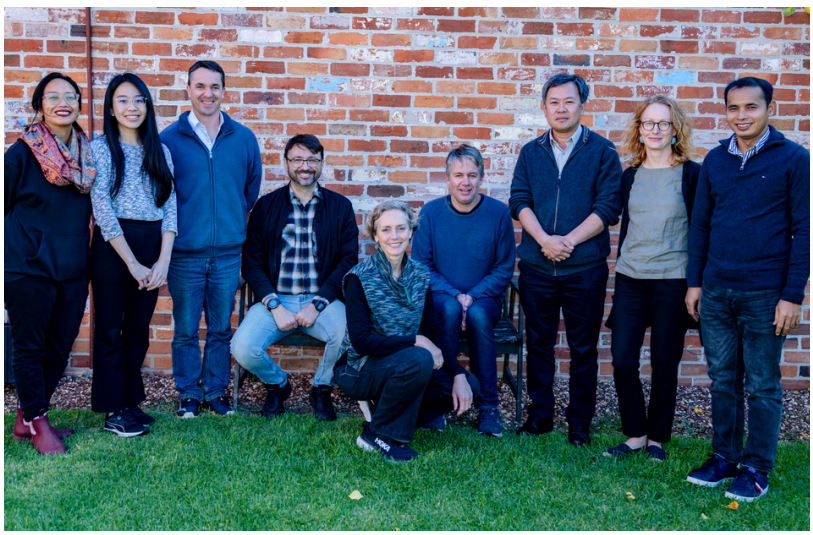
FROM CAITLIN FINLAYSON
PHOTOS: LEONIE VAN EYK

From May 1-5 our research team (Associate Professor Andrew McGregor, Dr Ariane Utomo, Associate Professor Brian Cook, Dr Caitlin Finlayson, Professor Katharine McKinnon, Dr Nicholas Harrigan, Dr Thong Tran, and Dr Van Touch) met together in-person for a series of workshops and paper writing sessions. There were representatives from all three Australian University project partners - The University of Melbourne, Macquarie University and the University of Canberra. We were also joined for one day by honours student Ru Foong.



We spent the week reviewing and planing project activities, developing project briefs for publications from Activities 1&2, and completing a final draft of a paper which was later submitted to the academic journal *Agriculture and Human Values.* This paper focuses on how agricultural extension responds to climate-development amplified transitions in mainland Southeast Asia.

In addition, the team filmed interviews with all the Activity Leads who gave an update on the phase of their activity, their key learnings from the last 12 months and what was coming up over the next year. You can watch each interview on our website by clicking on the relevant activity.



Welcome Le-Anne Bannan

FROM LE-ANNE BANNAN AND CAITLIN FINLAYSON
PHOTOS: MAO SOCHEA

Le-Anne Bannan is an Environmental Geography graduate from The University of Melbourne. She is currently working as a Research Assistant on the Farmer Uptake of Ag-Tech and Next-Gen Agricultural Extension projects while completing a master's of Geospatial Science at RMIT, Australia.

Le-Anne participated in the Mid-Term Review in Battambang in July (see below image with the wider project team). As part of her master's course she will complete a dissertation with the Next-Gen project.

The applications of geospatial science in agricultural extension research are typically focused on technical considerations such as precision farming, crop monitoring, disease detection, land analysis and land use management for increased agricultural output.

However, we know that the success (or un-success) of extension efforts are often due to a multitude of reasons spanning socio-economic diversity, gender, environmental factors, location, and access to resources.

Spatial analysis provides a unique opportunity to integrate these considerations and seek patterns which might otherwise remain unknown and hinder efforts by extension agents to improve farmer livelihoods.

After viewing the qualitative and quantitative data that the team has already collected, we are certain that spatial analysis can enhance the work, findings, impact assessment and analysis of the activities that are currently ongoing.

We look forward to working together.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

ARE THERE SPATIAL RELATIONSHIPS AND TRENDS BETWEEN HOUSEHOLDS ACCORDING TO THEIR IDENTIFYING CHARACTERISTICS WHICH EMERGED IN ACTIVITY 2?

WHICH (IF ANY) SPATIALISED ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIO-ECONOMIC OR OTHER FACTORS INFORM THE OUTCOMES OF SMALL-SCALE FARMERS IN NORTH WEST CAMBODIA?

WHAT CAN GIS REVEAL ABOUT THESE RELATIONSHIPS, FACTORS, TRENDS AND OUTCOMES THAT MAY HAVE OTHERWISE GONE UNNOTICED?

Project Partners

Resources

Check out the latest articles, blogs and research outputs which are shaping the project

Farm typologies

In this recent publication, authors describe the process of developing farm typologies and quantify the impact of the many subjective decisions that are not always evident to the end-user.

Read more.

Social farming

A comprehensive literature review on the concept of social farming (social agriculture), an approach which connects agriculture and social or health services at the local level.

Read more.

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