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***Experimental Research Project on the
Poverty Monitoring System (PMS) Phase II***

MIMAP-Burkina Faso

CECI
UFR/SEG
CEDRES
MIMAP/BURKINA
PMS

**EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH PROJECT ON
THE POVERTY MONITORING SYSTEM (PMS)
PHASE II**

INTRODUCTION

In the wake of similar projects in Asia under the MIMAP research program (Micro Impacts of Macroeconomic Adjustment Policies) of IDRC, a consortium of institutions, with support from CECI, carried out a pilot research project in Burkina Faso to ascertain the feasibility of a community-based poverty monitoring system (PMS) and to identify appropriate indicators. The first phase focused on methodological issues: its results were covered in a report published in April 1999.

The pilot experiment was conducted among a limited sample of communities and households and identified a number of aspects that would be crucial to the feasibility of such an undertaking in Burkina Faso. It also showed the need to refocus the PMS in terms of its primary clients and its management base, and to revise the methodology, particularly for data collection. Several aspects of feasibility remain to be verified. In this connection, the PMS needs to be developed and introduced on a full-scale basis in an entire administrative unit such as a Department [*département*], so that it can fulfill its promise as an essential tool for evaluating the effects of development policies on the poorest and most vulnerable groups.

CECI is a Quebec-based international cooperation agency with its own study centre specialized in poverty measurement and analysis; it has been active in Burkina Faso for several decades. CEDRES/INSD is carrying out the second phase of the MIMAP program. These two agencies have agreed to pool their expertise and submit a joint proposal for a second phase of the PMS along the lines described above.

1. Context and rationale for the PMS in Burkina Faso

Poverty exists to varying degrees in all societies, but it is particularly acute in developing countries, including most countries in Africa and Latin America, and in several parts of Asia. In the economic sense, it is defined in terms of a level of material well-being, but the concept of poverty is increasingly being viewed from a non-material viewpoint, where social and cultural aspects are taken into account.

Poverty awareness is now driving efforts to improve living standards for as many people as possible. International institutions and agencies have been striving, with varying degrees of success, to reduce poverty by improving living conditions for target groups in countries where poverty is particularly severe.

In Burkina Faso, despite significant economic and social progress, the people are still extremely poor, as demonstrated in the two priority surveys conducted by the government in 1994 and 1998. Using current values for the poverty line (CFAF 72,690 in 1998 vs. 41,099 in 1994), the proportion of poor people has risen slightly, from 44.5 percent in 1994 to 45.3 percent in 1998.

While conditions are improving slightly in rural areas, poverty is worsening in the cities. Gross domestic product per capita stands at US\$220, and the country's human development index was 0.320 in 1999.

Burkina Faso ranks 159th on the UNDP's sustainable human development index for 2001. Despite adoption of a structural adjustment program in 1991, poverty

indicators are still far too high in Burkina Faso, which is essentially an agricultural country. The government has prepared a strategic framework for poverty reduction and growth that gives priority to rural development, in recognition of the large numbers of poor people living in the countryside, and the fact that the country's greatest growth potential over the medium term lies there.

Phase II is intended to articulate the PMS with the national antipoverty strategy and to support its implementation.

The PMS represents a tool for defining indicators for the PRSP (Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper) and will also serve to reinforce the poverty reduction efforts of the authorities and other development partners.

The decentralization process now under way in Burkina Faso also offers an opportunity to experiment with instruments for community mobilization that were developed under the PMS. The objective of decentralization is to foster representative and participatory local structures for planning and managing development: the PMS will serve as a springboard, providing communities with the tools to evaluate their poverty situation and trends and thereby target their development efforts more effectively.

II. Description of phase II of the PMS

2.1. Results and lessons learned from the pilot phase

The phase-I study examined the appropriateness and feasibility of a poverty monitoring system in Burkina Faso and identified relevant indicators for monitoring poverty. It included an analysis of the current political context of the antipoverty campaign and a pilot survey in the province of Passoré, with a view to establishing the PMS in the country. The results of that phase were as follows:

- Existing data collection capacities are weak and the PMS will have to be modified with appropriate and accessible tools.
- In terms of political support, the local authorities have demonstrated a clear interest in the PMS. The current decentralization process offers a suitable point of entry for the PMS, which could be an ideal instrument for mobilizing community efforts at local development.
- In terms of community participation, it was recognized that if the PMS is to be operational and enjoy popular support, it will have to be based on a community development project or program of direct interest to local people. Such a program would have to include a leadership/training component in order to maintain popular interest in participating in the monitoring efforts without political haggling.
- Finally, we identified several poverty monitoring indicators, the most relevant of which at the local level are qualitative, non-monetary indicators. The choice of indicators will require further research and refinement as the work progresses. The intent of the PMS is to arrive at a set of readily usable indicators for tracking poverty in the most remote reaches of the country.

The institutional and socioeconomic setting in Burkina Faso would seem to be ripe for introduction of the PMS, given the current challenges facing the antipoverty campaign and the government's commitment to seeing it through. This move faces a number of constraints, however, that will require a progressive strategy based on "real scale" experimentation before attempting broader coverage.

The first phase showed the need to improve the functioning of the PMS, and accordingly it will be organized around four intervention components, described below, through which activities will be defined, coordinated and monitored at all levels.

2.2. Presentation of phase II of the PMS

- Intervention strategy

Phase II is intended to make the PMS tool available to local communities for use in planning and managing their own development and especially in evaluating and monitoring progress in their well-being and identifying the steps needed to improve the situation. Work will begin with a participatory research-action program involving the local community. Although the local community is the primary client of the PMS, this research-action will need to identify a few poverty indicators that can be compared from one community to the next, so that the PMS can also serve as a monitoring and evaluation tool for policies and programs pursued under the national antipoverty strategy.

The focus of PMS Phase II will be to develop a community-based poverty monitoring system that can eventually be extended to the whole country. The intervention will therefore cover all villages within a given administrative unit, to confirm its feasibility as an instrument for supporting antipoverty efforts at the local, regional and national levels.

Phase II will involve four integrated and complementary aspects:

- Finalizing the methodology.
- Training local people in the evaluation and regular monitoring of poverty levels.
- Generating synergy with local development finance programs and with the strategic framework for the antipoverty campaign.
- Project administration and management.

The stress will be on involving the local people and seeking their cooperation in ensuring the system's relevance as an antipoverty tool, in collecting reliable data and in keeping the system running on the basis of local resources.

The strategy will therefore focus on:

- A leadership/training approach to making the PMS operational and encouraging its appropriation by users.
- A gender and development strategy to incorporate the specific needs of women in the design and implementation of the PMS.

- Creating synergy with development finance programs that PMS users can draw upon in order to finance efforts to meet the needs identified.

The participatory approach will therefore be reinforced during phase II, and CECI-Burkina will play a key role in this regard. Development and implementation of the PMS will require joint efforts and specific expertise involving partners active in the sectors concerned. Chief among these partners will be CEDRES/BF and INSD, with technical support from CECI-Quebec. We will also work with CEDRES/INSD in developing the methodology, in analyzing the data and in monitoring implementation of the PMS.

- Objectives of phase II

The overall objective of the community-based PMS is to equip local communities to identify the various facets of poverty and to monitor them regularly, take steps to improve their situation, and help make antipoverty policies and programs as a whole more effective.

The specific objectives are:

- To define a methodology for a poverty monitoring system that is geared to local conditions and capacities.
- To describe the various facets of poverty in the Department of Yako, using simple indicators of the characteristics and behaviour of families and of local communities.
- To strengthen local capacities for planning, monitoring and evaluating antipoverty efforts.

A management-by-results approach will be used for prioritizing these objectives and stating them in operational terms, as follows:

Purpose: to make poverty reduction efforts more effective in Burkina Faso.

Goal: to develop an ongoing participatory system for monitoring functional poverty, one that can be used by local communities in the Department of Yako.

Expected results (outputs):

1. A poverty monitoring methodology that can be used locally and more generally is established and properly documented.
2. Local communities in Yako are in a position to monitor poverty levels through establishment of a poverty profile.
3. Synergy is being created with local development finance programs.
4. All the data collected from year 1 of the PMS for the Department of Yako have been analyzed.
5. Project resources are being efficiently managed in terms of the results achieved.

The above considerations are detailed in the logical framework shown below.

Logical framework for the project

Summary	Objectively verifiable indicators	Means of verification	Critical conditions
Purpose. to make poverty reduction efforts more effective in Burkina Faso	The number of projects/programs using VMS as a management-monitoring-evaluation tool. Reduction in multidimensional poverty indicators.	Methodological documentation on monitoring-evaluation systems in use by antipoverty programs/projects. Poverty profiles prepared using EMS and other poverty indicators for target groups of programs/projects.	The social and political context is stable. The PRSP is maintained. Good governance
Goal: to develop an ongoing participatory system for monitoring functional poverty, one that can be used by local communities in the Department of Yako	Institutional and technical capacities of local communities to produce their poverty profile. Relevant and reliable information available each year on poverty levels, published in the form of a regional profile. Existence of an ongoing, independently financed PMS in Yako.	Internal and external evaluation reports. Tools prepared for managing the PMS efficiently at the district level. Statistical information.	Local population is truly committed and cooperating.
Results. A poverty monitoring methodology that can be used locally and more generally is established and properly documented	Tools available and verified for all stages of implementing and using the system for monitoring and evaluating poverty trends at the village level. Results and lessons have been compiled and are available.	Activity reports. Tools accessible in different forms. Reports on statistical quality.	Availability of university researchers.
2. Local communities in Yako are in a position to monitor poverty levels through establishment of a poverty profile.	Number of villages with a reliable and regularly updated poverty profile, and using this profile for local development	Activity reports. Survey results published in the form of poverty profiles at the village level. Local development plans.	
3. Synergy is being created with local development finance programs.	Nature of contacts established. The number of local development projects submitted.	Action plan. Activity reports. Financing contract. Projects prepared.	
4. All the data collected from year 1 of the PMS for the Department of Yako have been analyzed.	Statistical studies completed, discussed and published, covering the indicator results (profiles) and their liability.	Research reports presented at conferences or workshops	
5. Project resources are being efficiently managed in terms of the results achieved	Strict financial reporting. Competitive unit costs.	Activity reports and financial statements produced by the management unit.	

2.3. Description of phase II components

Component 1. Refining the phase I methodology

Introducing a PMS into a community requires an information, education and communication (IEC) campaign so that everyone will understand clearly the need to develop capacities at this level. This must be followed by an individual diagnosis of community capacities so that a capacity strengthening plan can be developed in order to meet the objectives of introducing a PMS.

Since phase II will be undertaken at “real scale” in a great number of villages, in fact all of those within the Department of Yako, a pilot survey will have to be undertaken. This will clarify the objectives and the relationship between the PMS and PRSP, test the new methodology for collecting indicator data, provide an initial analysis of village data and select indicators for establishing poverty profiles in each village.

At this stage, the manuals for canvassers and supervisors will be developed, including instructions on controlling data quality, training data collectors and manual analysis of data on target groups. Programs for electronic data entry and processing will also be developed. Given the iterative approach adopted, this stage will include feedback/validation workshops with local residents. At the end of this phase, the methodology will be updated to serve as a basis for preparing an annual operating plan.

Component 2. Training villagers to use the PMS

This will involve equipping communities with a system for regular monitoring of data on poverty levels, based on results of the pilot phase. Since the effectiveness of the PMS depends on the reliability of the data, local people and canvassers will be trained and coached in producing information on a regular, periodic basis. The PMS will be adapted as needed so that local people can use it and update the information on a regular basis.

The capacity building process will be conducted through local representative bodies. The project will help to establish these bodies and a participatory diagnosis will be undertaken to identify members. Where local bodies already exist, they will be enlisted in the project, provided they are found to be sufficiently representative. This is the component that will place the greatest demands on project resources, since all villages and sectors of Yako Department are to be covered.

Component 3. Creating synergy with local development finance programs and with the strategic framework for the antipoverty campaign

Efforts will be made to establish close links with the decentralization process now underway in Burkina Faso and the decentralized rural development effort, through programs that will focus on creating representative local development bodies and raising funds to finance action plans put forward by the communities. The concern here is to help communities meet the expectations that this initiative is likely to evoke among the local people by putting them in contact with sources of village development financing.

Component 4. Administration and management of phase II

This covers all project administration and management activities. A steering committee will be constituted with representatives of the various partners. Day-to-day project management will be the responsibility of a coordinator based in Yako, supported as necessary by resources from the CECI office in Yako (secretary, drivers, social workers). A CECI volunteer will assist the team with communication and gender issues. The team will be able to draw as necessary upon expertise in Burkina Faso and Canada (the CECI-Quebec expert will serve as an adviser). The project team will work closely with researchers designated by CEDRES/MIMAP-BF.

2.4. The methodology

Some of the points discussed below will have to be adjusted after the pilot phase is completed.

2.4.1. Intervention zone and target population

The PMS will be implemented in the Department of Yako, Province of Passoré. It will cover all villagers in the Department of Yako (men, women and children). The Department of Yako was selected for this PMS experiment for a number of reasons. First of all, it is experiencing sharp demographic pressure on its renewable natural resources: the population is growing at a rate of 2.3 percent per year, and population density is estimated at between 45 and 50 inhabitants per square kilometer. The Passoré is an essentially agricultural province with a chronic food shortage. The target population is essentially rural, although a small portion lives in and around the town of Yako.

Secondly, the Department of Yako served as a laboratory during the first phase of the PMS project, and it is desirable to preserve achievements to date and ensure continuity.

Moreover, Canadian cooperation agencies, and in particular the CECI, have been active in the province since 1986, and much of their effort has been focused on the Department of Yako. This assistance has been provided both through volunteer programs and through development projects in several fields: agriculture, farmers' organizations, maternal and child health, the anti-STD/AIDS campaign, local capacity building, etc. CECI's efforts have led to a thorough familiarity with the region and the establishment of a network of partners. CECI is currently active in food security, with a community food security management project. Through this project, CECI has developed expertise in leadership/training activities, in participatory diagnosis and in equipping villages to identify the determinants of food security and to establish a food security calendar. This approach will be put to good service during implementation of the PMS.

Finally, the CECI has been selected to disseminate the action plan to foster professional agricultural organizations (PA/OPA) and the creation of provincial committees for coordination and exchange between farmers' organizations (CPCE/OP) in the country's northern region, the capital of which is Yako and which

includes the Province of Passoré. The CECI is also on the list of potential partners for the National Land Management Program (PNGT) Phase II, a large-scale local development program that is to be launched shortly. CECI is therefore well placed to foster synergy with broader national programs for combating poverty in this region.

2.4.2. Duration of phase II

The experimental research phase will run for two years, and will include an initial pilot survey for developing the methodology and defining the indicators and tools, and an operational phase in which the PMS will be implemented full-scale across the Department of Yako.

2.4.3. Data collection methodology

The results of the first phase revealed the need to refocus the program, and the data collection methodology will have to be revised.

Survey population

While the ultimate target of the program embraces all households in each of the 8228 villages of Burkina Faso, at this stage the PMS will focus its research on a portion of households in Passoré (all households in the Department of Yako).

Survey base:

This is a very important consideration. The survey base consists of the list of villages in the Department of Yako, including the city of Yako. This list has 37 villages (of the 203 villages in the Province of Passoré) and shows population and household numbers, based on the RGP of the INSD. [*i.e. “general population census of the National Statistics and Demographics Institute”??*]

Household sampling

The basic sampling unit is the village household. Statistical observations will refer to the household (and sometimes to a member of the household), and the essential information will be collected from households.

Community sampling

The communities, for survey purposes, are the villages of the Department of Yako. This phase will cover all 37 villages and seven sectors (semiurban) of the Department.

Sample selection

The Department is made up of villages/sectors that constitute the primary units for development. The local capacity-building approach to combating poverty, on which the PMS is based, requires an exhaustive census of households in each village of the Department in order to avoid the problem of extrapolation, which is difficult at the village level (this will also avoid the problem of aggregation in rural areas, where such skills are rare).

All households in all villages will be surveyed: the number of canvassers will depend on the size of the village. It is estimated that one canvasser can administer the questionnaire to about 400 households in the two-month timeframe.

Data collection method

Data will be collected by the people themselves, using the approach from the first phase. The necessary work of revising the questionnaires and manuals is now underway.

The sequence of work

The organizational pyramid for data collection is being retained. The canvassers will collect the field data. The controllers will supervise the work of the canvassers and conduct counter-surveys. The supervisory team will conduct unannounced field missions in the course of its work.

Data collection materials

The questionnaire and the manuals will need to be revised to reflect lessons learned from the first phase.

Reference period

This is an important notion, and is closely related to the nature of the questions. For income data, the reference period will be the crop year. The reference period for consumption expenditures will be the immediately preceding two weeks.

Collection period

Data will be collected during February and March, the period that falls between harvesting and sowing activities. At this point individuals already know the size and quality of their harvest and have an idea of what they are going to do with the proceeds. Indicator data will be collected regularly (at least twice a year).

Choice of field personnel

The canvassers are selected using the MIMAP approach, which seeks to develop strengths at the grass-roots level. It is desirable therefore for every village to have its own canvassers. The number will depend on the size of each locality.

III. Intervention structure and management

As project manager, CECI will be responsible, under the contract with IDRC, for project management, internal administration, communications and coordination, and, in the end, for achieving the objectives and producing the outputs expected. The MIMAP-Burkina team will be responsible for the scientific and technical dimensions of the project.

The project is therefore structured around the following elements:

- A steering committee consisting of permanent resource persons from CECI and from CEDRES-MIMAP/BF, which will provide overall guidance as the project progresses. The committee will approve the detailed execution plan, which is to be produced three months after project start-up, as well as all reports produced during the project. The director of CECI-BF will serve as executive secretary to the committee and will ensure that its decisions are implemented by all team members. The director of CECI-BF will also be responsible for coordinating activities among members of the team, for production of the various project reports, and for financial management of the project.
- A field coordination unit, based in Yako. The coordinator will be responsible for all field activities involved in implementing the project and will directly supervise field personnel. CECI will provide five leadership/training experts to promote the project among local communities throughout the Department. They will also supervise work during the survey phase. Their mandate will be to apply the communications strategy, lead workshops in the villages, conduct participatory diagnoses and help in training the canvassers. The field coordination unit will help other team members (CECI and CEDRES/INSD) in their tasks and will be responsible for producing the report on field activities.
- The MIMAP-CEDRES/INSD team. This team will be responsible for defining the survey methodology and developing the necessary tools, with the support of CECI-Québec. The team members will conduct the pilot survey, they will help to train the community canvassers, supervise the full-scale data collection phase, process the data and analyze them. They will then take the results back to the communities for validation. The team will be responsible for the survey portion of the reports (covering methodology, results and analysis).
- The communications support and GAD [gender and development] team. CECI will support project implementation by providing two Canadian volunteers. Those volunteers will work in particular on preparing and implementing the IEC and GAD strategies.

This experimental research project on PMS is in addition to the existing PMS component of the MIMAP-BF phase 2 program, where CEDRES/INSD researchers and resources are already earmarked for theoretical research, relating primarily to the first component. Efforts will be made to achieve full synergy between resources allocated to these two administrative units.

IV. Control and monitoring mechanism

Annual control and monitoring will be done through the annual assessment and programming exercise, in cooperation with project partners and target groups. The resulting annual action plans will include:

1. An assessment of the previous year's activities (strategy, appropriateness, efficiency and impact).
2. A detailed annual program for year 2, together with a budget. The annual action plans will be approved by the steering committee and will provide the basis for annual monitoring.

The PMS team will conduct ongoing internal monitoring and evaluation, and will produce an annual report assessing results achieved.

Quarterly activities reports will track progress under the program, and will be based primarily on ongoing operational monitoring of the villages and participants by the project's technical managers.

Financial reports will be submitted on a quarterly basis.

These permanent mechanism will be supplemented by one or more operational and evaluation reports prepared by IDRC.

V. Budget

Subject to further analysis, the budget is estimated at CDN\$196,355. CECI will contribute CDN\$15,440. IDRC is therefore being asked to contribute CDN\$180,915. Attached is a breakdown of the major budget items over two years.