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Uncovering Regional Disparities in Poverty in Viet Nam Using CBMS Data*

Vu Tuan Anh**

Viet Nam has made considerable progress in poverty reduction in recent years. In fact, the country's poverty rate has been halved in less than ten years. However, the rate of poverty reduction in some regions is still low. In view of this, identification of regional disparities across several dimensions of poverty can facilitate targeting of the poor and formulation of appropriate anti-poverty policies in each of these affected regions.

During the past couple of years, the CBMS-Viet Nam project has cooperated with local partners in five provinces located in five different regions to conduct poverty studies. This paper presents the results of the CBMS implementation in these localities and, in particular, illustrates how CBMS data can be used to uncover regional disparities in terms of poverty. The main objective of the analysis is to find out the possible reasons for these observed disparities. Based on the results, some poverty alleviation policies as well as the use of a CBMS-based, multi-dimensional poverty index are recommended.

Below left, Dr. Vu Tuan Anh, team leader of CBMS-Vietnam. Below right, Vu Thi Than, President of the Women's Union of Ninh Binh (WUNB). The WUNB is the CBMS implementing partner in the province of Ninh Binh.

A tree-lined village lane in Son Tay town, Ha Tay Province, Northern Viet Nam. Ha Tay Province is a CBMS site.

Tran Thi Hoa/World Bank

Economic Growth and Regional Poverty Disparity

Economic growth is an essential factor in improving the living standards of the population and in reducing absolute poverty. Poverty incidence is lower in areas where there is fast and stable economic growth. The growth benefits are felt by the lower strata of society through the direct impacts on employment and income generation. However, increased disparities in the distribution of wealth generated by economic growth both across social strata and regions reflect the failure of distribution policies and, possibly, inappropriate social and political institutions.

Regional disparity in living standards used to be measured by the difference in income and expenditure of the population in different regions. It is also measured by indicators of specific aspects of welfare such as education and health. Regional disparity in poverty, meanwhile, is measured by the differences of poverty rates of different regions.

In the 1990s, Viet Nam witnessed an acceleration in the growth rate of its gross domestic product (GDP), with an average annual GDP growth rate of 7.6 percent in the last 16 years (1990-2006). During this period, Viet Nam's population increased by 118 percent while its GDP grew by 322 percent, thereupon registering a GDP per capita growth of 253 percent or 6 percent annually. Viet Nam's per capita GDP was US$288 in 1995, $639 in 2005, and $835 in 2007.

In turn, Viet Nam's poverty rate was reduced by half in 2002 vis-à-vis its rate in 1993. This feat was repeated in 2006 when the poverty rate was once again halved from its rate in 1998.On average, therefore, Viet Nam's poverty rate had halved every 8-9 years, making the first goal of the MDGs completed in Viet Nam. Viet Nam is considered as a successful case in poverty reduction among developing countries.

Inside

* A condensed and edited version of the original paper of the author entitled *Regional Poverty and Disparity in Viet Nam* which was presented during the 7th PEP Network General Meeting held on December 10-12, 2008 in Makati City, Philippines.

** Project Leader, CBMS Viet Nam

Despite these successes, however, poverty reduction remains a major concern for Vietnamese society, inasmuch as:

- *Poverty reduction is still fragile and, unsustainable*. A large proportion of the people still have incomes that are very near the poverty line. As a result, they can easily fall into poverty when natural disasters or economic crises happen, or even when a household member gets sick.

- *The disparities in income and living standards between rural and urban areas, and across different strata and provinces, tend to increase*. The income gap between the richest quintile and the poorest quintile doubled in 15 years (According to the living standard survey of Viet Nam's General Statistical Office, it rose from 4.2 percent in 1990 to 8.37 percent in 2006). The Gini index based on the income indicator grew from 0.35 in 1994 to 0.42 in 2006 while the Gini index based on the expenditure indicator remained almost unchanged, at 0.34 in 1993, and 0.37 in 2006. There are two opposite tendencies: on one hand, the poverty incidence is decreasing while, on the other hand, inequality is increasing.

- *Regional poverty disparity is extending despite of reduction in poverty rates in all regions of the country*. Regional poverty disparity is reflected through the features noted below.

Poverty has declined significantly in all major regions in the country, albeit at different rates. Among the 8 regions (Red River Delta, Northeast Mountains, Northwest Mountains, North Central Coast, South Central Coast, Central Highlands, Southeast Region, Mekong River Delta), four (Northwest, Northeast, North Central Coast and Central Highlands) are less developed in terms of economic level. They are upland areas and most of the ethnic minority population live there. They face many constraints in their development process, including a difficult physical environment, poor access to infrastructure and low educational levels. The poverty rate is still high in these regions.

The rest of the four regions have reduced their poverty incidence at different rates: poverty rate in the Red River Delta declined by 20.5 percent, in the Mekong Delta by 26.6 percent, in the South Central Coast by 21.9 percent, and in the Southeast by only 6.4 percent although its original poverty rate was already low (12.2%) in 1998.

The Northwest Region has the highest poverty rate: it fell from 73.4 percent in 1998 to 49 percent in 2006. On the other hand, poverty incidence in the Northeast Region dropped from 62 percent to 25 percent. Poverty incidence dropped from 52.4 percent in 1998 to 28.6 percent in 2006 in the Central Highland Region. In fourth rank in the list of poorest regions in 1998, the North Central Coast Region fell to become the second poorest region in 2006 with poverty incidence declining by 19 percentage points (from 48% to 29%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Poverty rates by region

	1998		2002		2006	
	Rate (%)	Difference (time)	Rate (%)	Difference (time)	Rate (%)	Difference (time)
Whole country	**37.4**		**28.9**		**16.0**	
Red River Delta	29.3	2.4	22.4	2.1	8.8	1.5
Northeast Mountains	62.0	5.1	38.4	3.6	25.0	4.3
Northwest Mountains	73.4	6.0	68.0	6.4	49.0	8.4
North Central Coast	48.1	3.9	43.9	4.1	29.1	5.0
South Central Coast	34.5	2.8	25.2	2.4	12.6	2.2
Central Highland	52.4	4.3	51.8	4.9	28.6	4.9
Southeast Region	12.2	1.0	10.6	1.0	5.8	1.0
Mekong River Delta	36.9	3.0	23.4	2.2	10.3	1.8

Source: General Statistical Office, "Viet Nam Statistics Yearbook 2007".

Regional Poverty Disparity Measured by CBMS Data

In the past two years (2006-2007), the CBMS-Viet Nam project team has been supporting local partners in 5 provinces in the conduct of the CBMS in 50 communes (45 rural communes and 5 urban wards) in 14 districts as shown in Table 2.

In the surveyed localities, there are 3 whole districts (Yen Bai, Ninh Binh and Lam Dong). Except for Quang Ngai, all surveyed localities consist of one or two urban wards and several rural communes. Although the structure of population in terms of rural-urban is not similar in the surveyed localities, the collected data can nonetheless still be used as an example for comparing localities in different regions.

In 2004-2005, the CBMS approach was used in the framework of a research project of the Viet Nam Academy of Social Sciences in the conduct of a nationwide sample household survey. The sample covered 14,044 households in 133 rural communes and urban wards of 63 provinces (of which 11,740 are rural households in 60 provinces and 2304 are urban households in 16 cities). In each province, two communes / wards were selected, and in each commune/ward, approximately 100 households were randomly selected for interview. The results of this survey showed changes of socio-economic situation of households and communities (Vu Tuan Anh & Nguyen Xuan Mai, 2007). In this paper, data of this survey are also used, especially those of rural households for an analysis of regional disparity.

The indicator set used in the CBMS is modified in regions and provinces to adapt to the circumstances of localities. However, a number of core indicators remain the same in all surveyed localities. These common core indicators are used here to examine regional disparity in the different aspects of socio-economic situation that are closely related to poverty. These aspects are: (1) household structure, (2) income, (3) dwelling, (4) property, (5) education, and (6) health care.

Population and Household Structure

Regarding the age structure, the significant reduction in fertility and the gradual increase in life expectancy have resulted in the ageing population in Viet Nam, with a smaller proportion of young population vis-à-vis the greater proportion of old population. The proportion of population aged less than 15 years old reduced from 39

Table 2. Scope of CBMS implementation in 2006-2007

Region	Province	Number of districts	Number of rural communes	Number of urban wards	Number of households
Red River Delta	Ha Tay	10	9	1	10,016
	Ninh Binh	1	24	1	16,725
Northern Mountains	Yen Bai	1	3	2	6,314
Southern Central Coast	Quang Ngai	1	5	0	6,382
Central Highlands	Lam Dong	1	4	1	3,500
TOTAL	**5**	**14**	**45**	**5**	**42,937**

percent in 1989 to 33 percent in 1999 and further down to 26 percent in 2007. At the same time, due to a higher index of life expectancy, the proportion of population aged 65 years old and over in the country increased from 5 percent in 1989 to 6 percent in 1999 to 7 percent in 2007 (GSO, 2008).

The age structure data of the surveyed households in all regions reflect this tendency in Viet Nam's population change. However, data from the regions also show that the poorest regions (Northwest, North Central Coast, and Central Highlands) have higher proportions of young population (0-14 years old), and accordingly, a lower proportion of people in the labor force age and older population compared to other regions. The reason is that in these poor regions, family planning has weak effects on fertility behavior and having many children is still a popular phenomenon, especially among some ethnic minority communities. The average household size also reflects the differences in population change. While the average household size in the country is 4.6, the sizes of households vary in regions, with the three poorest regions having larger household size.

Income

On the average, income per household in the whole country is 18.4 mill. VND. The highest level is recorded in the Southeast Region (27.2 mill. VND), then in the Mekong River Delta (25.3), Central Highlands (20.8), South Central Coast (19.1), Northeast Mountains (15.6), the Red River Delta (14.1), Northwest Mountains (13.5) and finally, the North Central Coast at the bottom rank (10.8).

The average income per capita in a month is 351 thousands VND. The regional difference is quite big. Taking the lowest income of the North Central Coast as 1, indices of the other regions are as follows: Northwest 1.29, Red River Delta 1.57, Northeast 1.65, South Central Coast 2.04, Central Highlands 2.10, Mekong River Delta 2.49, and Southeast 2.87.

Dwelling

Most households in Viet Nam own a house. In the rural areas, almost all households have their piece of residential land and house. In the urban areas, 90 percent of households own a housing unit (house, apartment or room), and only 10 percent rent.

There is still a significant number of households with temporary dwellings, especially in the poor regions. The proportion of households which own temporary dwelling units is 17.7 percent in the whole country. The regions having high percentage of this dwelling type are Mekong River Delta (29.3%), North Central Coast (24.4%), Southeast (24.2%), Northwest (23.6%) and Central Highlands (19.2%). Only the Red River Delta has a low percentage of this dwelling type (2.8%). Regions in the North have lower proportion of temporary dwelling than regions in the South because the climate in the North is cold during winter.

Ownership of Durable Consumer Goods

Bicycle and motorcycle are the most popular individual means of transport in Viet Nam. At least 47.8 percent of rural households possess at least one motorcycle. On the average, there is at least one motorcycle per two households and 12 motorcycles for every 100 people. The poorest region (North Central Coast) has the lowest number of per capita motorcycles.

Regarding equipment for accessing information, television sets are popularly used by people. At least 76.6 percent of households possess a TV set, of which 62.9 percent have a colored TV set and 13.7 percent have a black-and-white TV set. This type of TV set is used mostly by the poor or where there is no grid electricity yet.

The difference between regions in ownership of TV sets is significant. The poorest regions have lower percentages, namely, Northwest (59.2%), North Central Coast (65.0%), Northeast (72.1%) and Central Highlands (72.8%) while the proportions in other regions are higher: Red River Delta (80.7%), South Central Coast (81.7%), Mekong River Delta (84%) and Southeast (87.1%).

Education

The rate of literacy calculated for the population aged 6 years old and over is 94.5 percent in the whole country. Accordingly, illiteracy rate is 5.5 percent. The mountainous and poor regions have higher illiteracy rates, namely: Northeast (6.9%), Central Highlands (9.1%), and Northwest (14.9%).

The percentage of people who have primary education (from grade 1 to grade 5) is 31.5 percent; lower secondary (6-9 grades), 41.6 percent; upper secondary (10-12 grades), 18.8 percent; and college and university, 1.8 percent.

Poverty is an important reason why children do not go to school. At least 46.3 percent of children who have dropped out attribute this to reasons such as lack of labor in the family, and very high cost of schooling, among others. Invalidity, and serious sickness caused 14.5 percent of children to drop out of school. On the other hand, 27.6 percent of the out-of-school children dropped out because they obtained bad grades. Meanwhile, the lack of awareness/appreciation of parents and children on the benefits of education was the reason for 9.5 percent of the cases.

Health

There are only 41.5 percent of households in the whole survey sample that have access to sanitary toilets. This figure is similar to the result of the health survey done by the Ministry of Health in 2003. Among regions, the Red River Delta has the highest percentage of access (64.7%), followed by South Central Coast (54.9%), Southeast (49.1%), Northeast (46.3%) and North Central Coast (45.5%). The Northwest has only 22.9 percent access, Central Highlands, 23.3 percent, and Mekong River Delta, 20.0 percent. These figures are too low compared with the target of the National Strategy of Safe Water Supply and Sanitary Environment, wherein it is targeted that 70 percent of households should have access to sanitary toilets by 2010.

CBMS Composite Poverty Index

Poverty rates measured by value indicators such as income and expenditures of households and individuals give a general picture of poverty but do not reflect concrete aspects of living in which people are wanting.

Poverty is, first and foremost, a state of deprivation of human basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, education, healthcare and, information, among others. Indicators of basic needs are, however, used separately and thus cannot define overall poverty rate nor compare poverty across different regions and across time.

In the CBMS which was piloted by the Viet Nam research project, poverty is comprehensively reflected by a set of indicators that include both value indicators (income) and the basic household needs (e.g., food intake, clothing, housing, transportation, education, healthcare). A study has also been done for identifying a composite poverty indicator for Viet Nam (L.M. Asselin, 2002; L.M. Asselin & Vu Tuan Anh, 2005). In this study, eight simple non-monetary, categorical indicators of human and physical assets developed in the CBMS research in Viet Nam, have been analyzed and aggregated in a composite indicator using the factorial technique. These indicators reflect the following groups of basic needs of the population: (1) income generation (underemployment); (2) health (chronic sickness, access to safe drinking water, sanitary toilet facilities); (3) education (adult illiteracy, out-of-school youth); (4) housing (types of dwelling); and (5) access to information (ownership of television, radio receiver, etc.).

The comparison of this multidimensional approach to poverty measurement with the money-metric approach based on total household expenditures shows that the CBMS-type indicators present a strong potential for multidimensional poverty analysis, being complementary to the more standard money-metric analysis. In addition, due to its low cost, this composite indicator approach should be looked at to meet the objective of regularly producing largely disaggregated poverty profiles for a more efficient monitoring of poverty reduction policies and programs.

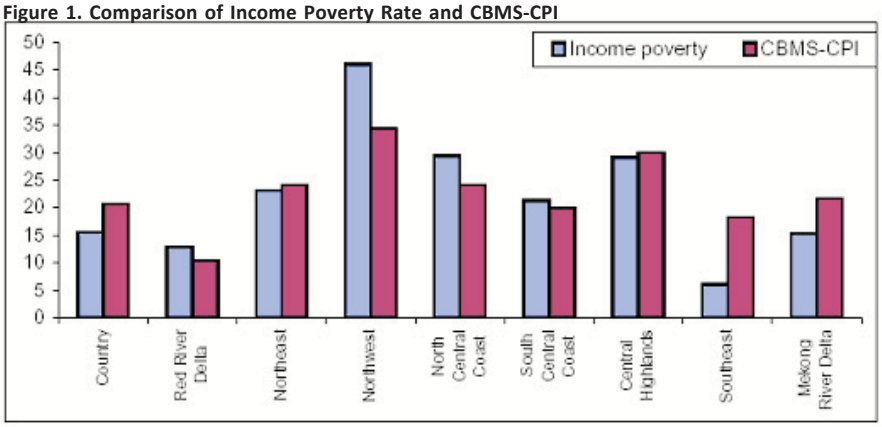
The CBMS Composite Poverty Index (CBMS-CPI) uses a set of CBMS indicators, namely:

Table 3. CBMS-CPI of Regions

	Whole country	Red River Delta	North east	North west	North Central Coast	South Central Coast	Central Highlands	South east	Mekong River Delta
P_1: Income poverty *	15.5	12.9	23.2	46.1	29.4	21.3	29.2	6.1	15.3
P_2: Dwelling poverty	18.4	3.3	14.3	23.6	24.7	13.1	21.5	24.5	30.0
P_3: Information poverty	16.4	11.1	20.5	29.0	26.0	13.7	21.5	7.7	10.6
P_4: Communication poverty	13.8	12.1	16.8	15.5	8.0	10.7	11.8	4.3	19.5
P_5: Knowledge poverty	5.5	2.7	5.2	11.65	3.7	4.6	9.3	5.0	5.9
Illiteracy	5.5	3.0	6.9	14.9	3.8	3.0	9.1	2.5	4.4
Child underschooling	5.5	2.3	3.4	8.2	3.6	6.2	9.5	7.5	7.3
P_6: Health poverty	54.4	20.0	65.2	80.3	53.0	56.4	87.1	62.2	48.6
No safe water	50.3	4.6	76.6	83.4	51.5	67.6	97.5	73.5	17.2
No sanitary toilet	58.5	35.3	53.8	77.1	54.5	45.1	76.6	50.9	80.0
CBMS-CPI	**20.7**	**10.4**	**24.2**	**34.4**	**24.1**	**20.0**	**30.1**	**18.3**	**21.7**

Note: * Data of poverty rates are taken from GSO national household survey in 2006 [GSO (2008)]. Poverty rates have been measured by monthly average income per capita according to the latest standard of the Government for the period 2006-2010 with different standards as follows: 260 thous. VND for urban; 200 thous. VND for rural (excluding effect of price index).

Figure 1. Comparison of Income Poverty Rate and CBMS-CPI



1. *Food poverty*: percentage of households which have income below the food poverty line (P_1).
2. *Dwelling poverty*: percentage of households which have temporary dwelling and do not have owned dwelling (P_2).
3. *Information poverty*: Percentage of households which do not possess any audio-video equipments (P_3).
4. *Transportation poverty*: Percentage of households which do not possess any motorcycle and bicycle (P_4).
5. *Knowledge poverty*: Simple average of adult illiteracy rate and child under-schooling rate ($P_5 = ½[P_{51} + P_{52}]$)
6. *Health poverty*: Simple average of percentage of households which do not have access to safe drinking water and do not possess a sanitary toilet ($P_6 = ½[P_{61} + P_{62}]$). In a better situation, where data are available, other indicators may be added, which reflect fundamental situation of health poverty like the percentage of child malnutrition.

The CBMS-CPI is a simple average of the above six poverty indicators as illustrated below:

$$\text{CBMS-CPI} = 1/6(P_1+P_2+P_3+P_4+P_5+P_6)$$

The CBMS-CPI has the following advantages:

- It contains the major aspects of human poverty; thus it is a multidimensional poverty indicator. One can use it for measuring and comparing poverty across time and regions.
- The major aspects of poverty reflect most targets of the national poverty reduction program. Therefore, one can use the CBMS-CPI for monitoring poverty reduction activities and programs.
- The computing method is very simple and easily understood, thus,

CBMS Network bares GFC sentinel sites

Selected communities in 15 countries spread out in 4 continents, as listed and shown in Table 1 and Map 1, respectively, will serve as poverty observatories or sentinels for the CBMS Network initiative on monitoring the impact of the global financial and economic crisis (GFC) on poverty.

The initiative aims to assess the impact of the crisis on poverty in developing countries in Asia, Africa, South America and Oceania. In particular, the impact at the household and community levels will be analyzed with the use of data on the different dimensions of poverty obtained from community-based monitoring systems being implemented in several countries. For instance, household welfare will be affected by a decrease in migrant remittances and other private transfers from abroad. It is also widely recognized that the poorest and the most vulnerable groups in society are expected to be the hardest hit by the crisis. Although households could adopt some coping mechanisms in the shortrun, some of their actions may have negative long-term consequences, especially on women and children.

CBMS researchers from these countries earlier attended a technical workshop held last February 2009 in the Philippines which produced, among others, the following outputs: 1) list of indicators that would need to be monitored to track the impacts; 2) list of questions that need to be added in the survey questionnaire to capture the required information; and 3) determination of the timing and frequency of data collection in order to provide timely data to policymakers.

Preliminary results are expected to come out before the end of the year and will be disseminated through the PEP-CBMS Network's website and newsletter. In addition, the results will be presented to concerned policymakers and other stakeholders in a policy conference.

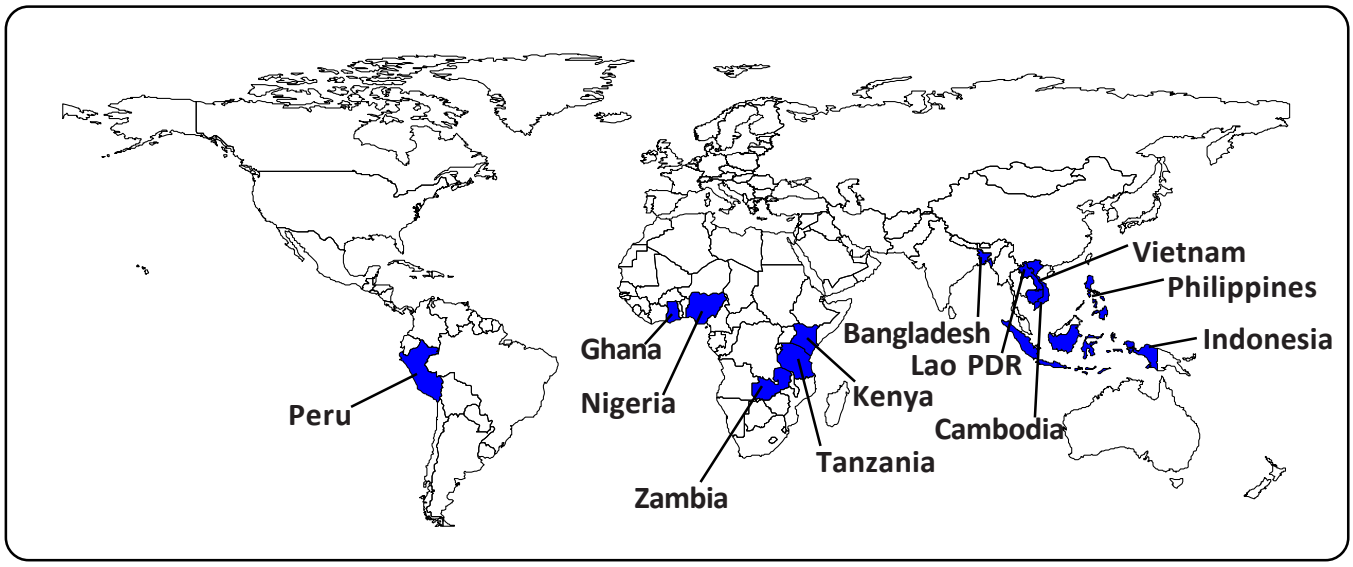
The project is being funded by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) through the PEP-CBMS Network. Meanwhile, the participation of one country from Oceania was made possible through the support of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).

Table 1. GFC Sentinel Sites

Country	Sentinel Sites
Benin	13th District of Cotonou and commune of So-Ava
Burkina Faso	2 urban sectors in the commune of Yako, 2 urban sectors in the commune of Diébougou and Kossodo in the commune of Ouagadougou
Ghana	Dangme West District (Dodowa, Prampram, Ningo and Afienya) and Ashiedu Keteke sub metropolitan (Jamestown)
Kenya	Bura Division (Walesorhea, and Hirimani), Garsen Division (Tarassa and Golbanti), Galole Division (Laini and Makere)
Lao PDR	19 villages in Sepone and Toomlane Districts
Nigeria	Edem community, Nsukka Local Government Area
Peru	2 villages in Villa El Salvador
Philippines	14 villages all over the country
Tanzania	17 wards and 1 village in Dodoma municipality, Lushoto urban ward in Lushoto district and Sultani ward in Morogoro municipality
Zambia	Chief Mungule area (2 sections) and Kabwata area in Lusaka province, and Mikonfwa area (6 sections) in Luanshya, Copperbelt province

* Research partners from Indonesia, Viet Nam, Cambodia, Bangladesh and one country from Oceania have yet to submit information on their proposed sentinel sites

Figure 1. Map showing location of different GFC sentinel sites



CBMS gains headway in Pekalongan

The CBMS Team in the City of Pekalongan, Indonesia has successfully completed the computerized encoding of data collected from two *kecamatans* in South and East Pekalongan last February 2009. This developed following a series of consultation workshops and trainings which culminated in the data collection in the said *kecamatans*. This activity was completed in October 2008, yielding data from 29,342 families.

The SMERU Research Institute attributed the success to the formation of an Executive Team on CBMS Initiative by the Head of the Regional Planning of the City of Pekalongan by virtue of Decree No. 050/1686 Year 2008. The team, which is to support CBMS in Pekalongan, consists of 4 smaller teams, namely:

1. Steering Committee Team – consists of eight members, mostly senior ranking officials in their respective agencies. Its role is to give directions and/or instructions to Technical and Secretariat Teams to ensure the smooth implementation of CBMS Activities.
2. Technical Team – consists of 24 members, most of whom are from the Regional Development and Planning Agency (Bappeda) and other government agencies of the City of Pekalongan, PATTIRO Pekalongan, and academicians from the University of Pekalongan. The role of this team is to prepare all technical aspects of the project, including: (a) compilation and synthesis of survey instruments, (b) conduct of socialization and consultation workshops for CBMS activities, (c) recruitment of CBMS enumerators and village coordinators, (d) conduct of training for CBMS enumerators, (e) supervision of household enumeration, (f) assistance in data processing, (g) analysis, and (h) dissemination of results.
3. Counterpart Team – consists of SMERU researchers. This team plays the role of mentor and gives advice on technical aspects in the CBMS implementation.
4. Secretariat Team – consists of 5 members, all of whom are Bappeda officials. This team provides support to the Steering Committee and takes care of the logistics and administrative matters related to the CBMS.

Mayor Basyir Ahmad, MD of Pekalongan, Indonesia

The SMERU Research Institute reported that the activities lined up under Phase 1 of the project will be fast-tracked, including data analysis, reporting and dissemination. Meanwhile, for the second phase, data will be collected from two sub-districts: West and North Pekalongan. It is expected that around 28,000 families will be covered under this second census.

Erratum

We would like to correct an error contained in the lead story in our March 2009 issue titled "Impact of Changes in the Prices of Rice and Fuel on Poverty in the Philippines".

The second bullet under the section on Results on page 2 should have read as follows:

"Based on the NBRs, about 85.5 percent of households in the Philippines would be negatively affected while only 12.1 percent would benefit from the increase in rice prices."

instead of as:

"Based on the NBRS, about 85.5 percent of households would tend to improve their welfare while 12.1 percent would experience welfare loss."

This error has already been corrected in the online version of the CBMS Network Updates (available on www.pep-net.org).

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everybody at the grassroots levels can use it.

- Except for income, all the rest of the indicators may easily be collected. However, communities have to collect and regularly monitor income data to measure poverty line. This poverty line is approximately at the level of food poverty. Thus, this data may be used for computing CBMS-CPI.

To test the CBMS-CPI, CBMS data were used for computing and comparing the CBMS-CPI of the different regions. (Table 3 and Figure 1).

Conclusions

1. Regional disparity in poverty is one of the key challenges which Viet Nam faces in its current development path. Despite its

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CBMS-Philippines to pilot test indicators of missing dimensions of poverty

The CBMS-Philippines Team is set to embark on an 18-month collaboration with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) that will test what is regarded as the "missing dimensions" of poverty data.

The project, which will start in June this year, will test the OPHI-identified five missing dimensions of poverty in the Philippines in a community-based setting. These are:

1. Work (including informal employment, and the quality and safety of employment)
2. Empowerment (the ability to advance goals and one's values as well as has reason to value, as opposed to acting on the basis of oppression or coercion)
3. Physical Security (safety from violence, including lethal and non-lethal violence)
4. Ability to go about without shame (humiliation and discrimination undermine social cohesion and form a barrier to the use of social services)
5. Psychological and subjective well-being (happiness, meaning and other states).

The project will be divided into two phases. Under Phase 1, the CBMS-Philippines Team, in coordination with the OPHI Team, will conduct a pretest and gather data on all five OPHI modules in one community. This activity will confirm which questions work well and test the comprehensibility of the modules for CBMS enumerators. Based on the results, the CBMS Team will make suggestions for modifications/improvements of each module to suit the local context and CBMS objectives.

The revised modules will then be translated into the local dialect and will be administered in two villages, one urban and one rural. Each village will have about 200-300 households, totaling about 500 households or about 2,500 persons.

Meanwhile, under Phase 2 of the project, the CBMS Team will introduce these five dimensions of poverty to local community-based governments and actors, and see which are of interest and of use. It will also undertake a second round of data collection which will make use of the revised questionnaires adapted to local context and will take into account the results of the pretest. This will be done in one city or municipality to test the usefulness for local planning and program implementation, and will cover about 1,000 households or about 5,000 persons.

Based on the results, the CBMS Team will then introduce selected questions into the core CBMS modules in the Philippines and in other partner countries. This will take place outside the timeline of this project and will be accomplished on an ongoing basis through CBMS' normal channels.

The OPHI is a research center based at the Oxford Department of International Development, Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford, England. It develops concrete survey and methodological tools to deduce the interconnected kinds of poverty and deprivation. One of OPHI's research themes is to develop more and better international data for poverty reduction. More information about the OPHI can be found at: http://www.ophi.org.uk/index.php

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remarkable achievements in economic growth and poverty reduction, regional disparity and social inequality may be strong factors that would hamper the socioeconomic progress in the future. Viet Nam has to pay more attention on policies of inequality reduction toward regions, social groups and ethnic groups.

2. CBMS can be used as an appropriate tool for poverty monitoring, especially by local authorities, social organizations and communities. Using CBMS data, one can analyze different aspects of human life, including poverty, and do comparisons across regions and times.
3. A CBMS Composite Poverty Index reflects the approach of multidimensional poverty. It can be used by local communities in analyzing the different aspects of poverty as well as in comparing multidimensional poverty across regions, localities and times. A Composite Poverty Index constructed by a simple method and based on community-based survey data is feasible and can be implemented widely in poverty monitoring and evaluation of poverty reduction activities.

CBMS methodology takes root in Peru

Laura Soria-Torres, Head of Urban Program, DESCO.

For the first time, the Community-Based Monitoring Sysytem (CBMS) has been transplanted to South American soil after gaining significant headways in Asia and Africa. This developed after the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) agreed to provide support to Centro de Estudios y Promoción del Desarrollo (DESCO) for the implementation of the CBMS-Gender-Responsive Budgeting (GRB) project.

The CBMS-GRB project aims to develop and pilot test an enhanced CBMS that takes into account gender issues, facilitates gender-responsive budgeting at the local level, and incorporates a planning and budgeting module.

This endeavor provides the CBMS the opportunity to go beyond data disaggregation and gives ample attention to gender considerations in data analysis, validation and, ultimately, utilization of CBMS data for planning and budgeting apart from their other uses for local governance.

The CBMS-GRB methodology had earlier been successfully tested in the Philippines, Morocco and Senegal.

The 2-year collaboration is also expected to promote an evidence-based and participatory approach to local development planning and budgeting and to monitoring local progress toward the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly in fostering gender equality and eradicating extreme poverty.

The project is being piloted in the municipality of Villa El Salvador, an urban, largely residential district in the outskirts of Lima, Peru.

One of the expected outputs of the project is the utilization of CBMS data at the local level as a basis for (i) local development planning and design of development policies and programs, (ii) preparation of local budgets, (iii) identification of needs/ problems and appropriate responses, particularly those that aim to narrow or close prevailing gender disparities, and (iv) project/program impact monitoring and evaluation.

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The ***Updates*** may be downloaded free from the Project's website: http://www.pep-net.org.

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