Editor's Notes
The research updates featured below are taken from the study on social protection in the informal sector of the CBMS Burkina Faso Team led by Dr. Prosper Somda and Dr. Lassina Konate.

In Burkina Faso, many still live below the poverty line according to the 2009-2010 Comprehensive Survey of Household Living Conditions (EICVM). Households suffering from chronic food insecurity are estimated at over 20 percent, while almost 20 percent live in constant threat of food insecurity. This is the reason for implementing the Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (SCADD), which aims to reduce extreme poverty and hunger in the country. SCADD provides social protection, but one of the main challenges in implementing this program is the coverage of workers, including those working in the informal sector.

In line with SCADD, more social safety net programs were rolled out to improve people's access to basic social services. These included cash and in-kind transfers, and subsidies and exemptions that favor the most vulnerable social groups and the poor. However, these programs have no clear strategy for defining which households and/or individuals should be included. Targeting is the main challenge for the government of Burkina Faso in terms of social protection programs. Most programs do not have a sufficiently clear and coherent strategy for defining beneficiaries, which raises the question of the effectiveness of social safety net programs. Therefore, the community-based monitoring system (CBMS) should be very useful tool to target beneficiaries.

Addressing the issue of targeting
To address the issue of targeting, the government of Burkina Faso implemented the CBMS in 2014. The CBMS census aimed to contribute to national strategies for poverty reduction and to build local responses by targeting the most vulnerable social groups. With the help of the survey results, appropriate solutions to reduce poverty will be put in place that will involve both the national policymakers and the community.

In general, the CBMS census in Burkina Faso aimed to contribute to the effectiveness of social safety net programs for the social protection of the informal sector and for poverty reduction.
Research Results

It aimed to empower grassroots communities in their fight against poverty. Specifically, the census was implemented to strengthen the capacities of the local communities to produce reliable data that will pinpoint the major causes of poverty. Relevant and reliable data from the census will help the local authorities to properly design communal development plans and projects. These will also enable the local and regional political and administrative authorities to take appropriate measures to better targeting of beneficiaries of social safety net programs within the scope of social protection.

The 2014 census was done in three communes: Diébougou, Koper, and To. The CBMS census, however, has been implemented before in the communes of Diébougou (2004) and Koper (2007). Meanwhile, it was the first CBMS survey to be implemented in To. Many surveys on poverty and welfare were done before, however, these were not disaggregated to the communal level. The CBMS census used a household questionnaire and facilitators conducted the interview in each household. The data collection was from April to May 2014 and covered all households in the area. It was conducted by a field team composed of a coordinator, facilitators, and investigators from the villages and respective sectors.

The informal sector

The informal sector is an important area of interest among policymakers and researchers. It is recognized that in developing countries, the so-called informal activities are important sources of jobs among rural and urban populations.

In Burkina Faso, at least 50 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) comes from the informal economy. The informal economy employs 74 percent of the urban labor force, which means that low productivity in the informal sector will affect the economy of the country. There had been no recent specific studies on this, however, it is recognized that the main feature of the informal sector in Burkina Faso is the strong participation of women. Some of the economic activities of women include petty trade, manufacturing of millet beer (dolo), selling of fruit and vegetables, and managing of kiosks or mini restaurants. Others are likely to be performing tasks like sewing, hairdressing, and aesthetics.

As for child labor, Burkina Faso is one of the countries in the sub-region that has the highest rate of child labor. Most of these children work in order to survive. Also, it appears that 55 percent of children working in agriculture and livestock are living with their parents. Of the working children in urban areas, 15.2 percent do not live with their parents, compared with the 9.6 percent in rural areas (BOURSIN, 2002).

Social protection

In Burkina Faso, social safety net programs started several initiatives to improve access to basic social services and to provide employment for disadvantaged social groups-all of which were aimed at reducing the effects of economic shock. Mandatory social insurance programs were organized by the state, allowing households and individuals to be protected against deprivations, thus avoiding debt and cushioning their spending through time. These programs assume a protective function to cover the risks of unemployment, old age, disability, illness, and death.

Meanwhile, social protection in the health sector is a concern of the Burkina Faso government. In August 2009, the government implemented a project to integrate the entire population in a single insurance system while developing conventional health insurance. Thus, this project will cover the entire national territory and will benefit informal sector workers from Diébougou, Koper, and To. Also, it aims to combine different funding mechanisms to enhance their effectiveness.

The state, through the SCADD, is trying to address the concerns on the consolidation of human capital and promoting social protection. In terms of social protection, the government intends to develop and implement a national social protection policy. The program focuses on building a social protection floor, setting up a special scheme for the poor, implementing a national health insurance system, and ensuring access of the poor to basic social services. The government defines social protection as a set of public interventions that help households and individuals to better manage risk and reduce their vulnerability and poverty by ensuring better access to social services and employment.

To provide the informal sector a strong social protection, the study assumed that the potential beneficiaries of the program, that extend to women and children and members of the informal sector in the communes of Diébougou, Koper, and To, are willing to contribute financially.

Study results

The study reveals that the social insurance system in the communes of Diébougou, Koper, and To in Burkina Faso only extends to formal sector workers. However, social protection can be extended to informal sector workers in these areas if many are willing to pay to have access to it. Table 1 shows the percentage of males and females who are part of the informal sector. It reveals that...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commune</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diébougou</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koper</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>5.4</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.9</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBMS Census in Burkina Faso, 2014

2BOURSIN, Frédérique (2002). Travail et trafic des enfants versus scolarisation, UNICEF, MASSN
10.2 percent of the combined population of the three communes are informal sector workers. The data shown confirm the earlier statement that more women are engaged in the informal economy. It shows that 15.5 percent of women in the three communes are informal sector workers compared to 4.4 percent of men. Among the three communes, Diébougou has the biggest proportion of informal sector workers at 17.8 percent followed by Koper at 15.5 percent. Meanwhile, in the commune of To, only 1.9 percent are informal sector workers.

The census also reveals the assistance received by the workers as illustrated in Table 2. It provides the proportion of workers in the informal economy who receive social assistance either from the government or charitable organizations. It shows that in Diébougou, only 7 percent of the informal sector workers receive social assistance. In the commune of To, almost half of the informal sector workers' population receives social assistance. It is only in Koper that more than half of the population of informal sector workers receive assistance at 77.6 percent.

Table 2. Proportion of Informal Sector Workers Receiving Social Assistance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commune</th>
<th>Proportion of Informal Sector Workers Who Receives Social Assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Diébougou</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Koper</td>
<td>77.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>To</td>
<td>45.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: CBMS Census in Burkina Faso, 2014

Further, the CBMS census showed the proportion of informal sector workers who are willing to pay a monthly fee in order to have a social insurance, as shown in Table 3. To be more specific, 76.6 percent in Diébougou, 82.9 percent in Koper, and 93.3 percent in To are willing to pay the average monthly amount to avail the social insurance and its benefits. It was observed that women are slightly more interested than men.

The CBMS survey revealed that to cope with economic shocks, the local government of these three communes provide social assistance to the people who are considered vulnerable to poverty. Social assistance includes food and non-food needs, housing, credit or finance, health care, and education. Children and individuals who are under 18 years old also receive assistance. This reflects the effort of the government to provide social protection to children. However, there is a need to strengthen these efforts to specifically cover those children identified as particularly vulnerable.
Argentina Team Conducts 2nd Round of CBMS Survey in Tandil

The 2nd round of the community-based monitoring system (CBMS) census was undertaken in the municipality of Tandil in Argentina to provide an update and a more comprehensive database for the use of the local government. Data collection started in September and targeted to cover 1,130 households, representing 3,492 individuals.

The first census in Tandil was done in 2011 during the first phase of the CBMS Argentina project. The second round which was conducted in September 2015 was expected to enable the Argentina Team to produce and analyze panel data to determine if any changes or improvements on the socioeconomic status of the people. In addition to this, a rider questionnaire about youth employment and entrepreneurship was added. The questionnaire, which was also implemented in Olavarria, aims to create a baseline data about employment and entrepreneurial activities of the young individuals in Argentina.

Initially, the project was to be conducted in another municipality. However, due to some external factors, the team decided to conduct the census in Tandil.

Before the census in Tandil started, 21 enumerators were selected from a pool of 50 interested individuals. The enumerators were trained in the first two weeks of September. After a thorough evaluation of their training performance, 1 was selected to be the supervisor, 14 were identified to do the field work, and 6 were considered as back-up enumerators.

Data collection process

Before the start of the census, two enumerators resigned and were replaced by those from the back-up pool. Despite the changes, the final 14 enumerators worked very well and successfully completed the tasks. Meanwhile, the supervisors monitored field data collection and validated the field work results. They also ensured that all information collected were properly backed up by the team.

Data collection was undertaken in two waves. The first was done from September 21 to October 21, 2015. The second was done during November 2-13, 2015. The number of enumerators in the second wave was reduced to five since the objective was simply to revisit some households that failed to provide certain answers during the earlier wave.

Level of people's participation

No major problem was encountered during the field work as the people were very interested to participate in the survey. They were motivated by the information that results from the CBMS survey will be used in local policies and projects, which they deemed to be important. The CBMS team of Argentina used the municipality building as its base where the members meet, and where the people of Tandil can always visit if they have questions and/or concerns regarding the census.

The team, however, pointed out one inconvenience during the field work—most of the houses were empty and no one was available to answer the survey questions. They also mentioned that some people hesitant and even refused to participate in the census.

The data collected from the survey are expected to help in the administration and implementation of projects of the local government. Survey results are expected to identify the groups of people that needed assistance the most.
CBMS Network Organizes RuMEPP Technical Workshop

The Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) team in Manila led by Dr. Celia Reyes organized a technical workshop to discuss the study on the Rural Microenterprise Promotion Program (RuMEPP) last November 9, 2015 at Crown Plaza Manila Galleria in Quezon City, Philippines. The speakers included Dr. Aniceto Orbeta, Jr., senior fellow at Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS); Dr. Arturo Pacificador, associate professor at De La Salle University (DLSU); Lalaine Joyas, an expert on Qualitative Impact Assessment Method; and Clarence Dingcong, from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

The workshop was attended by Dr. Tereso Tullao, Jr. of DLSU and by representatives from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), Department of Budget and Management (DBM), National Anti-Poverty Commission (NAPC), National Economic Development Authority (NEDA), Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), and Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). Dr. Jose Ramon Albert of PIDS and IFAD-RuMEPP project team members were also there.

RuMEPP is a program launched by the DTI in cooperation with IFAD to raise incomes and improve the livelihoods of poor rural people by providing them with loans and other financial services. The program is complemented by business development services such as capacity building, market linkages, and product development. It aims to increase the numbers and to expand new and existing rural microenterprises that are operating profitably and sustainably. To evaluate the program, a project team led by Dingcong from IFAD conducted a study covering four sites where the program was implemented. The sites were the Cordillera Administrative Region (CAR), CARAGA region, Bicol region, and SOCCSKSARGEN or Region XII in Mindanao.

The study team led by Mr. Dingcong shared the group’s experience in conducting the survey and some issues they encountered during the project. One issue encountered was the absence of respondents as some were at work when the group conducted the survey; they had to go back to do some interviews.

Dr. Orbeta said that based on the study, the program showed positive impact on profits; total cost increased primarily from fixed costs but sales increased faster. The findings also showed that RuMEPP was able to assist the ME owners improve their profits and accumulate business assets. However, it did not help much in employment generation. The program was able to generally improve microenterprise household welfare, particularly in terms of income, expenditures, and assets.

The presentation of findings was followed by an open discussion on the results. The main discussants were DTI Undersecretary Zenaida Maglaya, Small Business Corporation Head Josefina Flores, and Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Policy Center Executive Director Dr. Ronald Mendoza. Dr. Mendoza noted that decent jobs are available, most people chose these instead of going into the business of microenterprises. Thus, a different program with a larger impact must be considered. Also, the design of the training in putting up and maintaining a microenterprise should be examined.

NEDA Director Erlinda Capones pointed out that credit alone cannot provide changes in welfare. Dr. Reyes also highlighted one important lesson from the study, which is the issue of targeting, in order to achieve the goal of alleviating poverty. DBM Chief Budget and Management Specialist Evelyn Manguyod noted the importance of evaluating such programs so that these can be properly considered when allocating budget. Finally, the need for a continuing improvement and proper monitoring of the program implementation was pointed out.

The recommendations of the study team included better targeting since the program was only able to cover 26 percent of poor households in the project sites. The program should also reexamine its selection criteria, such as focusing on registered MEs and priority industries, if poverty alleviation is the objective. The project should also be in line with existing projects in the areas in order to make the gains more sustainable. In terms of assistance, it should also take into account skills training, product development, and market linkages.
News Updates

CBMS Bangladesh Completes Training of Enumerators

The Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) Project team in Bangladesh, together with representatives of the Bangladesh Academy for Rural Development (BARD), completed on December 8, 2015 the training of enumerators for the pilot implementation of the CBMS Accelerated Poverty Profiling (CBMS APP) in Mohammadpur (West) Union Parishad, Bangladesh.

CBMS objectives

The CBMS was developed to provide policy makers with a regular and frequent source of information on the possible impacts of macroeconomic adjustment policies on households and individuals, particularly those belonging to the vulnerable groups. The CBMS is now an institutional mechanism that is being implemented in many countries as a community-based poverty monitoring system, among other uses. CBMS also emphasizes youth employment at the local level and ensures the effective use of information by the local government officials especially in preparing their development plans.

The Bangladesh project has adopted the CBMS APP where the project team uses tablets for faster data collection. This is also in line with the government's aim to establish technology-based digital governance. Through this application, it is easier to make the information available online. The CBMS team developed a household profile questionnaire that was pre-tested in the project site. A rider questionnaire was also added to include a research on youth employment and entrepreneurship.

Enumerators’ training

The December 7-8 training of enumerators was attended by 34 participants that included 20 young individuals from Mohammadpur (West) Union Parishad. The other 14 participants were the chairperson, 12 member representatives, and the secretary of Union Parishad. The youth were involved since one of the objectives of the training was to create a base for developing a corps of properly groomed youths that are dedicated to help in the initiatives for reducing poverty using the CBMS census.

The training helped enumerators acquire the skills and techniques of the tablet-based data collection system. The training included an introduction to CBMS Bangladesh, and a discussion of the household profile questionnaire and the rider questionnaire on youth employment and entrepreneurship. Several data collection techniques were shared to help the enumerators effectively conduct the survey.

The training was successfully completed with the cooperation and enthusiasm shown by all participants. The knowledge and skills they acquired from this training will help all participants in carrying out their data collection tasks while on the field.
Evaluation of UNICEF's UCT program

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), together with the Philippine Statistical Association, Inc. (PSAi), organized two dissemination fora to share the results of the study on "Monitoring the Impact of Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) to Families/Victims of Typhoon Yolanda." The first fora was held on October 28, 2015 in Quezon City and the second was on November 13, 2015 in Tacloban City.

This type of UCT program, a form of emergency assistance provided by the UNICEF, is the first of its kind to be implemented in the Philippines. The cash assistance is given to families who were victims of typhoon Haiyan (local name: Yolanda) to increase their capacity to respond to disasters.

In Leyte, 10,009 households in six municipalities benefited from this UCT program. To assess its implementation and monitor the impacts of the program, the UNICEF commissioned third-party monitor groups, such as PSAi. The PSAi group led by Dr. Jose Ramon Alber covered the province of Leyte with the help of Dr. Celia Reyes of the Community-Based Monitoring System (CBMS) Network and her team. The study was done to help the UNICEF in evaluating the program and to making necessary adjustments if needed, moving forward.

The audience from the two fora included people from (i) the government, specifically from the National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) and Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD); (ii) directors and faculty members of academic institutions like the University of the Philippines and Leyte Normal University; (iii) international nongovernment organizations, such as Save The Children, OXFAM International, UN Habitat, and World Vision Incorporated; and (iv) the media. Also, 10 beneficiaries of the UCT program were able to attend the forum in Tacloban City.

Dr. Albert and Dr. Reyes were the main speakers of the event. Representatives from the UNICEF were also present and shared their thoughts about their experience in implementing UCT in the Philippines.

Dr. Albert presented the sampling design used in the study to monitor the impacts of the UCT program to its beneficiaries. The CBMS developed by Dr. Reyes and her team, he said, was used in the survey, with additional questions to capture the impacts of UCT.

Impact of the UCT program

Dr. Reyes discussed the findings of the study, particularly on prices, income and employment, health and nutrition, and education. The study revealed that the top three uses of UCT are (i) food expenses, (ii) miscellaneous expenses (including medicines and diapers), and (iii) savings. Savings also became an important use of the assistance as families saved part of the assistance to be able to buy materials to rebuild their houses.

The study revealed that the prevalence of malnutrition declined within the period of the UCT program. On education, an overall improvement in school attendance was noted during the period.

On income, the average monthly income of households across sites increased in the second round compared to the data from the first round, and drastically declined after the grant ended. During the UCT implementation, many households sourced their income from the cash assistance.

The findings, thus, reveal that the UCT has been a big help to beneficiary households. The team reiterated that this cannot be fully attributed to the UCT program since many other programs were present to help the disaster victims. On the other hand, some households have not yet fully recovered. Six months of assistance may not be long enough for some households to get back on their feet.

Stakeholders’ reactions

Representatives from NEDA and DSWD also shared their experiences on the program and gave reactions on the study results presented. At the open forum, the most common question raised was the length of the program. Since it was an emergency assistance, many in the audience wondered if the 6-month length...

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of the program was long enough to help the disaster victims back on their feet, yet not long enough to create mendicancy.

The government's role in responding to disasters was reiterated. Marichu Bustillos from DSWD emphasized the importance of the programs that are already in place in order to sustain recovery. Meanwhile, Meylene Rosales from NEDA noted the importance of putting in place a concrete government plan/program in times of disaster to cater to the needs of victims, and afterwards. Experiences from typhoon Haiyan are seen to provide lessons to help the country to better respond to disasters. The study points out that disaster victims have many and varying needs, hence, there should be a mechanism to help survivors improve their well-being. The intervention should be well packaged in addressing the needs of the people.

Eden Dadap of the Department of Education, Region VIII, also pointed out that the focus should not only be in recovery, but also in preparation to disasters in order to have zero casualties. She also noted that bringing normalcy to the people's lives may help them recover faster. In particular, she mentioned that to help children amidst all the devastation, trauma, and loss, letting them go back to school can help them recover faster since this is part of their normal life.

Finally, Adam Christopher Tibe, the UNICEF representative who attended the forum in Tacloban City, emphasized that the purpose of the UCT is to help improve the capacity of families to recover. As the study on UCT suggests, cash infusions are viable in an emergency situation as this empowers the beneficiaries to have independence in setting their priorities, and to spend the money on their most pressing needs.

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