

# 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 to assist in its dissemination. "Impact" is defined as changes or effects on conditions or behaviours resulting directly or indirectly, positively or negatively, from microinsurance programmes.

## INTRODUCTION TO IMPACT

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

Impact information can be used to:

- Document the most effective programmes;
- Learn from past mistakes and avoid ineffective designs;
- Create more effective schemes;
- 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 microinsurance impact assessments in 2009. This project tracks ongoing evaluations to:

- Remain current with the universe of microinsurance impact research and highlight regional, methodological and scheme-related trends;
- Facilitate exchange and networking among impact practitioners;
- 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 fully searchable database of all identified impact assessments of microinsurance. As of June 2011, the site featured 24 ongoing and four completed projects from Asia, Africa, and Latin America. We continually add studies as we identify them.

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

Where are impact assessments of microinsurance taking place?



View in a larger map.  
red=life, yellow=agriculture, blue=health, pink=composite

## TRENDS AMONG IDENTIFIED PROJECTS

A brief analysis of the identified ongoing projects reveals that:

- Most of the products under evaluation are either standalone micro-health insurance products or composite products, which include health insurance. Only nine evaluations assess non-health products, such as agricultural or life insurance.
- Ten of the evaluations are occurring in sub-Saharan Africa, and nine on the Indian subcontinent. Two assessments are being implemented in Latin America and none are occurring in the Middle East, Eastern Europe or Oceania.
- The identified projects strongly favour an experimental methodology, also known as a “randomised control trial,” to assess impact.

The currently-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 underrepresented regions like the remainder of Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and Oceania.

## 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 this field.

## SUPPORT

This initiative is a work in progress and needs additional funding 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@microinsurancenetWORK.org](mailto:info@microinsurancenetWORK.org)

## FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Visit the Global Stocktaking website at:

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

Visit the Impact Working Group’s website for updates and information about ongoing projects:

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

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