

Study of Climate-Adapted Value Chains Development Tuyen Quang Province, Vietnam

Desjonqueres, Chloe; MSc. in Development Practice Candidate, Trinity College Dublin & University College Dublin, Ireland, desjonqc@tcd.ie

Tuyen Quang is a province North of Vietnam that has been allocated \$24.2 million out of a \$49 million IFAD loan to the Government in an attempt to develop rural areas in 2011. The Program Coordination Unit (PCU) of Tuyen Quang City has been responsible for the distribution of the funds and progress supervision of the project, entitled the IFAD Tam Nong Support Project (TNSP). The aim of the project is to help Provincial Governments to develop pro-poor institutional reforms, including bottom-up participatory approaches, through value chains development initiatives. The way it is currently in place in Tuyen Quang Province is as follows: the TNSP team has allocated funds to each district, who encourage farmers' groups and companies to develop a production-oriented business plan. The plan, based on a template provided by IFAD, varies according to each group's identified needs, according to the approach of each district within the province, and to the expertise of the villagers' communes' officials, who are responsible for assisting them in the development of the plan. This competitive process, once approved, unlocks the funds to be disbursed to the companies and farmers' groups. The farmers receive funds through the companies, which should lend input material at zero (for the poor households) or very low (for the near-poor households) interest rate, which is to be paid back after an agreed time period, and then re-invested in the farmers in the next period. The farmers also benefit from the creation of credit-savings groups, as well as free training provided by the companies. The companies and the farmer groups sign a contract whereby the company agrees to purchase all or part of the farmers production output. The partnership also requires the prioritizing of beneficiary for women and ethnic minority farmers, as they are the poorest.

Now five years into the initiative, and a year ahead of the project's end, IFAD and TNSP's officials are interested in learning more about the interactions of value chains development and climate adaptation in the province.

My research project aims at evaluating the relationship between climate change, climate resilience, and tea production, as part of the value chains development of Tuyen Quang Province. Value chains development through the Public Private Partnerships emphasized by the SDGs, helps to improve the economic lives of the poor - with an emphasis on women and ethnic minorities. TNSP is looking for a case study analysis of tea, one of the main products of the province. As tea is a crop that is highly vulnerable to changes in climate, the current questions that I will potentially answer through the study are: How does climate change impact each stage of tea value chain development? How does the development of agro-value chains make tea producing households more resilient to climate change? What value chains mechanisms support ethnic minority and female tea producers in a context of climate change? How efficient is the Tuyen Quang Province value chains developmental approach in fostering the farmers' climate adaptation capacity?

Value chains development is an approach that needs further research, as it has often been focusing on businesses' profits as opposed to the income of the poorest, most vulnerable individuals. The research will involve a mixed-methods approach, potentially conducted as an evaluation of the TNSP project, and will be further developed with the head of the project once the IFAD Supervision Mission has left the site - it is currently conducting the final assessment of the project's progress in the province before the end of the initiative next year.

The data that I hope to collect includes demographic data, pre and post-TNSP implementation data (2011 to 2016) for economic variables (yields, incomes, productivity) hopefully getting economic data for the years prior to 2011, so my analysis is based on a greater time-period, climate data for Vietnam and for the province, tea production data at the district and provincial levels, as well as a qualitative assessment of the farmers' perception of climate change.