FOCUS ON

International Projects, Research, and Training with REES
(Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology)
Who we are

The University of Alberta is a Top 5 Canadian university and one of the Top 100 in the world, home to more than 170 graduate programs and 200 undergraduate programs, with a total enrolment of more than 45,000 students.

The Department of Resource Economics and Environmental Sociology (REES) is home to 20 academic staff, 2 support staff, and approximately 70 graduate students. We offer Masters and PhD degrees in Agricultural and Resource Economics and in Environmental Sociology, and have awarded over 500 graduate student degrees over the past 50 years.

Our impact is recognized well beyond Canada. Based on the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis (RePEc) ranking of 244 agricultural economics departments on the basis of citation analysis and popularity, REES is currently ranked No. 17 in the world and No. 1 in Canada among academic units.
Capacity

REES is well-acquainted with interdisciplinary work in international settings. Within REES, there are economists, sociologists, a political scientist, and a specialist in community-based research with indigenous peoples. We have depth and breadth in international development settings, working on issues related to gender, livelihoods, markets, environmental services, project evaluation, and climate change. Our focus is on generating policy and development relevant knowledge, using numerous quantitative and qualitative approaches.

Our professors have expertise in leading large interdisciplinary teams, with close connections to local partners. These connections include economics networks in Southeast Asia (the Economy and Environment program for Southeast Asia, EEPSEA), Africa (the Centre for Environmental Economics and Policy Analysis in Africa, CEEPA) and cross-Canada agricultural policy research networks (Linking Environment and Agriculture Research Network, LEARN; and Consumer Market Demand research network, CMD).

How we work

Much of our development work is undertaken while training graduate students, many of which come from developing countries. A large portion of external project funding goes to support graduate students who serve as research staff on these projects. Graduate students are enrolled in eight months of coursework that includes theory and methods. Following coursework, students engage full-time in pursuing their thesis research, which is normally completed in sixteen months (longer for PhD students).

Students work closely with faculty supervisors, who actively engage with our international partners. Through this process, students prepare background reports and literature reviews, help to structure and implement data collection, undertake data analysis and reporting of results. Thesis research is commonly published in top academic journals with co-authors from development organizations.
Recent projects and partnerships

2012-2016. $340,000. Climate Change Agriculture and Food Security (CCAFS) and University of Alberta Research Collaboration.

*Funded by CCAFS.*

This grant provides funding support for faculty members, graduate students and research associates to work with CCAFS partners on projects related to economic and social aspects of climate change. A number of these projects have analyzed data sets which CCAFS has collected. Other projects have cooperated with CCAFS staff to design and implement data collection.

2010-2015. $600,000. Vulnerability, coping and adaptation within the context of climate change and HIV/AIDS in South Africa: Investigating strategies and practices to strengthen livelihoods and food security, improve health, and build resilience.

*Funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).*

Rural households in developing countries are facing multiple sources of stress that may simultaneously impact various aspects of their livelihoods. This project disclosed knowledge about how these impacts are influencing different types of households, thereby providing guidance on donor interventions and policies to facilitate development.


*Implemented by the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation and the University of Alberta, funded by the Canadian Food Security Research Fund through the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).*

Action research was conducted in 3 agro-biodiversity hotspots in India to diversify and increase incomes, diets and connections to government agencies. UofA students conducted studies of specific technologies, effectiveness of government policies, social networks and project impacts.


*Implemented by Sokoine University of Agriculture and University of Alberta, funded by the Canadian Food Security Research Fund through the International Development Research Centre (IDRC).*

This project involved the distribution of exotic breeds of dairy goats, cassava and sweet potatoes to 120 households in four villages. Working closely with government extension officers and Sokoine University, development interventions were assessed on wide-ranging topics including animal health, feeding alternatives, gender and livelihood impacts, evaluation and policy implications.
Other selected international projects with REES involvement

Decentralization reforms and property rights: Potentials and puzzles for forest sustainability and livelihoods
*USAID SANREM*

Community-based antiretroviral treatment for AIDS patients in rural Uganda
*Canadian Institute of Health Research*

Building better corporate-smallholder partnerships: Sharing lessons across southern African countries
*CGIAR-Canada Linkage Fund*

Coerced mutual-help, family networks, and vulnerability in rural Tanzania
*Killam Research Grant*

Sustaining the values of ecosystem services in the Lake Victoria Basin: Harmonizing poverty reduction and environmental management objectives
*United Nations Environment Programme*

Pro-poor rewards for environmental services in Africa
*International Fund for Agricultural Development*

Mobilizing knowledge for sustainable agriculture, Sri Lanka
*Kule Institute for Advanced Studies*

An integrated analysis of climate change vulnerability in forest-based communities: Alberta Canada and Vichada Colombia
*Killam Research Grant*

Tracking change: Local and traditional knowledge in watershed governance (Mackenzie River basin, Lower Amazon and Lower Mekong River basins)
*Social Science and Humanities Research Council*
Recent selected publications


Recent REES graduate student theses


