

SDC 2019 Annual Meeting Abstracts

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Title: Promoting gender-responsive pest management solutions in southern Vietnam: Impacts, reflections, and lessons learned



Integrated Pest Management (IPM) is a holistic and sustainable approach to abate crop losses from pests and reduce dependence on chemical pesticides. The design, development, and dissemination of IPM practices and packages requires an understanding of the broader socio-economic and agro-ecological landscape, questioning where, when, why, and for whom such pest management approaches are most appropriate. This study explored the gendered dimensions of pest management in the context of a USAID-funded IPM research-for-development project in southern Vietnam. Ecologically-based IPM practices are promoted as an effective approach to address insect pests, pathogens, and weeds that negatively impact the production of four economically important fruit crops: dragon fruit, mango, longan, and lychee. We utilized a mixed methods approach, sex-disaggregated focus group discussions, a structured survey of male and female fruit producers, and additional semi-structured interviews, to document anticipated and unanticipated gender impacts from IPM adoption. Descriptive statistics were derived from the results of the structure survey and the semi-structured interviews were translated, transcribed and coded thematically (using deductive and inductive codes). Our findings indicated that there are gendered differences in the ways that men and women experience the advantages and disadvantages from applying IPM; including differences in how IPM application changed in the amount of time and effort men and women spend on pest management and gendered differences in the ways men and women benefited (or did not benefit) from capacity development programs. Likewise, we documented how intra-household decision-making, including decisions linked to investing and applying new agricultural technologies or management practices is rooted in conventional gender norms framing women's and men's expected roles in intra-household decisions. Our findings support the continuing need for gender-responsive research for development, research that is informed by an understanding of women's and men's problems and priorities. However, research on the gendered dimensions of pest management, and gender-responsive agricultural research in general, must more explicitly engage the gender norms that underlie persisting gender inequalities so that all farmers may realize the ecological and economic benefits from innovative agricultural technologies or management practices.