



CBMS in Sri Lanka: Prospects for More Roles in the Future*

The community-based monitoring system (CBMS) project in Sri Lanka aims to identify and pilot test appropriate methodologies for community-based poverty monitoring in selected locations and to improve indicators for measuring chronic and transient forms of poverty and its causes. CBMS data, when used to complement national data, will support the improvement of state policies and programs for poverty alleviation in the country.

This article documents the pilot phase of the research project undertaken by the CBMS-Sri Lanka Team in four selected field sites in the country. This phase will be completed by the end of the year leading to the development of a conceptual framework and a set of research instruments that could guide the second phase of the study.

Stating the Case for a CBMS

It is widely accepted today that conventional macro economic analysis of poverty is inadequate to understand and explain the dynamics of poverty. Though attempts are often made to examine the nexus between macro economic policies and poverty, our understanding of how macro processes impinge on the life chances of the poor remains largely impressionistic. This

is partly due to the difficulties in establishing a clear causal connection between macro economic processes, on one hand, and poverty, on the other. Moreover, poverty itself cannot be easily measured in quantitative terms as there is often a strong subjective element involved in the definition of poverty.

Despite various poverty alleviation strategies adopted by governments in numerous parts of the world, many poor people continue to remain poor even as others manage to get out of poverty. On the other hand, some non-poor people might slide into poverty due to various circumstances.

How do we explain these dynamics of poverty? Aggregate data collected from time to time can be very useful in tracing trends over time and space but can hardly shed any light on micro processes at household and community levels. Micro level field studies conducted over a period of time using surveys as well as qualitative techniques including case studies, meanwhile, can often uncover dynamics of poverty in great detail. Given the small size of the sample and the limited geographic area covered by such studies, monitoring can be done on a sustained basis over a long period of time, using the same sample of families for the purpose. This does not, however, mean that there is no

need for a time tested conceptual and methodological framework. An effective data collection strategy can after all be devised only if a comprehensive conceptual framework adequate for capturing complex poverty dynamics even in a small field area is developed and used.

At the same time, conditions prevailing in diverse communities can differ considerably due to various social, economic, political, ecological and cultural circumstances. This is true not only with regard to the characteristics of poor families but also their linkages to the wider economic, social, political, ecological

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*This article was prepared by the CBMS-Sri Lanka Project Team.

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and cultural environments. In other words, even when micro level studies were undertaken, it is necessary to select field sites carefully so that the diversity in the character of such communities is captured as much as possible.

Institutionalizing CBMS in Sri Lanka

The objectives of the first phase of the CBMS-Sri Lanka project (pilot study) were to: (a) refine the concepts and methodological approaches for community-based poverty monitoring; (b) develop new insights into the understanding of the causes and processes of poverty at the community level; and (c) identify new areas for community-based poverty monitoring, especially as they relate to wider socio-cultural and political factors that have a bearing on poverty dynamics.

By conducting qualitative case studies, an attempt was made to determine which kind of data would enable the development of appropriate indicators to monitor poverty at the community level and to get a better understanding of the poverty dynamics and changes within communities. Initially, four locations representing different sectors in Sri Lanka, namely, urban sector, rural sector, estate sector and "conflict" sector (which means the conflict-affected Northeastern parts of Sri Lanka) were selected.

The second phase of the CBMS project, on the other hand, covered the following activities:

- a) Development of an appropriate and comprehensive questionnaire for a poverty profile survey of selected communities, including *all* the households;
- b) Training of community members in interview techniques and other data collection skills for them to be able to undertake the surveys

themselves;

- c) Identification of potentials and constraints of community members' capacities to conduct interviews/surveys within their own community;
- d) Development of new ideas for poverty indices suitable to improve local level planning efforts (e.g. better targeting, better design of interventions); and
- e) Facilitation and supervision of two poverty profile surveys (one in the urban and another in the rural sector). Community members conducted the survey, together with university students who were from the selected locations or neighboring areas.

The poverty index that was developed takes into account different livelihood dimensions investigated in the CBMS exercise. It provides a ranking profile of poverty for the selected communities. Composite indicators were identified to differentiate between poor and better-off households.

For the final phase of the project, (a) improvement in the visualization of collected data for planning and impact assessment purposes; (b) communication of the results of the poverty profile survey to the community and discussion of opportunities to utilize the data for community development and empowerment; and (c) development of a dissemination strategy meant to replicate the CBMS approach in other locations in Sri Lanka, constitute the set of objectives.

Community members of the Colombo site, in collaboration with resource persons from the Colombo University, have organized meetings with government officials as well as with donor representatives at their

community center to discuss the collected data and to outline ways and means to utilize them for local planning exercises. This is an important step to facilitate a dialogue between public officials and community members on possible intervention programs.

Meetings also took place with officials from the Colombo Municipal Council (CMC) involved in impact assessment of urban poverty alleviation strategies to present the CBMS approach and to discuss options for further replicating CBMS in Colombo city. The idea has been proposed to the respective authorities to utilize the CBMS site as a model through which livelihood support to marginalized urban communities could be made more efficient and effective.

Role of Local Government Authorities

Long-term prospects for institutionalizing the CBMS in Sri Lanka depend on the empowerment of local councils. Empowered local councils can assume development and welfare functions in the interest of local communities. In view of this, the CBMS team has established close collaborative links with the Sri Lanka Institute of Local Governance (SLILG) to develop national level interventions aimed at empowering elected local authorities. The Institute has already developed programs on this and is currently mobilizing resources from local and foreign sources to implement these programs. Hopefully, with the increased capacity and enhanced resources—both material and human—local councils would be in a position to take over the responsibility of institutionalizing the CBMS within their organizations. CBMS tools can help the councils develop and maintain data bases, showing the actual socioeconomic conditions prevailing

in their territories and using such information to plan interventions and monitor change.

In this connection, discussions took place with the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government to elaborate on possibilities of providing training on CBMS by the University of Colombo to social science graduates attached to the Ministry of Provincial Councils and Local Government. The graduates could then be placed at local councils throughout the country to strengthen their capacities in this field. Linked to this discussion is the related issue of supporting ongoing university reform efforts in Sri Lanka to improve the quality and relevance of undergraduate education in Sri Lanka through the introduction of applied courses on poverty impact monitoring. A pilot course for undergraduates was offered in January 2005 at the Colombo University. The CBMS team facilitated the setting up of such pilot course.

Future Directions: In the Aftermath of the Tsunami Disaster

Impact of the tsunami on poverty in Sri Lanka

The impact of the December 2004 tsunami disaster in Sri Lanka has been enormous in terms of property, livelihood, social and psychological effects. Eighty-three Local Councils have been affected, some of which are municipal and urban councils while the rest are Pradeshiya Sabhas (rural councils). Within these local authority areas, a large number of urban and rural communities have been affected.

Based on a preliminary damage and needs assessment undertaken jointly by the Asian Development Bank (ADB), Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and World Bank in January 2005 as well as on data collected by the Centre of National



Discussion with a group of fishermen in the CBMS-site focuses on needs assessment after the December 2004 tsunami.

Operation (CNO)—the government body initially tasked to coordinate the tsunami relief activities the following shows the dimension of the damage:

- As of January 17, more than 31,000 people in Sri Lanka were reported dead and about 6,300 remained missing; the number of women and children among the dead seems to be disproportionately high; and more than 900 children have become orphans.
- Estimate of displaced persons stands at 443,000 while the affected population is estimated to be between one to two million out of a total population of about 19 million.
- Number of damaged houses stands at more than 130,000, of which more than 99,000 have been completely destroyed.
- The North East region was especially hard-hit (also the region mostly affected by the ethnic war over the past 20 years); estimates indicate that up to 70 percent of the total tsunami damages are in the North and East.
- Estimates of the damage to workplace and productive assets: two-thirds of the fisheries sector had been severely affected; damage to tourism industry has resulted in an estimated

unemployment of 14,000 people; more than 5,000 village industries located along the coastlines were destroyed.

The tsunami has affected two CBMS sites in Sri Lanka, namely, Kalametiya in the Hambantota district and Periyakallaru in the Batticaloa district. At the Batticaloa CBMS location, 224 out of 394 families were affected and at the Hambantota location, 136 families out of 240 were displaced. The damage ranges from loss of fishing boats and gear, damaged or fully destroyed houses and loss of family members. The Colombo site, meanwhile, was not affected because it is located far from the coastline.

Role of CBMS in tsunami relief and rehabilitation work

To evaluate the impact of the Asian tsunami on the CBMS site, the Team undertook a rapid assessment in early 2005 on the CBMS site in the Hambantota District on the southern coast of Sri Lanka. The site, which consists of two coastal lagoon systems—Kalametiya and Rekawattipally—typically represents poor rural coastal communities that were badly affected by the tsunami. For the rapid

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assessment, participatory research methods were adopted and included focus group discussions (FGDs) and a household survey. Data collection was undertaken with the assistance of local field researchers who had previously been engaged in the CBMS study. These community members played a vital role in data collection and methodology development. In addition, the communities in both sites extended their utmost cooperation and support during data collection, although these were very difficult times for them. This can at least partly be attributed to the involvement of local field researchers in the process, giving the communities a sense of ownership and empowerment.

The FGDs were forward-looking and positive – getting the community's perspective of how best rehabilitation and reconstruction should be undertaken in their area, taking their own priority needs into consideration. Meanwhile, the household surveys revisited 210 households, which have been the subject of ongoing research on factors affecting rural livelihoods since 2002. The fact that baseline data were available allowed the assessment of the impact of the tsunami both on household and productive assets. The community's views on the new coastal zone management policy issues that have emerged as a result of the tsunami (e.g., 100 meter no-build zone on the south coast) were also solicited. In addition, the survey included questions on what coping strategies were adopted by the households immediately after the tsunami and how their sense of personal well-being and security was affected.

Data analysis included investigating the differences in relation to the impact of the tsunami between households within and between villages in the two sites using both

...adopting the CBMS model, where community members play a critical role alongside researchers, is important in the post-tsunami disaster management and rehabilitation efforts in Sri Lanka.

univariate and multivariate analyses. The qualitative data were used to validate and triangulate results from the quantitative data as well as to obtain a more in-depth understanding of how individuals in the community were coping after the tsunami and how they felt rehabilitation should take place.

As expected, results indicated that the resumption of their primary livelihood at the earliest opportunity was considered a priority by all the focus groups. The communities felt that overall, the preliminary rehabilitation work had taken place in a fairly uncoordinated manner and with a lack of transparency. Some donor organizations were accused of helping only certain groups within the community and not others, thus creating conflict within the community. Many indicated that these participatory discussions were the first time community members had been given the opportunity to express their own ideas on how rehabilitation and reconstruction should take place in the village. As a direct result of the views expressed in the FGDs in relation to rehabilitation of the fisheries livelihoods, a tsunami rehabilitation committee was setup in the village that included representatives from the different fisheries sectors as well as relevant fisheries officials. Any activity to be undertaken with regard to rehabilitation of fisheries livelihoods was brought to the attention of this committee to ensure that the process was transparent at the village level.

Concluding remarks

The process of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction involves a large number of issues that should not be addressed in an ad-hoc manner. Although it is urgent to refer to the immediate requirements of the population affected, there is also a need for careful planning and implementation of mid- and long-term rehabilitation efforts. This would require an intense policy discussion with regard to various options available to ensure that affected people are treated fairly and equitably and those adverse consequences such as increasing social tensions and violent conflicts are avoided. Building capacities of local communities to play a role in the planning and implementation of rehabilitation efforts is one crucial task in this context.

It is clear that while researchers play an important role in data analysis, it is critical that community members engage in data collection alongside the researchers, to ensure the validity of the data, especially in the post-tsunami scenario. Their role is also important if findings of the research are to be taken on in the rehabilitation efforts at the community level. It is clear therefore that adopting the CBMS model, where community members play a critical role alongside researchers, is important in the post-tsunami disaster management and rehabilitation efforts in Sri Lanka. *

CBMS-Bangladesh widens coverage areas*

After successfully piloting the CBMS in four villages, the CBMS-Bangladesh Team has decided to expand the coverage areas of its local level poverty monitoring system (LLPMS). The LLPMS project, which is being carried out by the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD) in coordination with the Bangladesh Institute for Development Studies (BIDS), will now cover all 18 villages of Muhammadpur Union (West) under the Daudkandi Upazila of Comilla District.



Dr. Khandaker Mosharraf Hossain, MP. Honorable Minister, M/O Health and Family Welfare of People's Republic of Bangladesh, turns over the Ward Information Books (WIB) to the Chairman of Muhammadpur (West) Union.

At present, a partial tabulation of selected core indicators has already been made. The project team also reported that a Ward Information Book (WIB) containing the consolidated information on some indicators and a few basic information on each household in the survey has been prepared. In addition, a Ward Plan Book (WPB) is being finalized for release very soon.

National and local commitments

The team reported that they were able to get the commitment of the functionaries of the local government units to implement the plan that they themselves have prepared. Due to shortage of funds, emphasis will be given on the proper utilization of existing resources by providing need-based support services to the people.

Meanwhile, national policymakers appreciated the local government

units' efforts to implement the CBMS as it will help them design need-based interventions.

Dissemination strategy

Several mechanisms are being used to disseminate the information generated through the LLPMS. After completion of the Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) survey, results are presented to the villagers. After completion of the household survey, the findings are presented to the elite of the concerned villages and the local officials. The latter, in turn, present the summary findings of their communities' socio-economic conditions to the villagers during the Ward meetings. Finally, information is disseminated by the chairman of the Union Parishad to national officials during the planning workshop.

Forthcoming activities

Meanwhile, four Ward meetings will be organized to disseminate the findings of the survey and the salient features of the plan being prepared by the members of Gram Sarkar (the associate

organization of Union Parishad).¹ According to the project team, villagers will be invited by the functionaries of Union Parishad to these meetings.

Finally, a planning workshop will likewise be organized at the local level to finalize the partial plan of Union Parishad (consolidated plan of Ward numbers 06 to 09). The plan will be presented in the presence of the officials of service delivery agencies in order to get their commitment in providing the necessary assistance to the targeted groups in these communities.

CBMS work in Bangladesh is being carried out by the BARD, an autonomous national institution for training, research and experiment on rural development. *

¹This article was prepared by the CBMS-Bangladesh Project Team.

²Gram Sarkar means village government at ward level. Jurisdictionally, there is a Gram Sarkar at every ward of Union Parishad. It is composed of one chief, one adviser and 13 other members.

CBMS Team Gears up for the Next Phase*

After unveiling the results of the CBMS pilot survey in selected places in Burkina Faso last year, the CBMS-Burkina Faso Team is now gearing up for the third phase of the implementation of the community-based monitoring system. Said phase will cover two new sites: Department of Diébougou and Department of Koper, the latter at the request of Africa Sustainable Council (ASUDEC), an NGO working in the provinces of Bougouriba (Diébougou) and Ioba on which the department of Koper is dependent.

The implementation of CBMS in these areas will build on the lessons learned from the pilot test which covered 6 localities. These include the adoption of the monitoring tools in the localities in order to reflect their actual local capacities and the revision of the questionnaire to make it easily understood as well as to reduce the interview time.

Prior to this, the Team, together with its partner, the Centre Canadien d'Etude et de Coopération Internationale (CECI), presented its final report in several fora including feedback workshops where potential users of the CBMS data were invited. It likewise secured the commitment of the Local Committees for Development to use the information from the CBMS in planning for the development of their respective areas.

In addition, the CBMS-Burkina Faso Team is currently waging a campaign

to promote CBMS on two fronts. At the local level, it is doing advocacy work at governmental institutions, local governments and non-government organizations in order to make the system more visible.

At the international level, it is providing assistance to its neighboring countries which are also interested in implementing their own local poverty monitoring systems. It has already started working toward this end through the development of training modules in French. It has also recently conducted a workshop for a delegation from Niger on CBMS experiences in Burkina Faso. The delegation was composed of two officials working on Niger's poverty reduction strategies: Ms. Aminata Bouréïma, from the Suivi Evaluation de la Stratégie de Réduction

de la Pauvreté (SRP) and Mr. Ousséni Hamidou, coordinator of the Unité d'Analyse Avancée de la Pauvreté (UAAP). The briefing was in line with the interest of Niger

Meanwhile, at the request of the Canadian Parliamentary Center, the Team participated in a workshop on poverty last March 1-3, 2005 in Benin together with other CBMS researchers from Benin, Niger and Senegal. The workshop was intended to provide parliamentarians with better knowledge on poverty assessment and information management. One of the conclusions drawn from the workshop is the necessity to establish tight collaboration between poverty researchers and policy makers on the search for policies and strategies that can effectively reduce poverty. *



Selected members of the community during the presentation of CBMS in their locality.

*This article was prepared by the CBMS-Burkina Faso Project Team.

Roadshow for the Results of the CBMS Pilot Test*

As part of its continuing advocacy campaign, the CBMS-Cambodia project team has hit the road to actively promote and share the results of the CBMS pilot test to various stakeholders in several fora.

On February 28, 2005, the team actively participated in the National Forum on Pre-Identification of Poor Households hosted by the Cambodian Ministry of Planning. The event served as a venue to discuss various approaches in identifying poor households in the country.

It also recently organized a national seminar on community-based poverty monitoring system in Phnom Penh. The seminar, which was chaired by H.E. CHHAY Than (Senior Minister and Minister of Planning), aimed to present the survey results and gather feedback from stakeholders on the pilot implementation of the community-based poverty monitoring system (CBPMS) in Cambodia. Over 90 participants attended the event including representatives from UNICEF, Cambodian World Bank, Ministry of Rural Development, Cambodian Organisation for Research Development and Education, Jian Hua Daily, FAO, JICA, Health Unlimited, Khmer Community Development, National Center for HIV/AIDS, and local authorities in Battambang and Kratie.

Efforts will be made to “market” the project to prospective donor agencies

and the government so that they will continue to expand the CBMS. Ideally, the joint Government-donor PLG Programme will take ownership of the CBMS and incorporate it in their nationwide programme.

Both governmental and non-governmental agencies will be invited to use the CBMS data for a diagnostic study of the poverty situation in the selected communes. The information can also be useful in the designing of policy interventions and the targeting of vulnerable groups, including the poorest of the poor in the communes.

The CBMS pilot survey in the country started last year and was conducted in six communes with about 12,000 households. The communes of Prek Norint, Samrong Khnong, and Prek Luong were chosen from the Ek Phnom district of Battambang province to represent an economically better-off province while Snuol, Khsem, and Sre Char were from the Snuol district of Kratie province to represent a relatively poor province.

At present, the 6 communes could already produce their own poverty statistics which can be used for planning and monitoring purposes. In addition to poverty rates at the village level, the study provided scientifically generated statistics regarding demography, education, housing, water, health, household expenditure, occupation and income. *

Stakeholders from various agencies gather together during the national seminar on community-based poverty monitoring system.



* This article was prepared by the CBMS-Cambodia Project Team.

CBMS Implementation Moves to the Next Level

The early stages of the implementation of CBMS in Indonesia have moved to the next level with the successful completion of preparatory activities including a consultation workshop with relevant stakeholders and the conduct of the pretest of the survey instrument.

Consultation

A consultation workshop was held on February 2, 2005 at the SMERU's office to get valuable feedback from government agencies and non-governmental organizations on the draft research instruments.

Presented during the workshop was the background and purpose of the study as well as the methodology, project locations and welfare indicators that will be collected. Discussions on best practices in disseminating research results to local government officials, sustainability issues as well as the possibility of being replicated by other local governments immediately followed the presentations.

Pretest of the research instruments

Meanwhile, the pretesting of the research instruments was conducted on March 16, 2005 in the village of Solokpandan, Cianjur where a total of 11 families were interviewed. Present during the activity were 16 BKKBN officials and 3 BKKBN cadres who were asked to conduct the interviews.

The results of the pretest were as follows:

- The cadres, even without proper training, found little difficulty in

understanding and using the questionnaire to conduct interviews. This means that with proper training and adequate guidance, the cadres should be able to complete the enumeration according to schedule.

- The respondents were also able to understand and answer the questions quite effortlessly. This means that the questionnaire asks questions that are relevant to their day-to-day activities.
- The questionnaire was quite capable of documenting welfare differences among families observed during the pretest. This means that the questionnaire is already sufficiently detailed.

Next activities

With the preparatory stage completed on schedule, the CBMS-Indonesia team

is now preparing for the conduct of the actual fieldwork. Training for cadres will be held in mid-April, to be followed by the enumeration activity.

Meanwhile, a number of workshops designed to promote the importance of having a local monitoring system as well as to increase public awareness on the advantages of adopting a CBMS-type monitoring system, are already in the pipeline.

An interactive CD, which will contain similar items to those made available during the previous workshop, will be produced and distributed to most districts. For the regions that are lacking in computers, a guidebook will be prepared to share the information with different government agencies in their respective areas. *

Participants of the CBMS-Indonesia consultation workshop came from government and non-government agencies.



*This article was prepared by the CBMS-Indonesia Project Team.

...in Benin*

CBMS Implementation Gains Headway

The passage of Municipal Decree 2005/N°019/MCOT/SG/DPDM concretized the implementation of a community-based monitoring system in Cotonou, the seat of government of Benin.

The decree, which was recently approved by the Town Council, paved the way for the creation of the Coordinating Committee of the Community System of Poverty Follow-Up (CCCSPF). This committee is expected to provide local authorities with information on all the households of the town of Cotonou. Meanwhile, the technical commission presided by the Director of Prospects and Municipal Development (DPMD) will act as the permanent secretariat of the

committee. Both bodies will be presided by the city mayor himself.

Meanwhile, it was decided that the CBMS pilot site will be the 13th district, one of the poorest districts in Cotonou based on analysis of secondary data. Several visits of the site and meetings with local authorities have already been made.

Currently, preparations for data collection are already underway and will start any time between May and October 2005. Once the survey results start coming in, these will be forwarded to the Support Service to Community Initiatives of the Town Council to allow them to monitor the living conditions at the local level and help them design better local strategies to combat poverty. Survey results will also be transferred to the Observatory of Social Change where local impact of interventions can be monitored. *



A house in 13th district, the CBMS pilot site.

*This article was prepared by the CBMS-Benin Project Team.

...in Ghana**

CBMS Team Concludes Survey, Proceeds to Data Entry

After successfully conducting the CBMS survey in three communities of the Dangme West District of the Greater Accra region, the CBMS-Ghana Project Team reported that it is now encoding and

consolidating the data generated by the study.

The survey which started last year covered a little over 6,000 households in the communities of Dodowa, Prampram and Ningo and employed between 20-30 enumerators per area to administer the questionnaires. The survey instrument used had 12

sections, among which include composition and characteristics of households, education, employment, health, shelter, water and sanitation, income and livelihood, and access to social programs.

After the data entry and processing, results will be presented to the district in a validation workshop. *

**This article is an excerpt from a report prepared by the CBMS-Ghana Project Team.

...in Lao*

Preliminary results of the CBMS Pilot Survey Revealed

Seven months after initiating the commune-based poverty monitoring system (CBPMS) pilot survey in four villages in the districts of Savanakhet and Saravanh, the CBMS-Lao Project Team reports that the data collected by the study will soon be incorporated in the *Village Books* of the pilot sites. CBMS work in the country aims to supplement the socio-economic information contained

in these books which include data on population, housing, agriculture, labor, education and health.

Preliminary results of the CBMS pilot survey show that 80 percent of the 458 households interviewed are engaged in agriculture. More than 40 percent are living in houses made of bamboo (defined as non-permanent shelter) and more than 70 percent of households do not have access to latrine. On the other hand, 87 percent of households have access to wells while 11 percent use

water from streams and rivers as source for drinking and cooking. Most of the households use firewood and charcoal as energy source for cooking.

Malaria infection is also widespread in these areas. More than 50 percent out of the 3,815 total population of the CBMS pilot sites have been affected by malaria. In Narhong village alone (Province of Saravan), more than 80 percent of the villagers have suffered from malaria. *

* This article is an excerpt from a report prepared by the CBMS-LaoProjectTeam.

...in Pakistan**

CBMS Team Pushes for Incorporation of CBMS Indicators in the NARIMS

The CBMS pilot study was recently completed in Pakistan and efforts are currently being made to integrate as many indicators as possible in the National Reconstruction Information Management System (NARIMS) format for data collection. NARIMS was formulated by the National Reconstruction Bureau (NRB) for the collection of data for financial management, planning and development purposes, evaluation of existing schemes, and for performance incentives.

The CBMS sites for the pilot study included two union councils in the Punjab province, namely, Dhamyal and GB 42 union councils composed of seven and two villages, respectively. The findings of the pilot study showed that: (a) villages were generally resource-poor and lacked basic amenities like electricity, water and sanitation; (b) young population age structure characterizes the rural population, with a huge dependency ratio; (c) males were found to be more likely to go to school than females (but the situation is improving for females with an increasing trend among them observed); (d) female labor force participation rate was found to be very

low, with majority of those not working having no desire to work for money either; (e) expenditure on food comprised the main household expenditure, with more than 40 percent of households having a budget deficit; and (f) crime rate was not found to be high in the survey villages although only one third of the crimes were being reported to the law enforcing authorities, with action taken on less than half of these complaints. *

** This article was prepared by the CBMS-Pakistan Project Team.

CBMS Team Forges Ahead on all Fronts

The CBMS-Philippines Team is forging ahead on all fronts following several months of exciting new developments. Among the highlights are:

New Partnerships Sealed

Memoranda of agreements were signed by the Team for technical collaboration for the implementation of the community-based monitoring system in the following provinces: Bulacan, Eastern Visayas and Agusan del Sur. Agreements were likewise inked with the City Governments of Pasay and Mandaue as well as with the Bureau of Local Government Development of the Department of the Interior and Local Government.

The BLGD-DILG team is now an active partner in scaling up CBMS operations in the country. To date, the BLGD has already conducted CBMS trainings for their partner LGUs such as Marinduque, Masbate and Camiguin as well as the Science City of Muñoz and Tanauan City.

National Conference on CBMS

In response to the growing demand from local government units (LGUs) and concerned National Government

Agencies (NGAs) for disaggregated data at the local level, the Team conducted a National Conference on CBMS last September 2004. The 2-day conference was attended by participants from NGAs) LGUs, representatives of donor agencies and international development partners.

Continued Provision of Technical Support and Capacity-Building Assistance

The Team has also customized data collection and processing instruments for its new local partners in Bulacan, Pasay, Mandaue, and Agusan del Sur. It likewise conducted training workshops on data collection and processing as well as writeshops in the preparation of Socio-Economic Profiles and Barangay Development Plans. It also expects to continue its technical collaboration with Palawan and Puerto Princesa City.

Presentation of the CBMS Before Broader Venues

Local

In the domestic front, the Team, through its project leader, Dr. Celia Reyes, has been invited by several organizations to present the concept,

framework and processes of the CBMS. The invitation came from the following:

- Asian Institute of Management (March 2005);
- House of Representatives (March 2005);
- Commission on Human Rights (March 2005);
- De La Salle University (Second Alfonso Yuchengco Policy Conference: Human Security and Social Protection in the Philippines (January 2005);
- National Statistical Coordination Board (January 2005);
- Social Theory and Urban Poverty: Implications for Theory (December 2004);
- De La Salle University-Reformulation Professorial Chair Lecture (December 2004);
- Technical Working Group on Poverty Statistics (December 2004);
- Commission on the Welfare of Children (August 2004); and
- Philhealth (July 2004).

International

The Team recently played host to a study tour delegation from the Ministry of Planning of Bhutan. It also gave a CBMS briefing to study tour groups from Nepal and Laos. Meanwhile, Dr. Reyes recently went on a mission trip to China to explore possible opportunities to replicate CBMS in the country.

Last March 2005, the Team also hosted the Methodology Workshop on Integration of Local Level Gender Responsive Budgeting (LLGRB) and Community-Based Monitoring System



Some of the guests and participants during the National Conference on CBMS.

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(CBMS). The workshop was aimed at exploring possible ways to link the CBMS and the LLGRB in order to come up with budgets that will address gender disparities. It was attended by participants involved in the CBMS and GRB work from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Canada, South Africa, the Philippines and UNIFEM.

Research Initiatives

Using CBMS as a Tool for Gender-Responsive Planning and Budgeting by Celia Reyes, Anne Bernadette Mandap and Kenneth Ilarde (March 2005)

This paper outlines how CBMS can complement the objectives of GRB by providing a regular source of necessary gender-disaggregated data that can indicate issues that need to be addressed and prioritized in the budgeting process.

Improvements on the CBMS Data Processing System by Joel Bancolita

The original Excel processing forms used in encoding accomplished CBMS questionnaires occupy a huge amount of disk space and are prone to high encoding errors. Thus, the Team adopted and customized the Census and Survey Processing (CSPro) System, a program which is especially designed for processing of household censuses and surveys.

Meanwhile, the Team has also developed the CBMS Simulator to process the encoded data. Here, interfaces are developed to enhance user-friendliness in data processing by just clicking boxes to generate indicators and tables. Formulas are saved as programs which reduce the memory space occupied by the file, thus reducing the hardware specification of computers. *

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The **Updates** may be downloaded in Adobe Acrobat format for free from the Project's website. The site can be accessed through <http://www.pep-net.org>.

For inquiries, please write or call:

PEP-CBMS Network Coordinating Team
Angelo King Institute for Economic and Business Studies
Rm. I-1016, 10th Floor
Angelo King International Center
Estrada corner Arellano Streets,
Malate, Manila 1004, Philippines
Tel No: (632) 524-5333
Telefax No: (632) 526-2067
E-mail: mimap@dls-csb.edu.ph

Editorial Staff

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Anne Bernadette E. Mandap
Lani V. Garnace
Researchers/Writers

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PEP-CBMS Network Coordinating Team
Angelo King Institute for Economic and Business Studies
Rm. I-1016, 10th Flr. Angelo King International Center
Estrada cor. Arellano Streets, Malate, Manila 1004, Philippines

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