

# GLOBAL STOCKTAKING OF ONGOING IMPACT ASSESSMENTS OF MICROINSURANCE

The objective of the Microinsurance Network's Impact Working Group is to enhance knowledge about the impact of microinsurance by increasing the quality and quantity of evidence available and assist in its dissemination. "Impact" is defined as observable changes or effects on conditions or behaviours resulting directly or indirectly, positively or negatively, from a specific microinsurance programme.

## INTRODUCTION TO IMPACT

At present, very little is known about the impact of microinsurance on the client, household, community, enterprise or institution. Funding agencies may request programme evaluation; however they rarely require schemes to assess their impact. Impact research needs to build on high-quality research methodologies.

This information could then be used to:

- Produce evidence on the most effective programmes;
- Learn from past mistakes and avoid ineffective designs;
- Create more effective programmes;
- Include impact assessment in product design;
- Assist donor agencies in funding effective, evidence-based programmes.

## THE GLOBAL STOCKTAKING PROJECT

The Impact Working Group launched a global "stocktaking" of ongoing impact assessments of microinsurance in 2009. This project tracks ongoing evaluations to:

- Remain current with the universe of impact research in the microinsurance sector and highlight regional, methodological and scheme-related trends;
- Facilitate exchange and create networking effects amongst impact practitioners; and
- Identify evaluation experts for donors, practitioners, and others looking to conduct rigorous impact studies on microinsurance.

## THE WEBSITE

The core of the global stocktaking is a website which features a map and a fully searchable database of all identified impact assessments of microinsurance. As of January 2010, the site featured 22 projects from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We are continually adding studies as we identify them.

All results are based on a short survey that the Impact Working Group circulated to the research and microinsurance communities on ongoing impact assessments. The survey included questions on evaluation design, the product(s) under evaluation, researchers, funders, and timeframe.

Where are impact assessments of microinsurance taking place?



## TRENDS AMONG IDENTIFIED PROJECTS

A brief analysis of the identified projects reveals that:

- Most of the products under evaluation are either standalone micro health insurance products or composite products which include health insurance. Only seven evaluations assess non-health products, such as agricultural or life insurance.
- Over half of the evaluations take place in Asia, with over a third of all evaluations taking place in India or Bangladesh. Only two evaluations take place in South America.
- The identified projects strongly favour an experimental methodology, also known as a “randomised control trial,” to assess impact.

The current identified trends present opportunities for the impact research community. Researchers may wish to consider:

- Evaluating a wider range of microinsurance programmes, such as property, agricultural, and life insurance;
- Looking at more programmes in Asia and South America;
- Using quasi-experimental or non-experimental methodologies in addition to experimental methodologies.

## NEXT STEPS

The Stocktaking website will be continually updated, with ongoing impact studies added to the map and database as they are identified. Completed impact assessments will also be added to present more opportunities for research in impact of microinsurance.

## SUPPORT

This initiative is a work in progress and needs additional funding and contributions to continue its assessment of the global impact of microinsurance. If you are interested in supporting this initiative, please contact the Microinsurance Network at [info@microinsurancenet.org](mailto:info@microinsurancenet.org)

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Visit the Global Stocktaking website at:

[www.microinsurancenet.org/workinggroup/impact/stocktaking.php](http://www.microinsurancenet.org/workinggroup/impact/stocktaking.php)

Visit the Impact Working Group website for updates of activities and other ongoing projects:

[www.microinsurancenet.org/workinggroup/Impact/4.php](http://www.microinsurancenet.org/workinggroup/Impact/4.php)

For more information, please visit our website or contact the Microinsurance Network secretariat.