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In Memoriam

Roger Haviland Slade (1941-2023)



Roger Slade passed away on August 2, 2023 at age 81. He is survived by his wife Gillean, children Dominic and Claire and five grandchildren. Roger was born in Somerset, England on September 27, 1941, and graduated from the London School of Economics and Wye College, University of London. During 1967-70 he obtained his first experience as a practicing agricultural development economist working in the Ministries of Agriculture, and Finance and

Development Planning in Botswana, an arrangement funded by a Fellowship from the Overseas Development Institute, London. In 1971 Roger joined the FAO/IBRD Cooperative Programme in Rome and was seconded to Malaysia as field director of a major impact evaluation study of the Muda River Irrigation Project. Roger designed and supervised all the field surveys, and on returning to Rome in 1974, collaborated with Peter Hazell and Clive Bell of the Bank's Development Research Centre (DRC) on the data analysis, leading to a book that contained the first empirical analysis of a project's regional income multipliers (B-H-S, 1982). Roger then spent 4 years in Northern Nigeria designing and implementing an ambitious M&E system for three World Bank rural development projects, work that was eventually expanded to 7 projects.

In 1979 Roger joined the World Bank in Washington DC, initially as a consultant, then as an economist and soon senior economist in the South Asia projects department, with responsibilities for developing M&E programs for Bank-financed agricultural and rural development projects in countries of the region. One key area of focus was on agricultural T&V extension projects, several of which were on-going in South Asia during the 1980s. Roger co-wrote a number of reports and formal publications on these aspects of his work (e.g., F-S 1986, F-L-S 1987). In 1986, he moved to the Bank's India department, focusing first on agricultural policy work and contributing to the design and implementation of a wide range of agricultural projects, such as extension, irrigation and water management, social forestry, and credit. Subsequently, Roger assumed primary responsibility for analyzing the effectiveness and fiscal consequences of India's major poverty alleviation schemes and designing a reform strategy.

In 1990 Roger moved as a Principal Economist to a newly established unit within the Bank's Population and Human Resources Department, focusing on Women in Development. In this assignment he managed a team engaged in empirical and policy-based research needed to articulate the Bank's policy on Gender.

In 1993, Roger was promoted to become Chief of the division dealing with agriculture and natural resources in Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan. He led a large team engaging in policy dialogue, portfolio development and project implementation, with a strong emphasis on policy reform and institutional development. The assignment entailed interactions with high-level government and donor officials.

In 1995, Roger assumed responsibilities as a Senior Manager in the Bank's Operations Evaluation Department (OED) where he brought a broad perspective of rich development experience, especially in Asia and Africa, and his long experience with project evaluation. Covering in-depth work in sectors as diverse as agriculture, rural development, water resources, health, and education, as well as resettlement, post-conflict reconstruction, and development strategy generally, was challenging indeed, especially as he naturally gave explicit due attention to dimensions involving gender, participation, and NGO relations. But he managed these challenges with competence and aplomb, earning high respect of the diverse sectoral-specialist staff

members he led and managed. They also appreciated the nurturing style of his management and enjoyed his wit and sense of humor. His professionalism also came to be highly respected by those whose efforts were being evaluated, even when criticism of some of these efforts was perhaps hard to take. He fought to innovate in many ways to be at the cutting edge of evaluation of development effectiveness. Arguably, Bank Operations for the new millennium were greatly enhanced by drawing from the lessons forged by OED during Roger's distinguished tenure of the latter half of the 90s.

Roger retired back to England in 1998. Despite a prolonged battle with throat cancer, Roger remained active professionally. He played a key role in setting up the International Development Evaluation Association (IDEAS), inaugurated in September 2002 to be a global professional association for internationally active development evaluators. Roger served as Trustee and Treasurer and was active in the Association for several years. He also undertook impact evaluation studies and/or designed M&E systems for many organizations, including the World Bank, IFAD, AfDB, DfID, AGRA, Farm Africa, Louis Dreyfus Foundation, and the Aga Khan Foundation. Much of his most recent work involved evaluations of policy research for IFPRI and Roger helped push the frontier on methods for conducting such evaluations. His final professional contribution was as lead author of a paper synthesizing methods for evaluating rural development policy research (S-H-P-R, 2020). Roger was also active in the 1818 Society and served as chair of the UK chapter for some years. He is remembered fondly by many.

Peter Hazell, Gershon Feder and Jock Anderson

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[« Return to In Memoriam Page](#)

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