

SoCapZ

Social Capital and Development Projects: A case study in Zimbabwe

ABSTRACT

In recent decades, agricultural development projects have focused on adapting smallholder farming practices to new global and climate challenges and help farmers to become more resilient. A particular interesting family of practices regrouped under the concept of Sustainable Intensification (SI) seeks to increase the productivity, sustainability and resilience of farming systems. Most projects use participatory tools to foster cooperation between farmers, researchers and other stakeholders involved in the co-development of these practices. The central hypothesis of the SoCapZ project is that there are important two-way interactions between the social capital of farmers and farm communities, and the agricultural development projects. On the one hand, projects may increase the social capital of farmers, on the other hand communities with higher social capital may see more rapid adaptations of practices promoted. Units name AIDA CEE-M Institution name Dpt/faculty/lab name Country University of Zimbabwe Agricultural Economics Dept Zimbabwe Other Social sciences and agriculture-society interactions by the projects. To better understand these interactions, the SoCapZ project proposes to develop a methodology to measure the structural and cognitive components of social capital at farm and community scales. SoCapZ will also use recently methodologies to calculate indicators of resilience of the same farmers. These methodology will be applied to the EU funded project RAIZ which aim is to promote sustainable intensification of farming systems in Zimbabwe.

At the end of this one-year project, SoCapZ will provide a fully-tested methodology to measure social capital at farm and community levels based on a combination of surveys and lab-in-the field incentivized games. We will be able to analyse the relationship between resilience/productivity and current social capital at the beginning of the RAIZ project. As a long term impact of the SoCapZ project, we intend to use that methodology again after three years with the same communities. This will be permitted by the close interaction of the SoCapZ project with the RAIZ project. This re-use of the SoCapZ methodology will allow us to characterize the role of social capital in the theory of changes of an agricultural development project.

Keywords : Social Capital, Resilience, Ecological Intensification, Incentivized games

Year : 2021

Project number : 2101-044

Type of funding : AAP OS

Project type : AAP

Research units in the network : AIDA

Start date : 2022-01-01

End date : 2022-12-31

Flagship project : no

Project leader : Damien Jourdain

Project leader's institution : CIRAD

Project leader's RU : G-EAU

Budget allocated : 29914 €

Total budget allocated (including co-financing) : 29914 €

Funding : Labex

GOAL

The main objective of the SoCapZ project is to develop and test a methodology to measure indicators of

social capital, productivity and resilience of farms and rural communities. This methodology will be applied at the onset of the EU funded development project RAIZ in Zimbabwe, which aims at co-developing sustainable intensification technologies and practices among smallholder farmers.

The data generated during the SoCapZ project will allow us to test hypotheses about the interactions between social capital at farm and community levels, the co-development of agricultural innovations, and the resilience of farming communities.

It is important to note that we intend to apply this methodology again at the end of the RAIZ project. It will then allow a thorough understanding of the different pathways of changes induced by the project and conduct a proper impact analysis. This impact analysis could be considered the long term objective of the SoCapZ project.