

Changing household livelihood strategies in peri-urban areas in the context of urbanization

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Abstract: The result is mainly from a qualitative database of the author's research called "Changing in livelihoods of farming households in peri-urban areas of Thai Binh city in the context of urbanization from 2013 to the present". This paper is based on data collected from 30 in-depth interviews with respondents who are representatives of households in Dong Tho, Vu Lac, TanBinh communes belonging study site. The main purpose of the article is to describe the transformation of livelihood strategies of agricultural households in peri-urban areas. As a result, 3 major directions of change were indicated in this paper including 1) changing from agricultural to non-agriculture production; 2) maintaining agricultural production but gradually shifting the focus to non-agriculture, and 3) changing in agricultural production and combining with non-agricultural production.

Keywords: household livelihood, livelihood strategy, changing household livelihood strategies, urbanization, peri-urban

I. Introduction

Urbanization is a process spreadly occurring in the world, including Vietnam. The more developed the economy, the faster the urbanization process happens. Urbanization contributes to promoting the socio-economic development of the region, improving people's living standards. Urbanization is a phenomenon that dominates the roots of social structure, so it becomes an important research object.

Depending on research purposes, there are numerous definitions of urbanization. In the Dictionary of Sociology by G. Endruweit and G. Trommsdorff the concept of urbanization is often used in three different senses: (1) the growth beyond the average number of people living in urban areas compared to the population of a country or continent (2) the increase of population and/or area of individual cities (3) cultural and lifestyle expansion of a city (G. Endruweit and G. Trommsdorff, 2002, p.151). According to the demographic and economic-geographic approach: "Urbanization is the migration from rural to urban areas, the concentration of more and more people living in limited geographical territories called cities. It is also the process of increasing the proportion of the urban population in the census of a country. The sign of this phenomenon (the percentage of urban population to the total) is often considered the only indicator to assess the degree (level) of urbanization of a country or a region." (Trinh Duy Luan, 2004, p.69). Similarly, John Macionis defines urbanization as "the increased concentration of people in limited geographical areas known as cities. Urbanization not only changes the population distribution in society; but also changes many patterns of social life." (John Maccinios, 2004, p.679). Thus, through these definitions, researchers agree that the factor of population development in the city is one of the most important factors of urbanization.

The concentration of population in urban areas also creates many negative aspects of the urbanization process: unemployment, social evils, environmental pollution, compensation after site clearance, etc. These phenomena are more clearly seen in peri-urban areas. According to statistics from the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development- Vietnam, an average of 73.3 thousand hectares of agricultural land is acquired every year, affecting about 2.5 million people. In addition, in just the past 5 years, land acquisition has affected the lives of 627,495 households with about 950,000 employees. The above figures show that for every 1 hectare of land acquired, more than 10 agricultural workers lose their jobs. The reality shows that the land and job loss while lack of business experience and other professional skills makes the job change of workers whose land has

been acquired facing many obstacles, especially those who are over the age of 40. Underemployment will increase the rate of poor households, thereby affecting social problems, creating burdens for society and the country (VUSTA, 2012).

Changing occupations and livelihood strategies pays a lot of attention to researchers, such as the *Current situation and solutions to ensure sustainable livelihoods for communities living in the suburbs of Hanoi in the process of urbanization* (Bui Van Tuan, 2015); *Effects of the conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural land on the livelihood of people whose land has been acquired in Hoi An city, Quang Nam province* (Huynh Van Chuonget al, 2010); *Using social capital in the livelihood strategy of farmers in the suburbs of Hanoi under the impact of urbanization* (Nguyen Duy Thang, 2007) and so on.

Thai Binh is an agricultural province in the Red River Delta of Vietnam, in which the peri-urban areas have been in the process of urbanization (Cao Bien, 2019). Therefore, the problems of urbanization, especially livelihood strategies have also posed a big challenge for the people. According to Department for International Development (DFID)'s sustainable livelihoods framework, to have a good livelihood outcome or a good household economy, one of the necessary conditions is to have an effective livelihood strategy. For that reason, in this article, we study the changing of household livelihood strategies in peri-urban areas in the context of urbanization. The livelihood strategy in this article is understood as a change model under the impact of urbanization.

II. Concepts

Livelihood strategy

According to Seppala (1996, pp.569 -573) "Livelihood strategy is a household-level allocative process which includes continuous decision-making on three issues. The first is the social composition and cohesiveness of the household. The second is the socio-cultural resource base - the allocation of resources to non-material values. The third is the material resource base - the allocation of resources between agriculture, wage-labouring and income-generating activities." Diversified livelihood strategies are depending on many factors, of which the core factor is income. Seppala also offered 3 types of ideal livelihood strategies, which are separated based on the economic accumulation including:

- 1) *Accumulation strategy* which is a growth-oriented combination of different activities and accumulated wealth is a long-term strategy;
- 2) *Reproduction strategy* focuses on fulfilling social and cultural goals, including income-generating activities, investment in community activities, and social security;
- 3) *Survival strategy* includes activities that generate income just to survive.

According to the DFID, the term livelihood strategy is used to denote the combination of activities, and the choices made by the implementer to achieve livelihood goals (including production activities, investment strategies, etc). This is a dynamic process in which individuals combine activities to meet their various needs. DFID also emphasizes that the performance of livelihood strategies is measured at the household level whereby different members of the household live and work in different places which may be temporary (seasonal) or permanent. Through the livelihood framework, it is also found that livelihood assets combined with the structure and transformation process have a great influence on the choice of livelihood strategy. The sustainable livelihoods approach explores the factors behind people's choices about livelihood strategies to reinforce the positive aspects (that promote choice and flexibility) and minimize negative impacts (DFID, 1999, p. 35).

In this study, we focus on describing the reasons why people have to change their household's livelihood strategy; what resources households use to change their livelihood strategies; who is the key player in that livelihood strategy; what factors affect the household's livelihood strategy and the outcomes after change the household livelihood strategies.

Agriculture

In this study, agriculture includes planting (growing food crops, vegetables, fruit trees, and ornamental plants) and ranching (cattle, poultry, aquatic products). However, according to the results, the farmers in the study site mainly grow food crops and vegetables. Although some households grow both fruit trees and ornamental plants, these plants did not bring economic benefits to the household, so the authors do not analyze deeply into these two aspects. Non-agricultural occupations in the study are divided into three main fields: handicrafts (a garment, food processing, carpentry, etc); employed (maids, sales, assistants, security guards, workers, etc); trading/services (grocery trading, drink/food services, beauty services, entertainment services, trading of building materials, etc).

Types of capital

Human capital

Human capital represents the skills, knowledge, ability to labour and good health that together enable people to pursue different livelihood strategies and achieve their livelihood objectives. At a household level human capital is a factor of the amount and quality of labour available (DFID, 1999,

p.19). Human capital in this study is counted in terms of quantity (the number of people who work or can mobilize to work/help someone implement their livelihood strategy), quality (ability, skills, knowledge, work experience and health) to help people implement different livelihood strategies to achieve their livelihood outcomes or livelihood goals; knowledge of formal ownership structures and informal (such as rights, laws, standards, governmental structures, procedures, etc.). This capital is a necessary condition for the effective use and promotion of other types of capital.

Social capital

It is taken to mean the social resources upon which people draw in pursuit of their livelihood objectives. These are developed through: (1) networks and connectedness, either vertical (patron/client) or horizontal (between individuals with shared interests) that increase people's trust and ability to work together and expand their access to wider institutions (2) membership of more formalised groups which often entails adherence to mutually-agreed or commonly accepted rules, norms and sanctions; and (3) relationships of trust, reciprocity and exchanges that facilitate co-operation, reduce transaction costs and may provide the basis for informal safety nets amongst the poor (DFID, 1999, p.21). In this study, Social capital is the social resources (social relations, networks, groups, etc) that people use to achieve their livelihood goals.

Natural capital

Natural capital is the term used for the natural resource stocks from which resource flows and services useful for livelihoods are derived (DFID, 1999, p.23). Natural capital in this study is understood as natural resources such as land, water, climate, weather, etc. These are natural factors that people have or use to serve their activities and livelihood goals.

Physical Capital

Physical capital comprises the basic infrastructure and producer goods needed to support livelihoods. Infrastructure consists of changes to the physical environment that help people to meet their basic needs and to be more productive. Producer goods are the tools and equipment that people use to function more productively (DFID, 1999, p.25).

Financial Capital

Financial capital denotes the financial resources that people use to achieve their livelihood objectives. There are two main sources of financial capital: Available stocks (savings, cash, bank deposits or liquid assets such as livestock and jewellery) and Regular inflows of money (pensions, or other transfers from the state, and remittances) (DFID, 1999, p.27).

III. Methodology

The study was carried out in three communes of Dong Tho, Vu Lac, and Tan Binh, belonging to Thai Binh City, Vietnam. Samples were selected by convenience. Data from this study are extracted from the qualitative research database of the research, including 30 representatives of households in the study sites. From the above 30 in-depth interviews, the study selects the 6 most unique cases that worked in the field of agriculture since 2013 to compare the way they used resources to create livelihood strategies.

In this article, the authors will describe the change of livelihood strategies of farming households from 2013 to the present by retelling the stories that were collected through the qualitative data collection process. From which, the authors will analyze the stories about what livelihood strategies did the households have; what options did households combine; and how they did to achieve their life goals; what livelihood strategies did apply by the households.

IV. The changing of household livelihood strategies in Thai Binh's peri-urban city

According to DFID's sustainable livelihoods framework, due to the impact of external circumstances or the impact of livelihood resources, laws, policies, and culture, people are forced to have different livelihood strategies. In other words, it is imperative to have a change in livelihood strategies to develop or at least maintain income and secure a household's life. The ownership of livelihood resources such as human, natural, financial, physical, and social capital is one of the main factors that orient the transformation livelihood strategy.

In general, to develop their economy, the household in the study areas chose many different livelihood strategies which are divided into 3 main directions: 1) Completely shifting from agricultural production to non-agriculture production; 2) Maintaining agricultural production but gradually shifting focus to non-agriculture production, and 3) Changing agricultural production (to increase profit) and combining with non-agriculture production.

4.1. Changing livelihood strategies from agricultural to non-agriculture production

The stories presented below belong to the direction of households' livelihoods changing from agricultural to non-agriculture (such as trading and employment).

The first story

The first case is Mrs.Th's household in Vu Lac commune, who owned 720m² of field land, 150 m² of mixed garden, and 100-meter-square house. Previously, in 2013, she and her husband grew vegetables, raised chickens, and planted rice. However, since the day her husband died in 2015, she also had a health problem, so she quit farming and went to the town center to do housemaid with a salary of 5 million Vietnam Dong (VND) per month. In 2019, her son got married, Mrs. Th re-built the house to open a small hairdresser shop for her daughter-in-law, who earned 8 million VND/month from the shop. Then, she stayed at home and took care of the family, and joined hands to help daughter-in-law with her business, and sold processed foods to earn 3 to 4 million VND/month.

The case of Mrs.Th reflects the change in human capital affecting the livelihood strategy. The change in human capital, in this case, manifests itself in both quantity and quality. Mrs. Th's husband died, so she did not have anyone to share with her farming; soon after, she suffered from a disease related to bones and joints that made her unable to cope with the work needed a lot of strength. Therefore, she had to stop farming and switch to another work. This was an extremely reasonable choice for her at that time because having a job with a stable income, being able to go out to meet people, and being enjoyed extra- support by the owner (food, water, electricity, etc), and be able to save money. According to her, these were easy jobs, anyone could do it, did not need too much knowledge, suitable for health. However, after working as a maid, she found this job was difficult, the owner's high requirements made her change the working environment constantly. Mrs.Th had to change workplace because she could not find the right employer, making the job unstable. The change in human capital has once again affected the change in Mrs. Th's livelihood. That is when she has a daughter-in-law. Mrs.Th decided to rely on the family's social and financial capital to build a shop for her daughter-in-law. With a good income from the shop, Mrs. Th quit her job to help her daughter-in-law at home along with taking care of the family. Again, at that time, she still had good reasons for making this decision. Comparing between high requirements of the employers and the attainment level of knowledge, skills, and experience, and the average income, she chose to quit the job as a maid to stay at home and did housework.

To sum up, at the moment, she had more leisure time, did jobs suitable for health and still had an income, had time to take care of her family. This choice is not only contributing to the total income of the household but also maintains and develops a relationship among family members because of daily interactions and mutual support. Her family also has longer-term strategies for household livelihood. For example, it is the plan to give opportunity for her daughter-in-law to study to improve her skills and let her son work abroad to have a higher income and accumulate financial capital to do something else in the future.

The second story

Another case is Mrs. H's household in Tan Binh commune. Her family had 4 members, her daughter worked for a private company in Hanoi with a salary of 10 million/month, her son had been working abroad in Japan since 2018. Her husband worked as construction labor but did not contribute to the family economy because his income was spent on drinking alcohol and gambling. Her house has nearly 720m² of field, but it had been empty for 5 years ago; In her home garden, she grows vegetables, raises pigs, chickens, and ducks, but for 3 years, she has not raised them to sell anymore. Currently, she was selling fish at the markets and was re-selling to earn an income of 7-9 million VND/month.

The changes in the livelihood of Mrs. H's family are based on changes in human capital, natural capital, and also physical capital.

Firstly, in terms of physical capital, all tools, and machines used in agricultural productions such as plows, harrows, harvesters, threshers, etc, even spraying pesticides and rat poison, had been rented. This is a fairly common phenomenon taking place in the peri-urban of Thai Binh city. Because the price of agriculture tools and machines was too expensive to own, households often hired and borrowed. That household must depend on and spend money on tools to support production leads to the decrease of household income.

Secondly, regarding the impact of natural capital, the effects of climate change, extreme weather, rats, and insects epidemics greatly affect the income of Mrs. H's family. Through in-depth interview data, it is found that this is one of the reasons leading to people leaving their fields. The problem that has been mentioned in the research site is that each family alone could not be able to extinct rat and insects epidemic unless all households with nearby fields must do the same. Being too dependent on external factors and the income was not worth leads to the inefficient farming of her family.

Thirdly, about the influence of changing human resources in livelihood, now, both children support her in terms of finance (her daughter sometimes gave her money; her son sent her 5 million monthly). Her decision to stop growing food crops also was a reasonable decision for Mrs.H's because the price of food crop was cheap and farming was taking time and hard-working. In addition, her husband was an alcoholic, so he often did not return home. At home, he tended to hit her, take money, sold home furniture to afford gambles and drinks. He also often took her livestock products to sell, which made her depressed, even wanting to give up her ranching. Thus, she was no longer maintaining the previous livelihood, she decided to change her career to trading agricultural

products. She went to the houses with fish ponds around the area, bought fish from their ponds, and sold them to restaurants; The leftover fish, which are less delicious, she ate or sold for neighbors. On average, with each 10 kilograms fish, she bought about 20 thousand VND, so she earned several hundred thousand VND from selling fish. The money she earned, she collected and sent her sister to pay off a loan for her son to export. Her daughter was preparing to marry a Taiwanese husband who was the boss of the company she works for. She intended that when her daughter was married, she could help her pay off the debt, and she would go to Hanoi to live with and support her daughter. Due to that, she can live far away from her abusive husband, she and her daughter can rely on and help each other. Thus, if her daughter gets married, again her household's livelihood will change because of the change in human capital in the family.

From the above two cases, it can be seen that in the context of urbanization, the impact of natural capital and human capital greatly affects the decision to maintain agricultural production. Severe weather, diseases that destroy crops, low value of products, lack of health/labor are the main factors that cause people to abandon their fields. These farmers find new jobs that are suitable for them, without the need for highly specialized knowledge and skills, such as maids or running small businesses to serve their daily life. This reasonable choice gives people an income to meet their daily needs but lacks sustainability when their work and income depend a lot on other people. The development of the economy and society in the context of urbanization also helps the younger generations who is a supporter of their parents have more job mobility opportunities than their parent's generation.

Through the two cases above, we can see the same ideal of mothers who want to stay together and to take care of their children and grandchildren in housework; or let their son go abroad to work in the hope of changing life. This ideal is quite popular in peri-urban and rural areas of Vietnam, even creating labor export villages that many newspapers and studies have mentioned (Gia Doan 2019; Pham Linh 2019; Viet Linh et al 2019; Chu Uyen, 2019). For farmers, this is the only way to help their children and their families change their lives.

4.2. Changing livelihood strategies from maintaining agriculture and gradually shifting the focus to non-agriculture production

Different from the previous transformation, this way of transforming the household livelihoods is still maintaining the agricultural production but the main income of the household depends on non-agricultural occupations.

The third story

Mrs. T's family has 5 people, Mrs. T, her husband, and an 8-grade son, 2 eldest daughters who have gone to Ho Chi Minh to set up a business. Her family had a 260 m² field, now she still cultivated rice and raised livestock for self-serving and sell but the income from selling is not stable. In the past, she borrowed the empty fields from households that are temporarily not in use to increase productivity but recently the income from cultivating was not good, so two years ago she returned the field to them and went to be an employee. Currently, she was working as a hired worker for a vermicelli producer; her job was to dry processing vermicelli. She worked all day in the summer, and only one session in the rest season. She was paid about 2 million a month, accounted by working time and seasonal price. Sometimes, she looked for another part-time job such as washing dishes for hire, sorting feathers for badminton ball production, or clothing's ingredients. Her husband was a builder, with an average income of 8-10 million/month, this was also the main source of income for her family. Currently, because of the local's innovating with many new houses in the construction process, her husband's work was busy and the income was stable.

The story of T's family shows that she knows how to use social capital such as borrowing a neighbor's vacant fields to grow rice. However, with the lack of human capital, the profit from rice cultivation was unexpected. After that, because she had no skills, she was only hired to dry noodles. Although her income was not high and unstable, the job helped her to have an additional source of income, so she had no choice. Besides, her husband earned a relatively high income, so the low income from her job was still acceptable. Currently, she still wanted to maintain her farm work and hired work despite low income, had time and health to take care of the family members. She planned to send her son to Hanoi to study in the few next years. If her health is getting worse, she will go to Hanoi with her children and work as a housemaid to earn extra income.

The fourth story

Mrs. V's household has only her and her husband because the children got married and live separately. Their household had 1,800 m² of a field but sold 720 m² in 8 years ago. That the price of selling was 120 million was saved for interest. With the remaining land, they grew rice for self-sufficient and sale. In the past 3 years, although applied a lot of methods and spent a huge amount of money to solve the rat epidemic, the amount of rice was still not worth much. Therefore, Mrs. V's family left the field. After leaving the field, she worked as hired laborers, such as housemaids and babysitting; every day she earns about 120 thousand VND from these jobs. Currently, she was staying at home and taking care of the neighbor's children, earning about 2 to 3 million/month for each child. At home, he cooked to support her, raised chickens, and planted some vegetables in the garden to be self-sufficient.

The story of Mrs. V's family is another way to change her livelihood. Due to the low benefit from agriculture products, her family changed livelihood to gardening and raising livestock and worked as a hired employee. On the occasion the neighbor asked her to take care of the children, she came up with the idea of a childcare service at home. This choice is based on the consideration depending on economic benefit, health, and social network, and relationship. With the intimacy of the village built on the available social capital, people also trusted and sent their children to their family which brought them 10 million VND a month, on average. For her, this is a fairly stable job with a good income, and the time to work is not too much.

From the two stories above, it can be seen that households maintain agriculture for the main purpose of family use, and non-agricultural jobs bring households the main source of income. Households still maintain agriculture partly because they can utilize the necessary material for producing, partly because people want to maintain the form of self-sufficiency, not having to spend money to buy food and vegetable. In addition, with this type of livelihood people have income from trading what they grow that is clean.

However, income from agriculture production is not enough for them to have a better life. Moreover, due to the lack of human capital and the influence of the rats and insects epidemic, households have reduced the focus on agricultural production. Farming is a hard-working job, but it's a seasonal job. Hence, people have a chance to change their livelihood by getting other jobs besides farming, which are both easier and bring more income for them. Households also know how to use resources, especially human capital, social capital rationally to have different ways to create new sources of income. They are very agile in finding new sources of livelihood. There are many jobs and finding part-time jobs is not too difficult for people who are old and do not have specialized skills. Thus, they choose easy jobs that are not required a high level of health, time, and professional skills and knowledge. However, these strategies have not been considered sustainable because these jobs are not stable and are easily affected by other objective factors.

4.3. Changing livelihood strategies combined agricultural production with non-agricultural production

This is an effective livelihood strategy, but very few families follow this direction because that requires a great combination of different capital sources of the household. The capital source mentioned in the two stories below is social capital. From people's perspectives in study sites, social capital is considered as a blessing, a kindness from their relative, not a form of resource.

The fifth story

Mr. and Mrs. V's household had 1500 m² field land in Dong Tho commune. Then, they sold 300 m² of field land to another neighbor and had 1200 m² left. Three years ago, they still cultivated rice to sell. However, in recent years, they decided to leave the field because of the lack of health and rats epidemic influence in productivity. When farming, they did easy work such as sowing seeds; other stages namely plowing, harrowing, and reaping were done by rented machinery from the co-operative. Because it was more expensive to invest in seeds, fertilizers, and buy pesticides, they decided to stop growing food crops. Mrs. V wanted to plant rice so that the family has clean ingredients to eat, but her counterpart disagreed. This decision was also based on very reasonable reasons because natural capital was difficult, human capital and financial capital were declining. Thus, the household was forced to change its livelihood strategy. Mr. V asked the authorities to convert from farmland to garden land to change his livelihood purposes but it was not accepted. Therefore, he was now letting someone else cultivate to keep the field.

Thanks to a friend's introduction or in other words thanks to his social capital, in 2013, he was accepted as a security guard for a newly built school. His 100-square-meter house in his hometown was locked and he and his wife went to school to live nearby. The school provided him and his wife with 2 rooms, a private room for his family, and a security room next to the school gate. His labor contract was signed once a year, but it was highly stable because the school wanted to hire him for a long time. The school paid him 1 million VND/month; he received additional jobs such as looking after students' bikes, boiling water for teachers, sweeping the toilets, etc. In total, from all of his jobs, he received about 3.5 million/month. In 2015, he and his wife cultivated the excess land next to the school (the State's land has been recovered but not yet constructed) to grow vegetables and fruit trees. Irrigation water was also used from the pond next to the school. The agricultural products were both used to be self-sufficient and sold to teachers at the school and sold at the market. They earned nearly 2 million VND from that garden. After receiving a good income, the wife raised a few dozen chickens in the garden so that he and his wife both had more clean food for their meals and sell them to earn extra income.

The sixth story

Similarly, the second story in this direction of changing livelihood strategies is the story of Mrs. P's family in Tan Binh commune. There were 4 people in her family, their 2 children currently live together in Hanoi. Their son worked at a private company with a salary of 8 million/month, and their daughter was studying at the university. Their older son rent a house and paid for living expenses, a daughter's learning expense was taken care of by Ms and Mr. P. Her husband was an electrician, installed air conditioners, and repaired electricity for construction projects, earning 4 to 7 million/month depending on the season. Her house had 200 m² of residential land and 300 m² of garden land. Income from raising chickens, pigs, growing vegetables, and fruit

trees was not high, so she worked in a factory for extra income. However, after a while, she did not work anymore because she could only work in the packaging area and scrap room that affect her health. In 2016, she went to the city to work as a maid, but she quickly quit because taking care of the elderly was too hard, and she could not return home every day. In 2017, through a conversation with an old friend who was currently living in Nghe An, she was instructed to do the bean sprouts by her friend. After that, she finds more information on the Internet and learns from her friend. She spent 1kilogram of seed, she would get 100 kilograms of beans. That meanseach season of beans cultivation (3-4 months) she earned 3.5 million VND profit. She had to purchase the new bean sprout-making tool twice a year. The finished products from beans were sold in the market and that brought to their family 10 million VND/month. This livelihood created a great source of income for her family, but she had to work hard day and night. She wanted to increase productivity but she couldn't find assistants. Thus, she spent a huge amount of money to hire people and lost money to hire and train people but no one could meet the job requirement. Her husband was also helping her in some stages of bean processing and repairing neighbors' housewares such as fans, rice cookers, etc. to earn extra income.

From two similar stories of Mr. V and Mrs. P's family, it can be seen the flexibility in the livelihood strategy that combines agriculture and non-agriculture production of the people. The same reasons were given as low income, rat epidemic leading to the quit of agriculture cultivation. However, depending on the situation, each household chooses a different way to change their livelihoods strategies. Changing from growing food crops to growing clean vegetables to sell for money is not a sustainable livelihood strategy because the land to cultivate clean vegetables can be taken back at any time. However, that Mr. and Mrs.V use excess natural capital such as unused State land, irrigating vegetables by pond water, then using social capital to sell products to earn extra income, is a very reasonable consideration. In addition, thanks to their social capital, Mr.V got a new job that gave the couple a stable income, a new place to live with no worry about electricity and water costs. From this job, they started a new work that is associated with agriculture and brings a better income. They do not have a long-term livelihood strategy because of their old age and their satisfaction with the current stable occupation and income. From that story, it can be seen that Mr.V's household knows how to exploit and utilize their social capital to create new physical and financial capital and solve the problem of natural capital and human capital. Similarly, Mrs. P's family also gave up growing rice and switched to growing beans. Mrs. P's family had more advantages in terms of quality of human capital that they are both in labor age, the financial capital from her husband's job also provides a stable income for the household. In past, Mrs.P also intended to change her job from farming to another job, but quickly gave up because she did not meet the requirement of the job faced many difficulties: being away from her husband and children, uncomfortable spirit, low income, etc. Finally, by using her social capital, Mrs. P learned more about processing agricultural products from her friend. This livelihood strategy of Mrs. P's household, which brings a higher source of income, is also more stable and sustainable. In the two stories above, households know how to flexibly use social, human, and natural capital to improve household livelihoods. Although it is difficult for farmers to increase their household economy in this direction, the stories above will be typical models to help farm households have more suggestions in formulating strategies for development.

V. Conclusion and Recommendations

There are many ways for people to use the resources and capabilities of the household to maintain and develop the family's income. Each household in the study area has its strategies of economic development, even though they are no longer engaged in agricultural production or only maintain agricultural production or have strategies to develop agricultural production. They all know how to use the family's capital to get a better source of income. The reason for households to change their family's livelihood is still mainly due to the low income from growing food crops, the rat epidemic, and the lack of human capital; Households still grow food crops because they want to be self-sufficient. The people also do not have a good source of human capital, as shown by the fact that most of the household heads/interviewees are old, they also cannot meet the skills, experience, knowledge, and health for the new jobs. Therefore, they often look for new jobs that do not require too much skill but these jobs are often associated with low income and unstable work. However, the source of employment in the locality is diverse, and the people are also very agile in planning household livelihood strategies. Depending on the available capital of the family, people initially came up with short-term livelihood strategies to seek higher income, providing a better life for their families. They also know how to flexibly adapt the family's capital sources. Urbanization also helps young people in the study sites get a better job with a stable income and high mobility, so they become a fulcrum and hope for their parents - who are not able of social mobility. Through the above qualitative data, we can have a brief overview of the changing picture of household livelihood strategies in the peri-urban areas of Thai Binh City in the context of urbanization, thereby suggesting developing more flexible policies. The authors would like to give a few suggestions to contribute to the development of the household economy in peri-urban areas in the context of urbanization:

- 1) Localities need to take proactive measures to prevent rat and insects epidemic harmful to crops asynchronously and effectively, combining a variety of measures.
- 2) Localities have clear guidelines, introduce flexible policies on crop structure, create conditions for people to change crop structure and land use purpose without causing loss and wasteland.
- 3) Educating and training people on sustainable agricultural practices, introducing new plants with high economic efficiency.
- 4) Organizing training courses on knowledge and skills for people in each specific production field.
- 5) Guiding households to diversify livelihood activities to increase income, effectively combining agricultural and non-agricultural production.

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