

Abstract

Researches are crucial for highland development. The objective of this study was to assess the impacts of the Highland Research and Development Institute (HRDI) in the past decade and suggest the future research direction. The data were obtained from 441 projects under the HRDI during the fiscal years 2005-2014. The questionnaires of 167 projects and 4 case studies of the successful projects were conducted. The economic analyses were performed i.e. Net Present Value, Benefit-Cost Ratio and Internal Rate of Return.

The results show that the HRDI researches in the beginning mostly emphasized on extending the activities of the Royal Project implemented into the Royal Project extension areas including the supporting areas of the Royal Project. The recent researches aim more on economic, social, and environmental aspects of the highland communities. The research outputs and outcomes on technology, innovation, products as well as registration of intellectual property (52 items) have resulted in the success of projects on natural resources and environmental conservation, biodiversity preservation, food security, local knowledge and community economy. The economic analysis of the four case studies were 1) coffee-based researches produced NPV (2008-2024) equaled to 28,170,547 baht, BCR 4.13 and IRR 43% ; 2) food bank researches created NPV (2007-2024) equaled to 191,936,151 baht, BCR 5.52 and IRR 32% ; 3) Rice Researches made NPV (2011-2020) equaled to 5,954,000 baht, BCR 1.54 and IRR 23% ; and 4) Handicraft Researches produced NPV (2007-2024) equaled to 10,116,786 baht, BCR 1.47 and IRR 72%. In conclusion, the four case studied researches show that the HRDI researches investments in the past are economically worthwhile. The benefits will be higher in the long-run when the adoption of technology will be expanded.

Suggestions to HRDI for the future researches directions are e.g. continuing researches to produce “high quality” of products, commodities, innovations and varieties; emphasizing on high value brands royalty which specialized in highland and royal project products; and continuing the natural resources and environmental researches that serve the sustainability issue and research dynamic perspective, medium and long term researches should be supported. Carrying on training and strengthening of monitoring and evaluation are crucial.

Keywords: Impact Assessment, Highland Researches, Highland Research and Development Institute