

Evaluating the Outcomes and Impacts of the RAID Network Using the Success Case Method

Master of Global Food and Agricultural Business

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Assignment Cover Sheet

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Abstract

Researchers in Agriculture's for International Development (RAID) Network is an Australia-based group bringing together early to mid-career researchers. The purpose of this study is to find the evaluation approach that is most appropriate to evaluate the performance of RAID Network's 2017 to 2022 Strategic Plan. At the same time, understand the outcomes and impacts of each activity included and examine have those activities meet the expected achieving goals of the strategic plan, then provide a recommendation for future programs. The selected and implemented evaluation tool is Success Case Method (SCM), and the evaluated activities have been distinguished into three groups based on RAID's core objectives which are "Connect, Engage and Support". This study identified that all three groups of activities had achieved the expecting outcomes and impacts, while the viewpoints of activities' participants are presented in this paper. Although all initiatives were performing well so far, some necessary improvements for future programs such as increase the quality and quantity of resources provide, maintain the supportive vibe create, and actively access to and connect more researchers are still needed. Also, the challenges that RAID might face in the future are pointed out in this study.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Researchers in Agriculture for International Development (RAID Network) is an Australia-based network group founded by a group of young researchers in Australia in 2013 aiming to bring together early to mid-career researchers with an interest in agriculture and international development (RAID Network, 2020). The main objectives which RAID wants to deliver and express can be separated into three categories of obligations which are: "Connect", "Engage", and "Support" (RAID Strategic Plan, 2017). The detail of each main objectives can be seen as follows:

- Connect researchers involved in international agricultural research for development by facilitating networking and knowledge sharing.
- Engage more people in agriculture by raising public awareness about career pathways into, and the importance of, international agricultural research for development.
- Support career development of early to mid-career researchers through targeted capacity building initiatives.

As reported in the 2019/20 Annual Report, RAID held 14 networking reaching over 550 people in the 12-month period and has more than 1,000 enrolled members on the official website, while RAID also using mainstream social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram to increase communication channels for engaging more people (RAID, 2020). Additionally, they have hosted eight professional development workshops for its members since 2015 (RAID, 2019). Since March 2020, RAID has started implementing online events, for instance webinars and virtual networking events.

RAID's major stakeholders include the Crawford Fund and the Australian Center for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) (RAID Network, 2020). In 2016, RAID formalised an agreement to be integrated legally and financially as a program of the Crawford Fund. RAID primary funding source is from ACIAR, which over the past three years has been operating approximately \$50,000 per annum.

In 2017, the RAID Central Committee developed a five-year Strategic Plan (2017-22) based on these three core objectives including expected outcomes and impacts. The Strategic Plan's outcomes and impacts can be seen in Table 1. (see Appendix A for The Strategic Plan 2017-2022)

Table 1: Summary of planned activities, outputs, outcomes and impacts, as they relate to RAID’s core objectives (2017-2022)

Objectives		
Connect	Engage	Support
Activities and outputs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organise a minimum of eight networking events around Australia per year. • Maintain an effective online platform (website and social media) to connect members and facilitate knowledge and resource sharing. • Establish a mentorship program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source and produce high quality communications material, including blogs, videos and opinion pieces. • Publish this material on RAID’s website and disseminate through social media and mainstream media. • Identify and promote job and volunteer positions and scholarship and grant opportunities and disseminate via the website and social media. • Assist the Crawford Fund in the organisation and delivery of the Annual Parliamentary Conference and State Events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver one major professional development workshop each year. E.g. focussed on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Research leadership and management; - Effective collaboration in inter-/trans-disciplinary research; - Integrating a gender-focus into agricultural research for development - Communicating research for impact. • Deliver 2-3 shorter professional development seminars and webinars each year. • Make information and resources from professional development workshops and webinars available to all members via the website.
Outcomes and impacts		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early to mid-career researchers are connected with their peers, as well as interact with more experienced researchers, across disciplines. • Early to mid-career researchers receive advice and support from senior researchers outside of their own institutions, fostering cross-institution and cross-disciplinary collaboration. • Knowledge is transferred from senior scientists to early career scientists ensuring valuable lessons, successes and outputs are shared across generations, locations and projects. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater appreciation among the general public and policy makers about the benefits of investment in agricultural research for development. • Greater dissemination of job and volunteer positions and scholarship and grant opportunities. • Increased number of young people pursuing a career in agricultural research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased capacity of early and mid-career researchers to effectively conduct, manage and communicate agricultural research for development projects.

The RAID Committee seeks to understand to what extent it has achieved its outcomes and impacts of the five-year Strategic Plan and achieved the expected results as the scheme has

been executed for more than half of the process so far. Plus, many existing research papers have identified the importance of evaluating the training process and results, and the benefits and advantages that could be found through the evaluation (e.g., Alvarez, Salas, & Garofano, 2004; Lee, Jeon, Kim, & Lee, 2017; Medina, et al., 2015). Also, RAID would like advice regarding the fittest approach and methodology to measure and analyse the impact given its mandate, as the operation of its five-year strategic scheme is completed over a half.

In consultation with the RAID Central Committee, this study aims to evaluate RAID's outcomes and impacts against its Strategic Plan with recommendations to improve its initiatives for the remainder of the plan. In order to achieve this, this study will address the following research objectives:

- To review different evaluation methodologies on examining the outcomes and impacts of programs and selecting one which is fitting to evaluate the activities of RAID.
- To evaluate the outcomes of RAID's activities, while understanding how and in what way these activities impact participants from diverse working experiences and educational backgrounds.
- To provide a recommendation about how RAID could improve the effectiveness of its activities on transferring knowledge and skills better to succeed the expected goals and desired outcomes in the strategic plan.

This paper will use the Success Case Method to evaluate past activities and events to complete the research objectives. Besides, RAID Committee will facilitate survey collection of its members as well as providing operational budget to cover survey costs.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. THE IMPORTANCE OF EVALUATION AND TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS

The trend of globalisation and liberalisation has led to the two-way flows of ideas, capital, and human resources which increased the complexity of doing business (Draper, Dadush, Hufbauer, & Bacchus, 2012). In this light, numerous companies have aware that investing in training programs to develop the skill and knowledge of employees is essential and might be the best strategy to maintain competitiveness in the current business environment (Lee, Lee, Lee, & Park, 2014). According to the report of TAFE Enterprise (2018), a survey sent to above 400 Australian business revealed that more than 80% of the Australian business admitted more investment in staff training is needed, yet about a half (48%) of them prefer to directly employ new staffs and only 41% of the companies willing to spend more than 5% of their annual

revenue on training programs. In this sense, the reason that Australian firms do not put much effort into developing human resources could be explained by the uncertainty of the return of investment, which whether the investment in training employees will improve the overall performance of the corporation is always be questioned by the management of the most corporation (Lee, Lee, Lee, & Park, 2014). Thus, this further point out the importance of evaluating the impacts and results of training activities, and utilising evaluation techniques to analyse the application levels of professional skills or knowledge learned from these activities.

Evaluation is a rigorous and logical manner to ascertain the performance of training programs or educational activities, while it is also a systematic approach to identify what works and what needs to be improved within a long-term project or series of the scheme. To be more specific, evaluation is a process which collecting information and data from participants, program stakeholders, and associated material resources to analysing the results of the program (Lee, Jeon, Kim, & Lee, 2017). Moreover, the difficulties might face during the evaluation, and the information contained in outcomes could vary by the evaluators and methodologies involved, the nature of the evaluating program, and the resources available. At this point, one way to optimise the effectiveness of evaluation and increase the reliability of results produced is to select a context-specific approach which allows evaluators not been restrained by the obstacles such as to exceed the available budget or over-scheduled time.

One of the most significant factors that influence the design and effectiveness of the training activities will be the “transfer of training” model which originally presented by Baldwin and Ford (1988). This model introduced and summarised trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment as the three most fundamental and influential determinants that decide the outcome of training activities. In other words, these determinants will affect the levels of trainee learned and the continuance of the application of new skills or knowledge acquired from the training activity to the workplace (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Besides, an integrative study published by Burke and Hutchins (2007) based on reviewing the previous transfer of training literature, has further outlined and explained the impacts of three main determinants on training transfer. The two most popular traditional training transfer evaluating methods are The Four Levels of evaluation and ROI (Return on Investment) (Wu, 2007). However, the focus points and generated results of two models are distinct. The four-level evaluation model emphasises on analyses and demonstrates if the training outcome met the desired results of the company’s management and the interaction of factors that could affect the effectiveness of training transfer (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). On the other hand, the ROI model underlines converting the collected data into monetary value and compare the

monetary benefits to the costs of the program, which shows the actual return on investing training program (Phillips, 2011).

2.2. RAID NETWORK AND SUCCESS CASE METHOD

Activities operated by RAID Network are different from the regular training program in the private corporation or government department where the training period could be long-term and focuses on a particular group of people in a specific position. On the contrary, the capacity building programs conducted by RAID are usually very short-term and open to students, researchers, and people who are interested in agriculture and international development from worldwide. Furthermore, the meaning and the ultimate goals of the events and activities held by RAID are rather than to produce profits or benefit the organisation itself, but raising more Australian's awareness of the agricultural industry and helping small farm holders in different countries to develop the agriculture. In this light, RAID Network is more alike to a network between the concept of "Peer leadership network" and "Collective leadership network" which been classified as two of four leadership network types in Hoppe and Reinelt's (2010) research. A peer leadership network connects leaders through shared interests, experiences, and commitments, and provides with a channel for them to exchange advice, experiences and support each other; and a collective leadership network is a self-organised system of social ties which members are customarily attracted by common causes or shared objects (Hoppe & Reinelt, 2010).

In considering the nature of RAID Network and the characteristics of its programs, resources and budget available, and time limitation, we decide to apply the Success Case Method to evaluate the impacts and outcomes of RAID's Strategic Plan. According to Brinkerhoff (2003) the five overall steps of SCM are as follows: 1) Focusing on planning a Success Case study to ensure the purpose of the study will be indeed delivered; 2) Building an "impact model" that outlines what successful behaviours and outcomes should produce if the program is working well; 3) Designing and sending a survey (if needed) to search and potentially identify the most and least successful cases; 4) Interviewing and documenting most successful cases to powerfully capture how an intervention or innovation has been applied to achieve successful results; 5) Carry out communicating findings, conclusions, and recommendations to illustrate the research results.

On the one hand, SCM is designing to find out the working and not working parts in the training program easily, quickly and precisely (Brinkerhoff, 2005), while it is also time-saving and costless compared to traditional and more comprehensive evaluation method such

as Kirkpatrick's four levels of evaluation and ROI models. On the other hand, SCM is an effective hybrid approach for getting accurate, trustworthy, and evidential evaluation results, which uses a survey to collect brief self-report from participants regarding what they received from the program, what they believe they are applying or not using to identify the high and low application groups (Brinkerhoff, 2006). Then, sampling trainees been ranked in the highest and lowest application groups and implementing an in-depth interview to probe and document more information and actual application from them (Brinkerhoff, 2006). SCM using these two critical steps to reveal factors that facilitate or hinder the transfer of training in a program. Moreover, the influences of each apparent factor on participants, who succeed in employing training outcomes in the workplace and who does not owing to some reasons, will also be discovered and illustrated to helping conclude which part of the program is performing well and which needs a revision (Brinkerhoff, 2003).

Although the Success Case Method was initially designed for evaluating the private sector and mainly been applied in profit-based evaluation settings, it has now widely been used in assessing the programs in diverse sectors (Medina et al., 2015; Brinkerhoff, 2006). Lee, Jeon, Kim, & Lee's (2017) suggested in the report that SCM technique has effectively helped them to identify the factors that would impact the training transfer of training on newly appointed public officials. Also, Medina and colleagues reported that SCM is useful and valuable for estimating the success of health promotion and public health training project (Medina et al., 2015). From reviewing existing literature, despite there are barely any current research papers or articles have applied SCM to evaluate training program or educational activities in the agricultural sector, it is worth to try and use SCM on measuring whether RAID's strategic plan has met the expectation since the valuable information and practical analysis that it can produce.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. RAID'S ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

In this study, RAID's outcomes and impacts are being evaluated against its activities and outputs according to the three key objectives:

- Connect activities evaluated in this study are regular networking events, knowledge-sharing platforms, and mentorship programs.
- Engage activities evaluated in this study are high-quality communication materials, identify and promote job and scholarship opportunities, volunteer positions, and Crawford Scholars Program.

- Support activities evaluated in this study are face-to-face capacity-building workshops and webinars

More and specific details about each activity and event mentioned above could be found in Appendix B.

3.2. SUCCESS CASE METHOD

As described in the literature review, there are five steps of the SCM as outlined by Brinkerhoff (2003). Table 4 below outlines these steps, and the sources of information that will form the basis of this study's analysis.

Table 4: SCM steps and the sources of information for this project.

	<i>SCM methodology</i>	<i>Sources of information for this project</i>
Step 1	Focus on planning the study: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E.g. define the business goal, identify the stakeholders, check the time frame and available resources, design the outline of the study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RAID's strategic plan overview 2017-2022 (see Appendix A) ▪ RAID's annual report 2017-2020
Step 2	Build an impact model which forecast and illustrate what should happen if the programs were working effectively. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E.g. the expecting performance and results that the programs produce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RAID's strategic plan 2017-2022 (see table 1) ▪ RAID committee members
Step 3	Implement a survey and analyse the gathering data to identify and sort out the potential most and least successful cases.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Evaluation of survey responses
Step 4	Interview the success cases to document the unique success stories which could display the noteworthy training outcomes and tell the value of programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E.g. in what level and what way, new skills have been applied by the success cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Open-ended questions in the online survey. More details and information of this step will be explained in section 3.2.3.
Step 5	Demonstrate findings, communicate results, and disseminate the success experiences to more people in the company or organisation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E.g. the scope of the impact ▪ E.g. factors or issues that help or impede the impact. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Documented report

3.2.1. STEP 1. PLANNING THE STUDY

This study was planned in the first half of 2020 by the research team, including the Master's Intern, Research Associate from University of Adelaide, and members from RAID Committee. The central part of the study has been conducted and accomplished during the second half of 2020. Additional consultation took place with the ACIAR and Crawford Fund regarding study

approach and design. Following the instruction outlined by Brinkerhoff (2003) in this stage, we interpreted and defined the research purposes and objectives to identify the necessary information of the study, availabilities of budget and time, and interests and concerns of the key stakeholders (RAID Network and the Crawford Fund). Then, we start to classify and select participants of RAID's programs who are in our targeting group of this study as well as determine the time frame for finishing the research.

Nevertheless, during selecting participants of this project, unlike evaluation of most training programs have fixed and registered number of trainees in single or few training activities to evaluate, whereas our case has overall eight types of online/offline programs scheduled to be assessed and not all of the programs have comprehensive records. On the one hand, some activities were carried out and ended more than a year, which Brinkerhoff (2003) advised that program evaluation should best apply between six weeks and eight months after the training activity complete when the memory of participants still fresh and reliable. Similarly, Green and South (2006) also suggested that contamination might happen in the large-scale training program that takes place over a long period due to other interventions. On the other hand, some programs are normalised and ongoing from three years ago to current, and it is challenging to discern and list who has accessed that information such as knowledge-sharing platform in the Connect part and all activities in the Engage part. Taking all issues mentioned above into account, we finally determined the targeting group in this evaluation will cover all RAID members (1,080 enrolled on the RAID's official website).

3.2.2. STEP 2. CREATING AN IMPACT MODEL

In the Success Case Method, an impact model is usually being created and illustrated as a table chart to review, what outcomes should be produced, and whether they fulfilled the business objectives if the program is working well. Plus, the impact model also forms the basis for the survey in the next step and provides a reference of questions for interviews in step four (Brinkerhoff, 2003). In Table 5, the first column on the left-hand side indicates the new capabilities (knowledge, skills, or techniques) that RAID's training activities or programs should provide to the participants, while the last column represents the RAID's core value and organisation goals, which are intended to be produced by those activities and programs. The two columns on the middle describe the action and impacts in which the new capabilities should be applied to help to promote and reach RAID's core value and goals.

Table 5: Impact Model of RAID’s activities and programs.

	<i>Capabilities</i>	<i>Action</i>	<i>Impacts</i>	<i>Goals</i>
Connect Activities (<i>Networking Events, Online platforms</i>)	<p>The ability for young researchers to connect with their peers and senior researchers across disciplines.</p> <p>The ability for young researchers to access supports and advices from experienced researchers.</p>	<p>Meet researchers from different disciplines and fields of expertise and approach new contacts</p> <p>Meet peers with similar interests and approach new contacts</p>	<p>Participants receive job opportunities or are better understand how to search for a job</p> <p>Participants receive suggestion about or help on participants’ project/career life</p> <p>Participants are connected with researchers in the agriculture research for development (AR4D) field</p> <p>Build a professional relationship (network)</p> <p>Create supportive vibe and feel sense of belonging in the AR4D field</p>	<p>Increase knowledge transfer between researchers in the agricultural sector.</p>
Engage Activities (<i>Communicational materials, job and scholarship opportunities, Crawford Scholar Program</i>)	<p>Increase participants’ appreciation about the benefits of investment in agricultural research for development.</p> <p>Link participants with more job, volunteer, and scholarship opportunities.</p>	<p>Access to the undated information and researchers’ experience about AR4D posted on the social media and website by RAID</p> <p>Access to senior researchers and supportive peers</p>	<p>Participants will better understand the career pathway into the AR4D field</p> <p>Participants’ horizon/experience/knowledge will be broader</p> <p>Participants receive suggestion about or help on participants’ project/career life</p> <p>Create potential job opportunities</p> <p>Participants are connected with researchers in the AR4D field</p>	<p>Increase the number of young people pursuing careers in agricultural research.</p>
Support Activities (<i>Workshops, Webinars</i>)	<p>Increase young researchers’ management skills.</p> <p>Increase young researchers’ communication skills.</p> <p>Increase young researchers’ knowledge in agricultural research.</p>	<p>Know how to better lead and manage a project</p> <p>Know how to better lead and manage a multicultural team</p> <p>Know how to make a video to better communicate with and present a project/study/research to others</p>	<p>Increase participants’ experience and performance in AR4D</p> <p>Facilitate participants’ project/career life</p> <p>Participants are connected with researchers in the AR4D field</p>	<p>Increased capacity of young researchers to effectively conduct, manage and communicate agricultural research for development projects.</p>

3.2.3. STEP 3. IDENTIFYING THE BEST AND WORST CASES (SURVEY)

Unlike the survey designed suggested by Brinkerhoff (2003) and in other existing SCM literature papers which were primarily assembled by close-ended questions and the main objective is to identify the potential success cases for interviewing. This study's approach is a modified version of the process outlined in Table 4, whereby Step 3 and Step 4 are integrated into the same step. This was achieved through the use of closed-ended and open-ended questions. To be more precise, the first ten items in the survey are multiple choices, and all participants were required to answer, which aims to probe participants' basic personal characteristics and academic backgrounds. The follow-up twenty items combine multiple choices, checkboxes, Likert Scale, several open-ended questions to capture participants' views related to this study's aims. Those twenty questions are intending to know the activities and programs that each participant has attended or utilised, as well as the details involved. The data and information collected through survey will directly use to identify and analyse the most and least successful cases and discover the story behind them. The online questionnaire can be found in Appendix C.

3.2.4. STEP 4. DOCUMENTING SUCCESS CASES (OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS)

The interview process is usually the most crucial step while implementing the SCM approach which enabling evaluators to interview the success cases defined by step three and pick up the most completed and evidence-based stories to present on the report. However, as has been mentioned previously, the nature of RAID is much similar to a social network or non-profit research institution, which RAID members are working or researching for different employers in diverse locations rather than traditional training programs conducted by private or public sectors which trainees are easy to contact for arranging interviews. Under this situation, the time, human capitals, and budget demanded to conduct interviews might overstep the resources that this study could access. In this light, we apply a more comprehensive and sophisticated survey to replace the interview process, which should be completed in step four. The example of open-ended questions we adopted and put in each activity section to substitute for interviews are as below.

1. Please describe how RAID has helped Connect (Engage/Support) you in international agricultural research. Please give specific examples.
2. Please describe what, if any, have been the outcomes and impacts from this? If there are any quantifiable impacts, you may describe these here.
3. Please provide some suggestions about how RAID could improve how it tries to Connect (Support/Engage) its members.

As mentioned in the previous section (3.2.3), this study is using a modified approach to the SCM (outlined in Table 4). Therefore, Step 3 in our methodology addresses Step 3 and 4 in the Brinkerhoff (2003) methodology.

3.2.5. STEP 5. DISCUSSING AND REPORTING FINDINGS

The documented information and results will initially be formed into a draft report to communicate and explain findings with a few RAID committee members while discussing does the evaluation met the expectation of RAID Network and its partners. After that, a summary and recommendation will be summarized and presented to the critical stakeholders of RAID's training activities and events such as RAID committee, Crawford Fund, and ACIAR.

3.3. DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

Data collected was conducted by using Survey Monkey and distributed to 1,049 email subscribers. The survey was open from 14 October to 5 November 2020. Once the survey period is closed, the received complete responses will be separated into several groups based on the score received in the Likert-scale questions from strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (7 points) (refer to Appendix C). Later, the group of responses that received a higher score than the average will be defined as the potential success cases and primarily selected to review and analyse their qualitative data according to the impact model. After that, the results of those potential success cases that meet most expected achieving impacts and outcomes in the impact model will be considered as the most successful cases in this SCM study. To better and more comprehensively demonstrate the findings and results in this study, despite identifying the most successful cases, we also coding and documenting the suggestions of every respondents as a table in Appendix D.

3.4. ETHICS APPROVAL

The University of Adelaide's Human Research Ethics Committee approval for this study was received on 9 October 2020 (Approval number: H-2020-207).

4. RESULTS

The overall gathering responses from the survey after three weeks were 48, composed of 30 complete responses and 18 incomplete responses (quit or unfinished the survey). This study will only analyse and present the complete responses. The quantitative data illustrate characteristics of 30 respondents who completed the survey and how they are grading the participated RAID's Connect/Engage/Support activities, while the qualitative data reveal the

outcomes and impacts of RAID's training activities and events as well as feedbacks of participants.

4.1. SURVEY RESULTS

4.1.1. CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONDENTS

According to data collected from 30 complete responses, more than half of respondents are in the age 25 to 34, and about a quarter of them are in the age 35 to 44. Also, the number of female respondents is higher than male respondents; the ratio of male to female respondents in this survey is 13:17. More than 90% of respondents were based in Australia with two respondents based overseas (the United Kingdom and Indonesia). A majority of respondents were based in New South Wales or Queensland (20% from each states). Comprehensive information about respondents' characteristics could be found in Table 6 below.

Among all respondents, about a half of them have reported that they first hear RAID and its activities through word of mouth from colleagues or friends, a third responded they know RAID through online platform (website and social media), and rest of them meet RAID from other sources. Also, approximately 65% of respondents have been a RAID member for less than four years, about 25 % of them become a RAID member for more than four years, and 10% of them do not remember. Additionally, Figures 1 and 2 below exhibit and compare the career stages of 30 respondents when they joined RAID and the career stages of them currently. Based on these two charts, it can be found that most respondents were postgraduate students when they joined RAID, while the majority of them have become early to mid-career researchers. At the same time, 23 among 30 respondents report that they are currently working in the universities or research institutes, six report working in the governmental or private sectors and one reports serving in the civil society.

Table 6: Characteristics of survey respondents (N = 30).

	Percentage	Number
Age		
<i>Less than 24</i>	10%	3
<i>25 to 34</i>	53%	16
<i>35 to 44</i>	23%	7
<i>45 and older</i>	13%	4
Gender		
<i>Female</i>	57%	17
<i>Male</i>	43%	13
First hear about RAID		
<i>Friend/colleague</i>	43%	13
<i>Online platform</i>	33%	10
<i>Crawford Fund Conference/Young Scholar Program</i>	13%	4
<i>Others</i>	10%	3
Current Location		
<i>ACT</i>	17%	5
<i>NSW</i>	20%	6
<i>QLD</i>	20%	6
<i>SA</i>	17%	5
<i>VIC</i>	10%	3
<i>TAS</i>	7%	2
<i>WA</i>	3%	1
<i>Overseas</i>	7%	2
Membership Length		
<i>Less than a year</i>	10%	3
<i>1 to 2 years</i>	20%	6
<i>2 to 3 years</i>	17%	5
<i>3 to 4 years</i>	17%	5
<i>More than 4 years</i>	27%	8
Workplace		
<i>University/Research institute</i>	77%	23
<i>Government</i>	13%	4
<i>Private sector</i>	7%	2
<i>Civil society</i>	3%	1
RAID's target audience¹		
<i>Australian citizen/PR and based in AU</i>	77%	23
<i>Australian citizen/PR and based overseas</i>	0%	0
<i>Not an Australian citizen/PR and based in AU</i>	20%	6
<i>Not an Australian citizen/PR and based overseas</i>	3%	1
Research background and interests (select up to three)		
<i>Animal and veterinary science</i>	27%	8
<i>Crop systems</i>	23%	7
<i>Horticulture</i>	37%	11
<i>Fisheries</i>	3%	1
<i>Natural resource management</i>	13%	4
<i>Economics and policy</i>	17%	5
<i>Social sciences</i>	30%	9
<i>Agribusiness and value chains</i>	37%	11
<i>Climate change</i>	23%	7
<i>One/Planetary health</i>	27%	8
<i>Gender and empowering women</i>	3%	1
<i>Other</i>	20%	6

¹RAID's target audience is Australia-based researchers, including those with or without citizenship/permanent residency, and Australians based overseas.

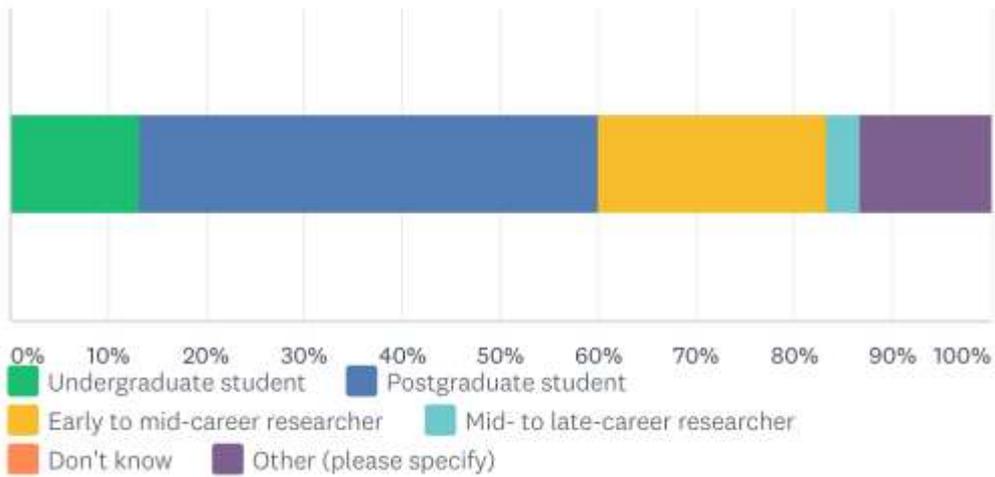


Figure 1: Career stages of respondents at the time of joining RAID.

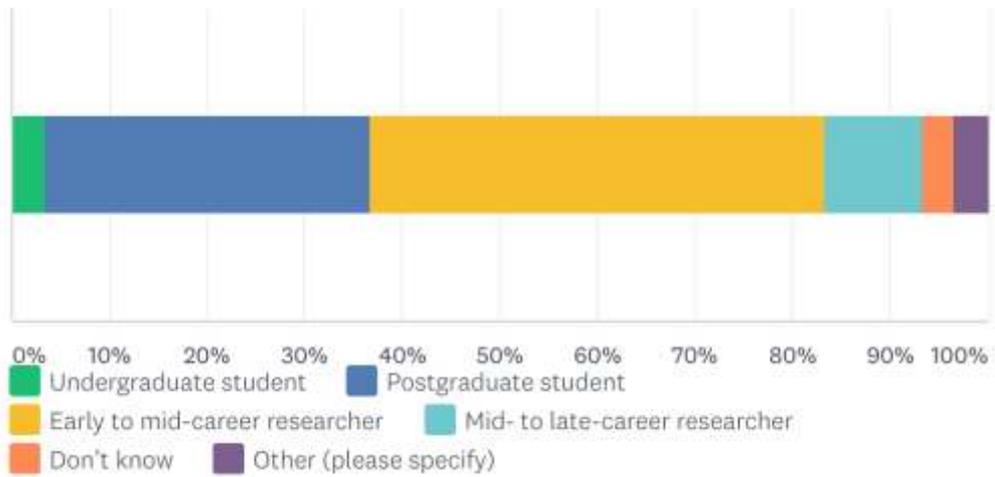


Figure 2: Career stages of respondents at time of answering the survey.

4.1.2. SCORE OF 'CONNECT' SECTION

There are 24 out of 30 respondents reported joined the following Connect activities and events at least once

- 95% of respondents attended the state-based regular networking events
- 58% of respondents read or utilised the information on the online platform
- 16% of respondents participated the mentoring program.

Figure 3 below reveals respondents' rating on the Connect activities or events they have participated. Overall more than half of respondents agree or strongly agree that participate Connect activities helping them to better connect with peers, researchers, or experts from different disciplines or institutions, and increase cross-fields or institutions cooperation.

Specifically, respondents most strongly agreed that RAID helped them to connect with researchers in different disciplines (58%), compared to connecting with peers (38%) and connecting with peers in different institutions (38%). In comparison, 20% of respondents slightly to strongly disagreed that RAID helped them connect with more experience researchers.

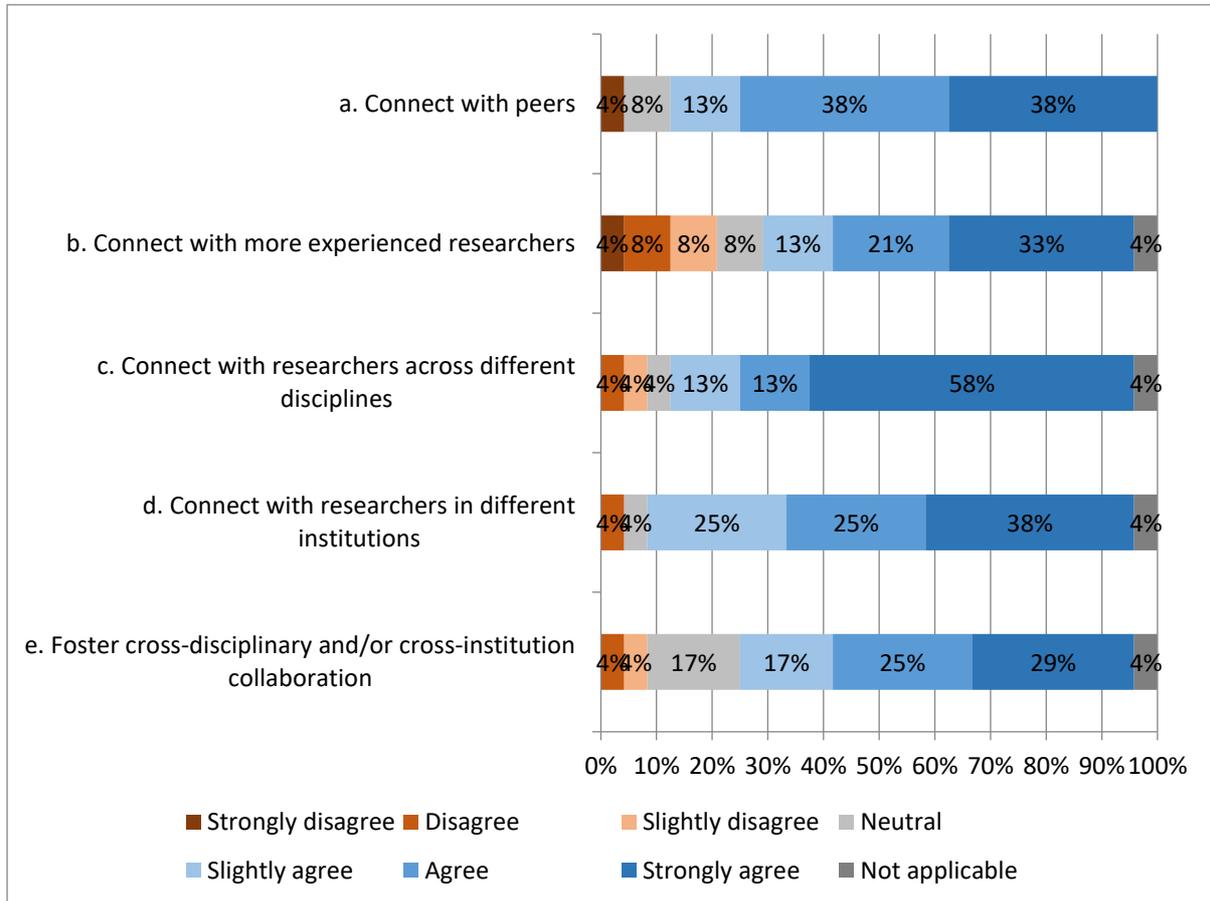


Figure 3: Rating of respondents against CONECT outcomes and impacts.

4.1.3. SCORE OF 'ENGAGE' SECTION

A total of 24 among 30 respondents have participated the following engage activities and programs:

- 88% of respondents viewed the communicational materials such as blog series, videos, or opinion pieces
- 76% of respondents seen or utilised the job, volunteer or scholarship opportunities published on the RAID website
- 32% of respondents participated in Crawford Scholar Program.

As shown in Figure 4 below, majority of respondents agree or strongly agree that engage programs contribute to raise public awareness of investment in AR4D's benefits (71%) and

increase the dissemination of job and scholarship opportunities as well as volunteer positions (88%). On the contrary, merely 34% of respondents agree to strongly agree that RAID has changed or influenced their decisions to pursue a career in agricultural research. To be more specific, neither propositions “a” or “b” received zero negative comments (strongly to slightly disagree) from respondents, while 20% of respondents did not agree with proposition “c” (see Figure 4).

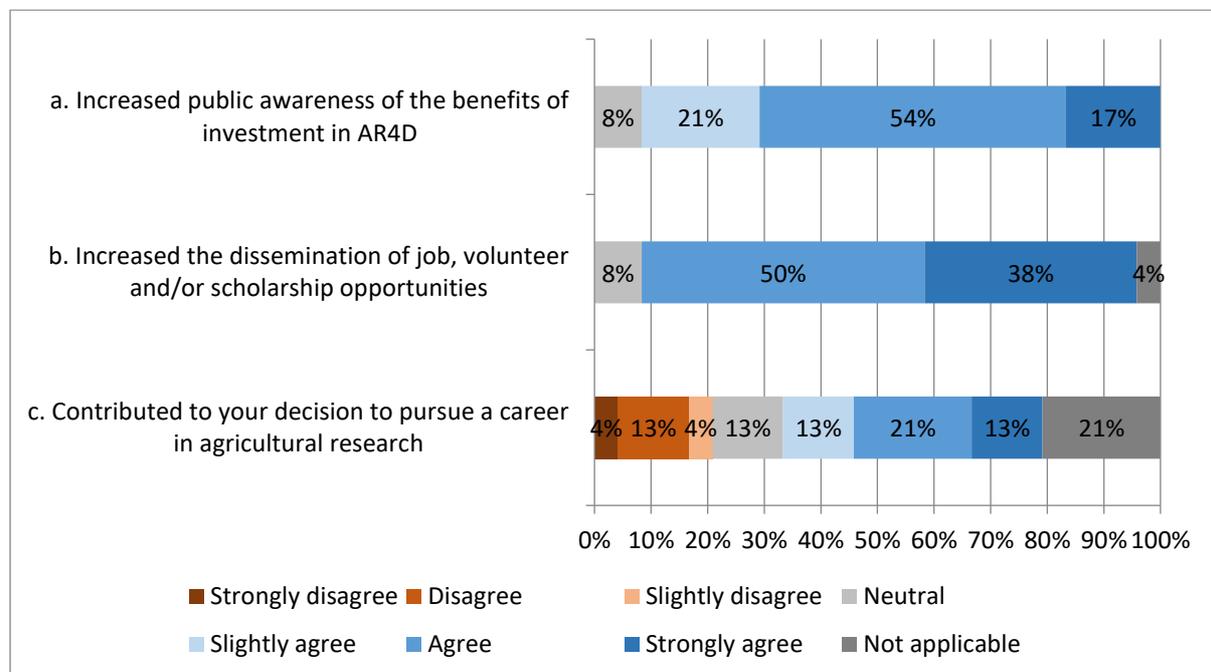


Figure 4: Rating of respondents against ENGAGE outcomes and impacts.

4.1.4. SCORE OF ‘SUPPORT’ SECTION

Overall, 20 respondents answered that they have attended or accessed to at least one of the following training activities or programs:

- 62% of respondents participated capacity-building workshops
- 86% of respondents participated webinars
- 14% of respondents have used other professional development resources available on the RAID website

According to Figure 5 below, 50% of respondents agree or strongly agree that RAID helped them to develop capabilities to conduct and manage AR4D projects more efficiently, and 35% of respondents agree or strongly agree on activities in support section facilitate them on communicating research or scientific results. Distinct with the results in other sections, 40% and 55% of respondents rating proposition “a” and “b” as neutral or slightly agree,

respectively. Besides, 10% of respondents selected negative answers in proposition “a” and 5% of respondents chose it in proposition “b”.

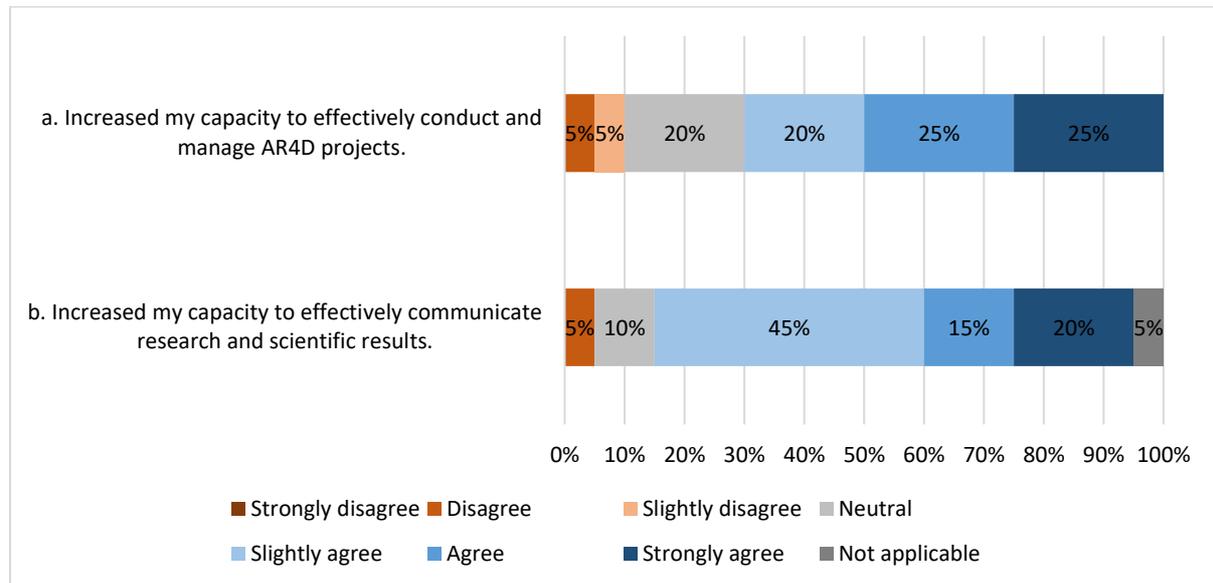


Figure 5: Rating of respondents against SUPPORT outcome and impacts.

4.2. QUALITATIVE RESULTS

Generally, an SCM study should more focus on finding out, analysing, and presenting the stories behind the most successful cases, according to Brinkerhoff (2003). Differently, in this study, we examine and present both most successful cases and less successful cases to discover thoroughly the characters that facilitate or hinder the delivery of innovation from RAID’s activities and events.

4.2.1. COMMENTS IN ‘CONNECT’ SECTION

The average score of 24 respondents who have participated in Connect activities and completed the all five Connect proposition ratings (Likert-scale 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree) is 5.5 (27.59 points). In comparison, 14 respondents among them received a higher score than average and been identified as the potential success cases of the Connect section, which means roughly 60% of respondents satisfied with RAID’s Connect activities. Further, five potential success cases gained full scores (35 points). On the other hand, ten respondents who received a lower score than average been considered as the less successful cases, while the lowest score is 12 points. After reviewed the open-ended questions of potential success cases and respondents with lowest scores, some quotes retrieved from most success cases (top 10% score) and less successful cases (least 10% score) are present in Table 7 below.

Table 7: Quotes from participants' comments (Connect activities)

	<i>Most successful cases</i>	<i>Less successful cases</i>
<i>How RAID has helped Connect you in AR4D?</i>	<p>Respondent 7: know other RAID members and people from other workplaces</p> <p>Respondent 18: provide the platform and events with a friendly environment to allow me to feel comfortable and confident to approach new contacts</p> <p>Respondent 20: met researchers from different disciplines and areas of expertise</p>	<p>Respondent 1: Participated in two face-to-face events, I believed that benefits would be more if I could attend regularly</p> <p>Respondent 15: RAID helps me feel a sense of community and connection with R4D scholars and researchers in Asia-Pacific region</p>
<i>What have the impacts been?</i>	<p>Respondent 7: Networking</p> <p>Respondent 18: Provide job opportunities</p> <p>Respondent 20: Developing connections and building a network of contacts</p>	<p>Respondent 1: I felt interested and included in the group as a whole. It gave me motivation to be involved.</p> <p>Respondent 15: Non-quantifiable- gave me a sense of hope and a Facebook group I could check into regularly</p>
<i>How could RAID improve it?</i>	<p>Respondent 7: A more frequent newsletter and get together events</p> <p>Respondent 18: More opportunities for connecting with others, more info online, more socials</p> <p>Respondent 20: Having more online events like discussion forums, seminars perhaps podcasts.</p>	<p>Respondent 1: I enjoy face to face events which had a few small presentations, some food and mingling activities.</p> <p>Respondent 15: Stay in touch with older (mid-career researcher), Do Q and A sessions with people from non-vet/animal sciences backgrounds.</p>

4.2.2. COMMENTS IN 'ENGAGE' SECTION

The average score of 24 respondents who have once joined Engage activities and completed all three Engage propositions (Likert-scale 1-strongly disagree to 7-strongly agree) is 5.1 (15.4 points). Among 24 respondents, 12 of them received a higher score than average and been identified as the potential success cases of the Engage section. Plus, two potential success cases received full scores (21). Nevertheless, half of the respondents received the scores lower than average been considered as the less successful cases, while the lowest score is 11 points. Some quotes retrieved from most success cases (top 10% score) and less successful cases (least 10% score) are present in Table 8 below.

Table 8: Quotes from participants' comments (Engage activities)

	<i>Most successful cases</i>	<i>Less successful cases</i>
<i>How RAID has helped Engage you in AR4D?</i>	<p>Respondent 8: met supportive peers in agriculture for international development careers who could provide valuable guidance</p> <p>Respondent 10: Blog is good for engagement, opportunities board for ways to get involved and engage in research. The invitation and support to connect with the Australian Volunteers Program has been fantastic way to engage.</p>	<p>Respondent 1: Provides information and videos</p> <p>Respondent 23: Provided me with information about current ACIAR projects</p>
<i>What have the impacts been?</i>	<p>Respondent 8: The connections and conversations enable by the event leads me to pursue a semester abroad and make me hooked on agriculture for development.</p> <p>Respondent 10: More aware of opportunities from reading blogs and website</p>	<p>Respondent 1: Feel more up to date</p> <p>Respondent 23: General awareness raising for me</p>
<i>How could RAID improve it?</i>	<p>Respondent 8: RAID blogs to provide questions (in order to facilitate more interaction and thought) not only answers.</p> <p>Respondent 10: keep and increase using social media to reach more early- to mid-career researchers</p>	<p>Respondent 1: Unsure</p> <p>Respondent 23: Feels like blog pieces are written by a select 'club' of researchers. Would be nice to hear a wider range of voices/opinions</p>

4.2.3. COMMENTS IN ‘SUPPORT’ SECTION

The average received score of 20 respondents who participated in Support activities and completed two propositions in the Support Likert-scale is 5.175 (10.35 points), while 9 among them have gained a higher score than average and been identified as the potential success cases in the Support section. At the same time, four potential success cases received full scores (14 points). However, more than half (11/20) of respondents’ rating on RAID’s Support activities are below the average score, where the lowest score is 4 points. Some quotes retrieved from most success cases (top 10% score) and less successful cases (least 10% score) are present in Table 9 below.

Table 9: Quotes from participants' comments (Support activities)

	<i>Most successful cases</i>	<i>Less successful cases</i>
<i>How RAID has helped Support you in AR4D?</i>	<p>Respondent 8: learned a lot about leadership and management in an AR4D context, meet other AR4D enthusiasts</p> <p>Respondent 16: leadership and management workshop were a great</p>	<p>Respondent 11: N/A</p> <p>Respondent 17: Provided inspiration that there are many of us working toward common goals.</p>

	<p>opportunity to discover and facilitate one's career life</p> <p>Respondent 18: a better understanding of research leadership, enable me to develop my leadership skills</p>	<p>Respondent 20: network of supportive EMCR's</p>
<i>What have the impacts been?</i>	<p>Respondent 8: Leading and managing a multicultural team with agriculture for development social enterprise overseas.</p> <p>Respondent 16: simply a better leader and manager and overall team player.</p> <p>Respondent 18: Be able to apply some of the skills I learnt in the workshop in my job as a field researcher</p>	<p>Respondent 11: N/A</p> <p>Respondent 17: N/A</p> <p>Respondent 20: sense of "people, belonging. Contributed to my core career value of purpose</p>
<i>How could RAID improve it?</i>	<p>Respondent 8: Course offerings could be more demand driven</p> <p>Respondent 16: Provide certificates or some kind of record of the events etc. (e.g. have attended on our members profile)</p> <p>Respondent 18: Continuing to offer bespoke and customised capacity building initiatives that will benefit researchers in AR4D</p>	<p>Respondent 11: A focus and practice piece on research translation (e.g. policymaker), A focus on the development practice versus the agricultural benefit is important, feels RAID is not focusing on this part.</p> <p>Respondent 17: Provide information to new members on how to connect with RAID</p> <p>Respondent 20: more direct involvement with ACIAR</p>

5. DISCUSSION

5.1. OVERALL PERFORMANCE OF ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Most Connect activities' participants pointed out that RAID had helped them to build professional relationships or receive guidance and support from experienced researchers by participating in the state-based networking events or accessing the resources on the online platforms. Compared perspective and feedbacks of respondents with the impact model in step 2, it is clear that activities in the Connect section have achieved the expected results and facilitated the transfer of experiences and knowledge in the AR4D field. However, only four among 24 Connect activity participants reported having attended the mentoring program. This could be due to the mentoring program commenced recently, while networking events and online platforms have always been there since the strategic plan was implemented in 2017. In addition to accomplish general goals in the Connect section successfully, one participant acknowledged Connect activities inspired him about ideas for future communications activities,

while the same participant also recommended other early career researchers to join RAID. Besides, when asking participants about room for improvements, many of them have mentioned the supportive vibe and sense of belonging created by RAID and hoping RAID could keep maintaining this friendly atmosphere. In this sense, the emotional feeling could be an essential factor that tight the bonding between researchers from different clusters.

On the other hand, the main objective of Engage section aims to raise public awareness about the importance of agricultural research for development, while bring more young people or researchers to pursue and start their career life into it. In this light, offering information related to updated agricultural research and opportunities in the AR4D sector could be two key factors to measure the effectiveness of Engage activities. In comparison the responses of most successful cases with the impact model, it can be seen that the educational materials published on the blog have a positive impact on the career development of participants and increase the experiences and horizon of participants. Also, the opportunity board on the website and connection with Australia Volunteers Program provide participants with multiple ways to access the AR4D department. Consequently, we identified that RAID's Engage activities had reached the expected achieving impacts and outcomes. Besides, many participants also mentioned RAID's helped them to meet and approach new contacts of senior researchers or supportive peers in the Engage section which duplicates the results of Connect section. Such situations could happen because participants actively build connections with researchers who published reports on the blog or offered opportunities through online platforms, while it might also due to the survey structure and question explanations are not clear enough.

Although the overall outcomes and impacts of Support activities seem not performing well, which more than half of participants' responses received the score lower than the average score. However, it is due to most respondents selected options such as "Neutral" or "Slightly agree" rather than choosing negative options. No respondents selected strongly agree in this section, and only one selected not applicable. In contrast, comments from the most successful cases shown that Leadership and Management workshops offered the management skills targeted in the field and have helped them to improve their career development to become a decent leader and team player. Likewise, one participant who has participated in the Mobile Acquired Data workshops indicated that now applying the techniques and methods learnt from the workshop in both international and domestic projects. Moreover, a participant accomplished that webinars and online discussion groups held during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown are particularly beneficial and useful. Similarly, few participants in this activity

section mentioned they met and got opportunities to collaborate with researchers across disciplines and borders.

Besides, participants of the Connect, Engage or Support activities have responded that RAID helps them to access to other researchers and approach new contacts, which might indicate that most participants favour or interest in the human resource network that RAID could help them to build.

5.2. IMPROVEMENT OF FUTURE PROGRAMS

All activity sections have received participants' feedbacks recommended that RAID should more frequently to hold all kind of activities and events while raising the numbers of job, volunteer, and scholarship opportunities on the opportunity board. Also, both participants of Connect and Engage sections have proposed ideas that RAID should group up members with comparable research interests together through regular social events (e.g. reading group) or social media (e.g. Facebook and WhatsApp) to make members keep active in the network. Apart from this, a small number of participants suggested RAID should put more effort into connecting and engaging undergraduate student and mid to late-career researchers, although they are not in the current focusing groups of the five-year plan while they could be included in targeting group of the next strategic plan. (Refer to Appendix D for complete suggestions from participants)

5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS

5.3.1. FUTURE ACTIVITIES AND PROGRAMS

Overall, the performance of initiatives under RAID's Strategic Plan is working well and achieved the expected outcomes and impacts so far. Hence, apart from expanding the number and scope of resources and information aiming to provide to the targeting audience in the Strategic Plan, while an essential step next could be sustainability. Like the point mentioned by many respondents, to maintain the supportive vibe of RAID Network. RAID must maintain the quality and availability of resources, materials, and opportunities delivered through online platforms, as well as networking events, workshops, and discussion forums offered face-to-face. In details, the "quality" in here is not only about the explicit and complete content, which also means the updated and specific topics that researchers in RAID's targeting group need. One way to accomplish this would be by regularly collecting ideas and opinions from them to understand their demands, then count and sort out the research topics or professional skills that been mentioned most to formulate as a reference to future programs and capacity-building activities. Also, planning the programs that are gathering researchers with common research interests or objectives together and allow them to share their passion and thoughts as seminars

or workshops could be a great chance to increase communication and create inspiration in the AR4D field. This kind of activities could refine the strengthen of social network tie between researchers and benefit to sustain the supportive vibe.

On the other hand, it is recommended that RAID should try more to connect researchers in suburban or rural areas and experts outside academia. Accessing and connecting them with the existing members could bring various voices into the network and increase the diversification of research. Enhancing cooperation with the governmental institutions (e.g. ACIAR and CSIRO) and private sectors (e.g. Crawford Fund, universities, and regional agencies) to design and conduct research projects or fieldwork schemes in certain regions could be an efficient way to involve more researchers, experts, and people who are interested in AR4D into the network. Additionally, the environment of where activities or events holdings could be a very critical factor that influences how much trainees could learn and their feedbacks on RAID's programs, which provide a comfortable and undistracted training environment is also a noteworthy point.

5.3.2. FUTURE EVALUATION

It is suggested that RAID should regularly evaluate the outcomes and impacts of its programs and the performance of the upcoming plan, which could not only facilitate RAID committee to track and record the effectiveness of each activity on delivering knowledge, skills, and information but also creating a two-way communication opportunity between the RAID committee and members. This kind of opportunity could help RAID to design the activities that fitted the necessary of its targeting group more accurately and efficiently. However, despite this paper successfully conducts the SCM to evaluate RAID's strategic plan, while the responses that cannot be analysed, such as N/A have been recorded multiple times in the open-ended questions. This situation could due to the explanation and paragraph of items are not clear enough, or respondents were distracted by other things, which might suggest that an interview is needed to collect information and understand participants' viewpoints deeper in the future program evaluation.

Apart from this, the survey designed in this project was sent to all RAID enrolled members rather than all activities' participants, which means many people did not join any activity or use any resource provided by RAID and caused to a low responding ratio (48/1,049). Although some activities such as knowledge-sharing platforms and blogs might be hard to document the number and contacts of participants, it is advised that RAID should record the numbers and contacts of each recordable activity as well as providing an individual feedback sheet in the end of activities to increase the responding rate.

6. CONCLUSION

In summary, the overall performance of RAID's five-year Strategic Plan until the current stage is satisfied, and all initiatives have achieved the expected results. On the one hand, activities in the Connect and Engage sections successfully increasing the transfer of information between researchers across career stages and disciplines in the AR4D department and facilitating the career pathway for young researchers to start the career in this department. On the other hand, capacity-building workshops and webinars in the Support section have contributed to the development of professional skills and knowledge for researchers to operate a project or lead a team with confidence and technique. Besides, activities in all three-section have helped participants to build a professional network with supportive peers and researchers. However, expanding the number and scope of programs without compromising quality will be a tough challenge that RAID might face.

7. REFLECTION

I have known better about how to manage my time for operating a long-term project more effectively and how to plan and discuss with other researchers. Below are the suggestions I would like to give people who want to start primary research or doing research with others:

- Time management will probably be one of the essential things when conducting primary research and collaborating with a third-party organisation (RAID Network in this study), which a great time management skill will ensure one could submit the project before the deadline.
- Applying for ethics approval to start primary research might take one month to a few months depends on the types and involves of the research, while it is also necessary to prepare extra time for editing the application according to feedback sent back from the Human Research Ethics Committee.
- Communicating the objectives and discussing desired findings with the stakeholders of the study will require more time than complete secondary or individual research.

- Planning and checking all needed resources for research are accessible and available at least until the deadlight of the project is also a useful approach to minimise the risk, which could hinder the project complete.

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9. APPENDICES

Appendix A:	RAID Strategic Plan Overview 2017-2022
Appendix B:	RAID's Activities and Outputs
Appendix C:	Questionnaire
Appendix D:	Outline of Suggestions from Respondents about How RAID could Improve its Future Programs

APPENDIX A - RAID STRATEGIC PLAN OVERVIEW 2017-2022

Who we will target: RAID's primary target will remain Australia-based early to mid-career researchers with an interest in agriculture and international development, but undergraduate students and senior researchers are also encouraged to join the network. 'Australia-based' includes Australian's working or studying overseas, and international researchers working or studying in Australia. However, anyone with an interest in agriculture and international development is welcome to join the network. Agriculture encompasses all aspects of food and fibre production, from farm gate to market, and includes crops, livestock, fisheries, forestry, natural resource management, economics and social sciences.

What we will deliver: In line with our objectives, RAID will continue to connect, engage and support early to mid-career researchers with an interest in agricultural research and international development.

Connect: RAID will connect researchers by holding regular networking events, providing an online platform to enable knowledge sharing, and by establishing a mentorship program. Each year, RAID will organise a number of networking events across Australia in association with major conferences and as stand- alone activities in regional areas. These events will provide young researchers with an opportunity to connect with their peers, as well as interact with more experienced researchers in an informal setting. RAID's website and

social media platforms will enable members to disseminate information about themselves and their projects, share stories and experiences, and to draw upon the knowledge base of the network through discussion forums and question and answer capabilities. Over the next five years, RAID will also establish a mentorship program, connecting early career researchers with senior researchers and providing a direct conduit for the transfer of knowledge, support and advice.

Engage: RAID will work closely with our partners to increase awareness and appreciation of the importance agricultural research for international development among the general public, and to engage more young Australians in agriculture. RAID will focus on producing high quality communications material (blogs, videos, and opinion pieces) and actively disseminating this information through social and mainstream media. RAID will also identify and promote relevant job and volunteer positions and grant and scholarship opportunities, to highlight career pathways into international agricultural research for development, and support the career development of researchers already working in this space. Through our partnership with the Crawford Fund, RAID will play an active role in the organisation and delivery of important advocacy events, such as the annual Crawford Fund Parliamentary Conference and relevant state events.

Support: RAID will support career development of early to mid-career researchers through targeted capacity building initiatives, including face-face workshops, seminars and online webinars. The capacity building initiatives will be designed to equip young researchers with the skills and knowledge needed to effectively engage in international agricultural research, such as conducting, managing and communicating research in a rapidly changing world.

How we will deliver: RAID is managed by a central committee and a network of regional representatives. The central committee oversee the implementation of RAID's strategic plan and manage RAID's day-to-day business, in accordance with RAID's policies and procedures. RAID regional representatives are based at institutions where there is a concentration of researchers involved in international agricultural research for development. Regional representatives report to the Events director and are responsible for organising regional events and raising awareness at a local level. Central committee and regional representative positions are all volunteer-based. RAID will evaluate the need for further administrative support on an annual basis. This will be based on the growth of the network, scope of activities implemented, and available resources.

RAID functions as an independent committee of the Crawford Fund. The Crawford Fund is a non-profit, non-government organisation that works to raise awareness of the benefits to Australia and developing countries from international agricultural research, commissions studies on research policy and practice, and arranges specialist training activities for developing country scientists. Over the next five years, RAID will continue to work closely with the Crawford Fund in pursuit of our shared goals and in line with our common values.

Partnerships are key to RAID's success. Over the next five years, RAID will focus on strengthening existing partnerships while creating new partnerships with agricultural research agencies, funding bodies, volunteer organisations, and other networks. To achieve this, RAID will actively explore opportunities for collaboration and cross-promotion, while seeking new funding opportunities and sponsorship. Building strong partnerships across sectors and institutions will enable RAID to broaden our reach across the agricultural community and help to ensure RAID has a stable income stream. To support our activities, RAID will seek a

combination of core and events-based funding and sponsorship. RAID will also welcome donations by utilising the Crawford Fund's deductible gift recipient (DGR) status.

APPENDIX B – RAID'S ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

Based on the structure of the five-year Strategic Plan (2017-22), RAID's programs are categorised into three categories, which are: "Connect", "Engage", and "Support" (RAID Strategic Plan, 2017).

CONNECT ACTIVITIES

The three main activities operating under this category are regular networking events, knowledge-sharing platforms, and mentorship programs. Activities among this segment are all aim to increase the communication between researchers from various disciplines and career stages as well as boost the exchange of knowledge and information.

Regular networking events:

During 2017 to 2020, RAID hosted 43 regular networking events (approximately 15 per year) across major cities of Australia and have recorded 1,460 participants. Most networking events were organised through face-to-face approach and only 3 of them were holding online due to the outbreak of coronavirus and restrictions in 2020. These three-hour events will provide a space for young researchers to connect with their peers as well as an opportunity to meet more experienced researchers in an informal setting.

Knowledge-sharing platforms:

RAID's official website is the central location of all stories, latest reports and job or research opportunities, where people can access the useful resources, check the upcoming events or programs, and review the issues that RAID has participated. Besides, RAID's home pages on mainstream social media such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram provide a discussion forum and further enable researchers or members to disseminate the information about their projects or research and share their experiences or personal viewpoints. Notwithstanding the website and home pages are created between 2014-15 and earlier than RAID's five-year Strategic Plan, while the objectives and position of these online platforms are more precisely and clearly after it has been concluded into critical section of strategic plan in 2017. The numbers of people engage with RAID on the official website and online platforms in 2020 are shown as below:

- RAID's website: 1,080 members
- RAID's Facebook group: 1,249 members
- RAID's Facebook page: 1,578 followers
- RAID's Twitter: 1,850 followers
- RAID's Instagram: 177 followers

Mentorship Programs:

RAID plans to establish a mentoring program during its five-year Strategic Plan aiming to enhance the connection between early career and senior researchers while enabling a direct conduit for transferring skills, knowledge, and experiences. A partnership has been established to address part of the strategic plan, whereby five Australian and Vietnamese early and mid-career researchers support each other over a series of months. However, this paper might not be able to evaluate this program precisely as it is partway through its implementation.

ENGAGE ACTIVITIES

The primary activities in this category are producing high-quality communication materials, identify and promote job and scholarship opportunities, volunteer positions, and Crawford Scholars Program. The main objectives in this stage are closely collaborating with RAID's partners to indicate the career pathway in the agricultural industry and demonstrate the importance of agricultural research for development (AR4D) to the general public.

High-quality communication materials:

Each year RAID runs a blog competition and started to present and disseminate meaningful materials such as blogs, opinion pieces, and videos that could raise public awareness on the importance of agriculture in international development. To be more specific, RAID updated new blog fortnightly and has published 62 blogs from 2017 to the first-half year of 2020. These materials can be obtained and reviewed on RAID's website and YouTube channel, while the number and characteristics of people who have accessed or reviewed those blogs have not been counted and recorded by RAID.

Job and scholarship opportunities, volunteer positions:

RAID actively identifies jobs, scholarships and volunteer positions relevant to agriculture and international development to promote career pathways and support career development for researchers in these fields. RAID does not record people who have obtained those opportunities,

and in this sense, the number and characteristics of people utilised those opportunities are unknown.

Crawford Scholars Program:

RAID regularly assists the Crawford fund to operate and deliver important events and programs such as the annual Crawford Fund Parliamentary Conference and other state and regional events. Each year RAID plays an important role in the Parliamentary Conference, except in 2020 as the conference was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. RAID's role in the conference includes supporting the Young Scholars Program, mentoring approximately 40 young scientists interested in international agricultural research.

SUPPORT ACTIVITIES

The critical activities in this category are face-to-face capacity-building workshops and webinars which are developed to qualify young researchers with knowledge and skills needed to effectively and confidently join the international agricultural research in a rapidly changing world.

Capacity-building workshops:

Research leadership and management skills are two critical components for researchers in the agricultural development sector toward successful research, while the delivery of this kind of training in the agricultural field is currently insufficient in Australia (RAID Annual Report, 2018). At this point, a series of capacity-building workshops have been designed by RAID and its partner to narrow down the gap of training in agricultural career space and support Australian-based researchers to better cope with future challenge in the workplace. In detail, the structure of workshops combines both lectures and seminars which provide participants with a chance to discuss new ideas and exercise new techniques with lecturers and their peers. Moreover, a networking event was usually included in workshops to offer participants extra opportunities to interact and consult with experienced researchers with distinct backgrounds and from different disciplines in the area where the workshop held.

RAID has collaborated with Crawford Fund and hosted six "Agricultural Research Leadership and Management" workshops between 2017 and 2020 in several Australian universities. Some details about those workshops can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Agricultural Research Leadership and Management workshops held between 2017 and 2020.

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Locations</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Workshop Length</i>
Workshop 1	Video Communications	9 to 10 July 2015	University of Sydney, NSW	24	1 day
Workshop 2	Mobile Acquired Data (MAD) Apps	15 to 17 February 2017	University of Melbourne, VIC	21	2 days
Workshop 3	Leadership and Management	12 to 14 June 2018	University of Queensland, QLD	22	2.5 days
Workshop 4	Leadership and Management	9 to 11 October 2018	University of Adelaide, SA	16	2.5 days
Workshop 5	Leadership and Management	26 to 28 February 2019	University of Tasmania, TAS	15	2.5 days
Workshop 6	Leadership and Management	14 to 16 May 2019	Charles Sturt University, NSW	15	2.5 days
Workshop 7	Leadership and Management	9 to 10 September 2019	Charles Darwin University, NT	17	2 days
Workshop 8	Leadership and Management	03 to 05 March 2020	University of Western Australia, WA	15	2.5 days

Webinars:

RAID's Capacity Building team directs online webinar workshops in the goal of more broadly and effectively engaging and supporting young researchers worldwide in the agricultural sector to develop their career life. Unlike the attendance of substantial RAID hosting workshops or seminars might be restricted by locations and circumstances, while online webinars more accessible and typically have a higher participating rate, especially in the particular period such as coronavirus disease pandemic. Also, along with its flexibility and approachability, both the topics of webinars and the number of attending experts are more diversified and extensive than traditional seminars. RAID has held three

webinars from 2017 to first-half year of 2020, and the information of those webinars are exhibited in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Summary of past webinars between 2017 and first-half year of 2020.

	<i>Topics</i>	<i>Dates</i>	<i>Platforms</i>	<i>Participants</i>	<i>Webinar Length</i>
Webinar 1	Doing International Research in Lockdown	27 May 2020	Zoom and Facebook	60 via Zoom More than 747 views on Facebook	1 hour
Webinar 2	Women in Agriculture and Climate Change	4 June 2020	Zoom and Facebook	30 via Zoom More than 753 views on Facebook	1 hour
Webinar 3	Selling Science: How to Communicate your Research	25 June 2020	Zoom and Facebook	100 via Zoom More than 900 views on Facebook	1 hour
Webinar 4	Volunteering in international R4D: during COVID & beyond	31 July 2020	Zoom and Facebook	75 via Zoom More than 695 views on Facebook	1.5 hours
Webinar 5	Life for smallholders during COVID-19 webinar	27 August 2020	Zoom and Facebook	38 via Zoom More than 730 views on Facebook	1 hour

APPENDIX C – QUESTIONNAIRE

By clicking “Yes” button below, you are indicating that you have read and understood the above information and consent to participating in this study.

Please select one answer

- Yes
 No

Background and Demographics

1. Age:
- Less than 18
 - 18 to 24
 - 25 to 34
 - 35 to 44
 - 45 to 54
 - Older than 55

- Prefer not to specify
2. Gender:
 - Male
 - Female
 - X (Indeterminate/Intersex/Unspecified)
 - Prefer not to specify
 3. Where are you currently located:
 - Australian Capital Territory
 - New South Wales
 - Northern Territory
 - Queensland
 - South Australia
 - Tasmania
 - Victoria
 - Western Australia
 - Overseas – specify which country:
 4. How did you first hear about RAID?
 - Friend/colleague (e.g. word of mouth)
 - Online (e.g. website/social media)
 - Crawford Fund Conference/Young Scholars program
 - Other conferences (e.g. AARES, TropAg)
 - Other - please specify
 5. Approximately how long have you been a RAID member?
 - Less than a year
 - 1 to 2 years
 - 2 to 3 years
 - 3 to 4 years
 - More than 4 years
 - Don't know
 6. When you joined RAID, what career stage would you consider yourself to have been in?
 - Undergraduate student
 - Postgraduate student
 - Early to mid-career researcher
 - Mid- to late career researcher
 - Other – please specify:
 - Don't know
 7. What career stage would you consider yourself to be in now?
 - Undergraduate student
 - Postgraduate student
 - Early to mid-career researcher
 - Mid- to late career researcher
 - Other – please specify:
 - Don't know
 8. Please select the option that best describes you when you joined RAID:
 - I am an Australian citizen/permanent resident and based in Australia
 - I am an Australian citizen/permanent resident and based overseas
 - I am not an Australian citizen/permanent resident and based in Australia
 - I am not an Australian citizen/permanent resident and based overseas
 9. What sector are you currently working in?

- University/research institute
- Government
- Private sector
- Civil society

10. Research background/interests (select up to three):

- Animal and veterinary science
- Crop systems
- Horticulture
- Fisheries
- Forestry
- Natural resource management
- Economics and policy
- Social sciences
- Agribusiness and value chains
- Climate change
- One/Planetary health
- Gender and empowering women

CONNECT Activities

11. Have you participated in one of the following?

- Attended state-based networking event(s)
- Connected with other researchers through RAID’s website or social media
- Participated in a RAID mentoring program
- Yes
- No
- Don’t know/can’t remember

12. Please indicate which of the following you have participated in (select all that apply):

- Attended state-based networking event(s)
- Connected with other researchers through RAID’s website or social media
- Participated in a RAID mentoring program

CONNECT Outcomes (from networking events, online platforms, mentoring programs)

13. Please indicate the statement, from strongly disagree to strongly agree, which best represents your views.

Options Pro-positions	Strongly disagree (1 point)	Disagree (2 points)	Slightly disagree (3 points)	Neutral (4 points)	Slightly agree (5 points)	Agree (6 points)	Strongly Agree (7 points)	Not applicable (0 point)
I believe RAID has...								
a. Helped me connect with peers (e.g. people in a similar career stage)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Helped me connect with more	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

experienced researchers								
c. Helped me connect with researchers across different disciplines	<input type="checkbox"/>							
d. Helped me connect with researchers in different institutions	<input type="checkbox"/>							
e. Helped foster cross-disciplinary and/or cross-institution collaboration	<input type="checkbox"/>							

14. Please describe how RAID has helped CONNECT you with other researchers. Please give specific examples.
[open ended]

15. Please describe what, if any, have been the outcomes and impacts from this? (e.g. for your own career, organisation, project, etc).
If there are any quantifiable impacts, you may describe these here. This does not necessarily need to be a monetary value. Think about new research collaborations leading to new publications, trying a new method/approach, a new job, promotion opportunities.
[open ended]

16. Please provide some suggestions about how RAID could improve how it tries to CONNECT its members.
[open ended]

Engage Activities

17. Have you participated in one of the following?

- Read/viewed RAID's blog series, videos or opinion pieces
- Seen or heard about job, volunteer or scholarships opportunities through RAID's platforms
- Participated in the Crawford Fund Young Scholars Program

Yes
 No
 Don't know/can't remember

18. Please indicate which of the following you have participated in (select all that apply):

- Read/viewed RAID's blog series, videos or opinion pieces
- Seen or heard about job, volunteer or scholarships opportunities through RAID's platforms
- Participated in the Crawford Fund Young Scholars Program

ENGAGE Outcomes (Blogs, opinion pieces, videos, opportunities page, Crawford Scholars Program)

19. Please indicate the statement, from strongly disagree to strongly agree, which best represents your views.

Options Propositions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not applicable
I believe RAID has...								
a. Increased public awareness of the benefits of investment in agricultural research for development (e.g. with general public and policy makers)	<input type="checkbox"/>							
b. Increased the dissemination of job, volunteer and/or scholarship opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>							
c. Contributed to your decision to pursue a career in agricultural research (internationally or domestically)	<input type="checkbox"/>							

20. Please describe how RAID has helped ENGAGE you in international agricultural research. Please give specific examples.
[open ended]

21. Please describe what, if any, have been the outcomes and impacts from this? (e.g. for your own career, organisation, project, etc).
If there are any quantifiable impacts, you may describe these here. This does not necessarily need to be a monetary value. Think about new research collaborations leading to new publications, trying a new method/approach, a new job, promotion opportunities.
[open ended]

22. Please provide some suggestions about how RAID could improve how it tries to ENGAGE its members.
[open ended]

Support Activities

23. Have you participated in one of the following?
- Attended a RAID capacity building workshops (e.g. video communications, mobile acquired data, research leadership and management)
 - Attended a RAID online Webinar (e.g. research in lockdown, climate and gender, communicating science)
 - Accessed professional development resources available on the RAID website
- Yes
○ No
○ Don't know/can't remember
24. Please indicate which of the following you have participated in (select all that apply):
- Attended a RAID capacity building workshops (e.g. video communications, mobile acquired data, research leadership and management)

- Attended a RAID online Webinar (e.g. research in lockdown, climate and gender, communicating science)
- Accessed professional development resources available on the RAID website

SUPPORT Outcomes (Attending workshops, Webinars, Available resources)

25. Please indicate the statement, from strongly disagree to strongly agree, which best represents your views.

Options Propositions	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neutral	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly Agree	Not applicable
I believe RAID has...								
a. Increased my capacity to effectively <u>conduct and manage</u> agricultural research for development projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>							
b. Increased my capacity to effectively <u>communicate</u> research and scientific results.	<input type="checkbox"/>							

26. Please describe how RAID has helped SUPPORT you to in work in international agricultural research projects. Give specific examples.
[open ended]

27. Please describe what, if any, have been the outcomes and impacts from this? (e.g. for your own career, organisation, project, etc).
If there are any quantifiable impacts, you may describe these here. This does not necessarily need to be a monetary value. Think about new research collaborations leading to new publications, trying a new method/approach, a new job, promotion opportunities.
[open ended]

28. Please provide some suggestions about how RAID could improve how it tries to ENGAGE its members.
[open ended]

29. If there is anything else you'd like to say about RAID or this project, please write it here.
[open ended]

APPENDIX D - SURVEY RESPONSES REGARDING HOW RAID COULD IMPROVE ITS FUTURE PROGRAMS

	Connect Activities	
	<i>Potential success cases</i>	<i>Less successful cases</i>
<i>Please provide some suggestions about how RAID could improve how it tries to Connect its members.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold more state-based event 2. Hold more social event 3. Find and group up RAID members who have similar interests through FB, WhatsApp or other social medias 4. Maintain relevance 5. Maintain the valuable community vibe created by RAID 6. More involvement with mid to late-career researchers 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increased and regular measurement of impact/outcomes 2. Hold events that specifically targeted to certain area. (Encouraging students and new researchers are important, but rarely the main reason for me to attend a networking event.) 3. Difficult to connect people in a non-city-based campus (e.g. Gatton) It would be good for students (responsible for plenty of research) in such campus to collaborate with others. 4. Feels the network largely passive with few intended outcomes, clarify the method for connecting maybe?
	Engage Activities	
	<i>Potential success cases</i>	<i>Less successful cases</i>
<i>Please provide some suggestions about how RAID could improve how it tries to Engage its members.</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Blog open for providing questions and only answers 2. Put more resources into marketing RAID on the social media to let more people meet RAID 3. Increase the numbers of job opportunities and volunteer positions provided on the website 4. Provide job opportunity for member to do research in organisations collaborate with RAID 5. Involve RAID members in RAID funded international research or projects 6. Hold an annual seminar for RAID member to present their research and experience 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Done great job of communicating within the R4D and academic community but seen less evidence of engagement with the general publics. 2. Can't really think of anything at the moment 3. Into the broader media, linking to other websites would help (e.g., through the RDC's, Plant Health and Animal Health Australia, etc.) 4. Like to see little networking sessions for idea exchange with other RAID members. 5. Quarterly in person or virtual meet ups. 6. RAID is targeted at too general an audience, or at students rather than researchers. Might barrier researchers' engagement.

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. More focus on researchers in the north rather than only on researchers in SA and VIC. 8. Hold event that can continuously make members active in the group (e.g. reading group or mentoring program) 9. Touch with researchers outside of academia 10. More opportunities to support AR4D researchers in their career journey 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Feels like blog pieces are written by a select 'club' of researchers. Would be nice to hear a wider range of voices/opinions
	<i>Support Activities</i>	
<p><i>Please provide some suggestions about how RAID could improve how it tries to Support its members.</i></p>	<i>Potential success cases</i>	<i>Less successful cases</i>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Hold more webinars and workshops 2. Hold more face-to-face workshops and seminars 3. Hold more workshops in small cities (e.g. Adelaide) 4. Provide certification or record of participating RAID activities 5. Course offering should be more demand driven (e.g. suggestion by RAID members) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. More volunteer or unpaid internship opportunities open to undergraduate students 2. RAID could engage with universities' postgraduate student society to organise training workshops 3. It'd be cool if RAID customized NRL Raiders jerseys into RAIDers merch. 4. Offer scholarship for PhD student 5. RAID should continue to give members hope that at some time in the future, they will be able to work abroad again. 6. RAID could also organise some country- or subregional-based events (e.g. Laos, SW Pacific) to promote sharing of experiences. 7. Perhaps RAID could seek funding from Crawford Fund or an education department to support short secondments/internships for early career scientists - to work in government departments or other organisations which develop or manage international agriculture projects - to see how proposals are developed, organised, managed, evaluated and reported from a managing organisation perspective. IT

		<p>security settings prevent me from registering at the Google docs website (governmental sector)</p> <p>8. More direct involvement with ACIAR.</p>
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