LEARNINGBRIEF

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Targeting the Ultra-Poor: Lessons from Fonkoze's Graduation Programme in Haiti

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The ultra-poor are defined as the poorest sub-group of those in extreme poverty. They make up over half of the estimated 797 million people living in extreme poverty globally (RESULTS Educational Fund and Uplift 2017) and have particularly complex vulnerabilities and needs. The 'graduation' programme approach has been developed to address these needs and has been proven to successfully empower the ultra-poor to lift themselves out of poverty and into sustainable livelihoods. Fonkoze, a Haitian non-governmental organisation (NGO), has graduated over 6,000 Haitian women out of ultra-poverty through its Chemen Lavi Miyò (CLM) programme. This Learning Brief reports key findings from a study that compared the poverty status of participants in Fonkoze's CLM programme with households identified by the national poverty indicator. It first reports the broader context on the graduation approach – globally and in Haiti – presenting an overview of both the national social protection programme and Fonkoze's CLM programme. This is followed by an account of research to compare the CLM target group with the targeting of the national programme, testifying to the ultra-poverty of CLM households. The CLM ultra-poor are a clear sub-category of those identified as 'most' deprived by the national poverty indicator and the Brief concludes by arguing that standalone survey-based approaches are likely to be wholly inadequate as a targeting tool for graduation programmes in Haiti.

Extreme poverty: the global context

The adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has seen a strong global commitment to tackling poverty (SDG 1). Global estimates[1] suggest that over three-quarters of a billion people, or 10 per cent of the global population (2015), are in extreme poverty and living under the World Bank's US$1.90 International Poverty Line. The major route to the achievement of SDG 1 will be through inclusive economic growth.

But not all households will benefit from economic growth and so the targets for SDG 1 include the establishment of national social protection systems. Social protection systems, sometimes called social security, will be a key element in realising the economic rights of extreme poor households but their expense means the scale of public investment in them is controversial. In rich countries, the design of these systems invariably includes some elements aimed at getting people into work, which helps garner political support for the associated expenditure. Similar approaches are now being adopted in developing countries and the graduation model is an important example. The graduation model uses careful targeting methods to identify a sub-category of the extreme poor referred to as the ultra-poor (Box 1).

BOX 1

What's the difference between extreme poverty and ultra-poverty?[2]

The World Bank uses a monetary measure to define extreme poverty, setting it as those who consume less than the equivalent of US$1.90 per day, based on a formula for purchasing power parity across nations.

We use the Multidimensional Poverty Index methodology (MPI) developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) because it measures poverty across the many areas that affect those living in ultra-poverty. These areas include years of schooling, child school attendance, child mortality, nutrition, electricity, improved sanitation, improved drinking water, flooring, cooking fuel, and assets ownership. A deprivation cutoff is set for each of these indicators and weights are assigned to each.

A household deprived in all 10 indicators would receive a score of 100 percent. The Index considers a household "poor" if they have a deprivation score of 33 percent or higher. (See http://www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensionalpoverty-index/ for an explanation of the MPI methodology,and our Methodological Notes for more details on its adaptation to define and measure ultra-poverty.)

We define ultra-poverty as having an MPI score of 60 per cent or higher.

Source: RESULTS Educational Fund and Uplift (2017: 11); reproduced with permission

What is the graduation model?

Graduation is defined by its five core characteristics: it **targets the household**, often those headed by women; it is **holistic** in that it combines social assistance, health care, livelihood training, and financial services; it provides the family **an initial economic 'push'** through a single, significant investment; it includes forms of **coaching or mentoring** to overcome economic and social barriers; and it is **time bound.**

These interventions provide a pathway for graduating the household into market-based sustainable livelihoods while recognising that they may often want continuing access to other services such as microfinance or, where available, other provision from the national social protection system.

The common components[3] of a graduation approach include:

1. **Productive asset transfer**: One-time transfer of productive assets, such as cows, goats, or supplies for petty trade.
2. **Technical skills training:** Training to manage the productive asset.
3. **Consumption support:** Regular cash or food support for a few months to a year.
4. **Savings:** Access to a savings account, or encouragement to save.
5. **Home visits:** Frequent home visits by implementing partner staff to provide accountability, coaching, and encouragement.
6. **Health:** Health education, health care access, and/or life skills training.

Targeting the ultra-poor

The Bangladesh NGO BRAC first developed the graduation approach in 2002. Since then BRAC has graduated 650,000 households (2016) out of extreme poverty through its Targeting the Ultra-Poor (TUP) programme. BRAC adopted the model because of a realisation that microfinance and other livelihood programmes they were operating did not benefit the ultra-poor. These largely single instrument market-oriented activities did not address the multiple dimensions of poverty of the ultra-poor households and the TUP programme was carefully designed, using the components listed above, as a response. BRAC used the term 'ultra-poor' to clearly signal that the programme was designed for a very specific group of the most needy amongst the extreme poor.

Three design aspects are important.

- The programme uses rigorous targeting methods to ensure that **only the most needy are included**. This is important given the relatively high costs of packaging multiple interventions together.
- The programme is designed for that sub-section of the ultra-poor who are **able to sustain a livelihood** through self-employment or small enterprise. For the TUP this is further specified to target ultra-poor women. There are other groups, such as some older people, who lack the human resources to manage a small enterprise and for whom other forms of social assistance are needed.
- The programme is **time bound**. The TUP runs for 24 months and provides a sequence of activities designed to assist households within that period to establish sustainable livelihoods at higher levels of wellbeing and to provide economic resilience to withstand shocks. It is, however, important to recognise that achieving this target was not in any way meant to signal exclusion of these households from other forms of support, such as pensions or social services, as and when they were available through national social protection systems.

Rigorous evidence has established the success of the TUP programme (Bandiera *et al.* 2013) and 11 pilot replicates of the programme were undertaken through a group of partners led by the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP) and the Ford Foundation to provide external validation of the model. Evidence on six of these included in a study (Banerjee *et al.* 2015) using randomised control trials, established that sustainable improvements in livelihoods were maintained 36 months after asset transfer and that there was statistically significant improvement compared to the control groups in ten key dimensions of wellbeing: consumption; food security; productive and household assets; financial inclusion; time use; income and revenues; physical health; mental health; political involvement; and women's empowerment.

Support for the graduation model

There is now growing support for the inclusion of graduation programmes in national social protection systems and several stakeholders are supporting financing, advocacy and technical assistance activities, including BRAC, RESULTS Educational Fund, Uplift and the Graduation Learning Platform, previously with CGAP and now the Partnership for Economic Inclusion led by the Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice of the World Bank. Some national governments have adopted the graduation approach, appreciating that it has the promise to reach a particularly needy group and reduce the long-term

costs of social protection. In 2018, the World Bank's Partnership for Economic Inclusion in a 'State of the Sector' report showed that there were 99 graduation programmes, of some type, in 43 countries serving 3.1 million households; the report goes on to show that there are currently many initiatives to increase that number (Partnership for Economic Inclusion 2018).

Challenges in adopting the graduation model

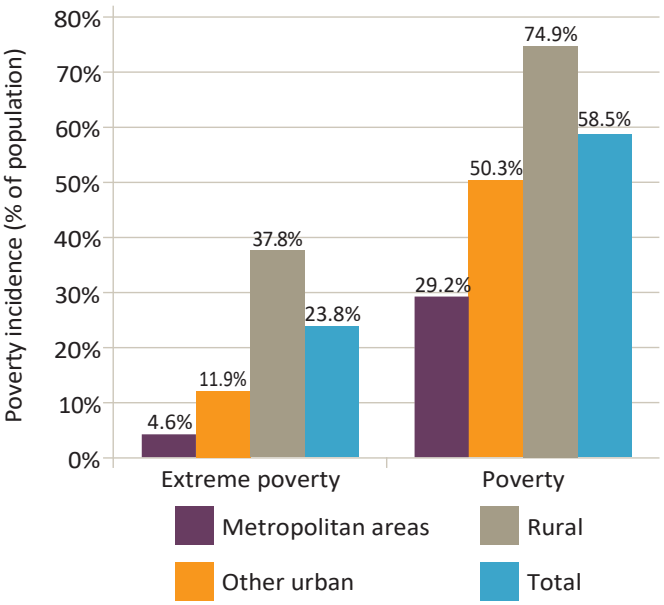
However, relative to need and opportunity, the effort is still modest and the challenge is to scale up current programmes and deepen this commitment across the global South. The affordability of, and the political will to commit significant expenditure on, social protection in poor countries is an obvious overarching constraint. But, within any given commitment to the development of national social protection policies, a number of key challenges to the adoption of the graduation model can be identified.

- Most official national poverty surveys do not allow **identification of the ultra-poor as a policy target**. Certainly, it is quite possible to play around with poverty lines and by lowering them to identify poorer and poorer sub-groups, but these estimates are based on income or consumption. They are not refined enough to match the targeting criteria useful for the graduation approach. The same limitation applies to the Multidimensional Poverty Index developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative[4] and adopted by the United Nations Development Programme. Social register approaches, such as advocated by the World Bank, might be a good start for a comprehensive system but need to be accompanied by further targeting instruments to be useful for graduation approaches. These are not easy to specify.
- Most successful examples of the original graduation approach have come from NGOs with the implication that their **successful scaling up will come through partnership between government and non-government organisations**. This is not always a familiar or indeed welcome approach with the attendant issues it brings, including of accountability.
- The spread of graduation has come with a lot of **experimentation on design**. This is very much needed and welcome as it offers the means to fine-tune the approach in different contexts. However, sometimes experimentation is driven by an overwhelming concern with reducing costs rather than addressing needs.
- With multiple development stakeholders interested in the graduation approach the **target groups have expanded** – for example, refugees, youth, and people with disabilities. In many ways this is a very positive development and entirely consistent with the overall SDG commitment of 'leaving no one behind'. However, it does mean that it is more difficult to pin down in policy dialogue what exactly the graduation approach is.

Extreme poverty in Haiti

A 2015 World Bank report (Singh and Barton-Dock 2015) uses 2012 poverty data that show the number of extreme poor in rural areas of Haiti remains nearly unchanged since the last survey in 2001 at over 37 per cent (Figure 1). As yet, there is no separate definition for the ultra-poor in Haiti. The World Bank analysis recognises that even a significant improvement in economic growth will not effectively target the extreme poor and, without special measures, Haiti will not meet the World Bank extreme poverty target of less than 3 per cent by 2030. The need for expansion of programmes targeting extreme poverty in Haiti therefore has authoritative support. However, one of the basic challenges in Haiti is to garner support for a policy focus on extreme poverty.

Figure 1 Incidence of poverty and geographic distribution of poor by urban and rural areas



Source: World Bank and ONPES (2014: 3), CC BY 3.0

Obstacles to including the extreme poor

As part of the overall research, Fonkoze held a workshop in June 2016 during which government representatives and development partners reviewed obstacles to the effective inclusion of the extreme poor. A number of critical obstacles were identified including:

- Extreme poverty not seen as solvable – extreme poor 'criminalised'
- Lack of interest/awareness – statistical blindness
- Trickle-down model – focus on macro economy
- High levels of poverty for everybody, so why single out extreme poor?
- Lack of openness and trust – negative experiences with NGOs.

These findings underline the severity of challenges in addressing extreme poverty, and are reminiscent of debates in Victorian England and the notion of the deserving poor. This implies that in order to effectively champion expensive programming for the extreme poor, decision makers must first be convinced that such specific programmes are required.

Social protection programming in Haiti

Successive governments in Haiti have developed elements of strategies to address poverty through social protection measures but these have been limited and not properly implemented or financially sustained (Lamaute-Brisson 2015). However, the Government of Haiti, with support from international development partners, is again in the process of developing its social protection strategy. A 2014 report from the World Bank has reviewed efforts to date and identified a set of future priorities for social protection in Haiti (World Bank and ONPES 2014). Notably Fonkoze's CLM programme, though not referred to as a graduation programme, is identified as a 'promising pilot initiative' and a candidate for scaling up (Box 2).

BOX 2

Social protection priorities in Haiti

In the face of large and entrenched poverty rates and numerous vulnerabilities, few of the poor have access to social protection or formal safety nets…

Priority 1: Build the foundational blocks of a social protection and promotion system, starting with a targeting system…

Priority 2: Increase the coverage of social safety nets, especially among households with children, while insuring sound targeting and improving the quality of relevant programmes, particularly those able to enhance human capital promotion…

Priority 3: Pursue articulation efforts and watch for agile implementation on the ground…

In rural areas, the government and interested donors could consider scaling up promising pilot initiatives with good track records such as the **Fonkoze multipronged initiative Chemen Lavi Miyo** (pathway to a better life) for extremely poor women in the Plateau Central…

Priority 4: Address the issue of predictable, efficient, and sustainable financing for social protection.

Source: World Bank and ONPES (2014: 170–72), CC BY 3.0

Currently, the main national social protection programme in Haiti, *Kore Lavi*, is a five-year US$79,996,200 USAID-financed plan and is intended to be the basis for building a nutritional safety net that targets pregnant women, malnourished children, and the poorest households. The *Kore Lavi* programme is based in the Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor and implemented in partnership with a consortium of CARE, Action contre la Faim and the World Food Programme. It seeks to establish a sustainable system of social protection for households in chronic food insecurity in Haiti and is implementing a safety net programme that improves access to locally produced foods among vulnerable households. The programme also focuses on maternal and child health and nutrition interventions for pregnant and lactating women and children under two years of age. This programme, with an initial duration of four years and extended by a further two years in 2017, has had a direct impact on more than 18,000 households through the provision of monthly social assistance via an electronic platform (food vouchers for the purchase of exclusively local products) and 205,000 people through interventions in maternal and child health and nutrition in 16 food-insecure communes, distributed in five departments.

The programme uses a measure of deprivation and vulnerability to identify participant households, using the same 2012 household survey data which provide the latest assessment of household poverty. Using these data, analysts developed a proxy means test which categorises households according to depth of poverty. This was done using a locally-specified form of the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) and is known as the Haitian Deprivation and Vulnerability Index (HDVI). It assesses poverty in seven domains (Figure 2).

Figure 2 Haitian Deprivation and Vulnerability Index

Source: CARE, Haiti; reproduced with permission

This *Kore Lavi* targeting instrument is important because a variant of it might well be the basis for the development of a social register, currently being proposed by the World Bank in Haiti as the data platform for the national social protection programme. It was through partnership with this programme that the research team undertook comparative assessment of Fonkoze's ultra-poverty programme.

Fonkoze's ultra-poverty programme

Programme overview

Fonkoze is one of the largest NGOs working in Haiti to provide financial and non-financial services to empower Haitians – primarily women – to lift their families out of poverty. Fonkoze's Chemen Lavi Miyò (CLM, translated as 'The Pathway to a Better Life') programme empowers Haiti's poorest women to graduate out of ultra-poverty, with hope and vision for their futures.

The CLM programme targets participant households extremely carefully through a four-stage process. A programme area within central Haiti is identified based on a programme rollout plan. The first stage of targeting within a new area is to conduct a social mapping exercise identifying all households; this is then followed with a participatory wealth ranking exercise to provide an initial identification of households in extreme poverty. Usually, five groups of households are identified through the exercise and the CLM team focus attention on the lower two groups as potential programme participants. For households in these lowest two groups of wealth, the Fonkoze Evaluation Card – a short household questionnaire – is then used to provide an assessment of poverty. Once completed the enumerator generates a poverty score based on prior assessments of the character of poverty.[5] The households are then visited again by senior CLM staff and, following a detailed assessment, a determination is made as to whether they are suitable for programme participation. The overall approach taken is explained in Simanowitz and Greeley (2017) and the key criteria for inclusion or exclusion are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 Current CLM inclusion and exclusion criteria

Inclusion	Exclusion
• A woman aged 15–65 who can work • A man or woman with disabilities who is in ultra-poverty • A woman with at least one child under 15 years who is dependent on her • A young woman living with her parents who has more than one child, with no support from the father(s) • A young mother living with her parents and with more than four children living with them • A woman who has only reached 10th grade or below in school • A woman whose husband cannot help the family • A woman with a husband who either has no trade or who does not earn money with his trade • A family without an expensive animal, such as a cow or a mule • A family whose livestock is worth less than 2,500 Haitian gourdes • A family that cannot send the children to school or whose children are sent to school by someone else • A family without irrigated land or with only *ka* (land unit) of mountain land • A woman with children who has no activity or is a day-labourer • A woman with dependents who has a small commerce worth less than 1,500 Haitian gourdes • A family receiving no support from any other institution • A family with a home in poor repair or with a home they received through a project	• A woman aged over 65 • A woman with no children as dependents • A young woman who has just one child and who lives with her parents • A young woman with only one child who made it beyond the 10th grade in school • A family with a man who earns a salary of more than 2,500 Haitian gourdes per month • A woman with a husband who has a profession that earns money • A family with large livestock • A family with more than one animal and total livestock holding over 2,500 Haitian gourdes • A family with irrigated land • A family with an inherited mountain plot larger than a *ka* (land unit) • A woman who earns more than 2,000 Haitian gourdes per month at a job • A woman with commerce worth more than 1,500 Haitian gourdes • A woman able to send more than half of her children to school

Source: Fonkoze, Haiti; reproduced with permission

Over the past ten years, Fonkoze has successfully 'graduated' more than 5,000 women and their families into sustainable livelihoods, with a 96 per cent success rate (Huda and Simanowitz 2010; Concern Worldwide 2014). Developed from a proven graduation model (early technical assistance was provided by staff from BRAC's TUP programme) the CLM programme targets the poorest women in rural Haiti with an 18-month support package including assets, a cash stipend, weekly mentoring visits, skills training, and savings facilities.

As there are few basic services available to people living in poverty in Haiti, Fonkoze has included several additional elements in the programme, such as support to improve housing, sanitation and a water filter, as well as a partnership arrangement with a local development organisation, Zanmi Lasante, that provides free health care for programme participants.

Advocating for the ultra-poor in policy debates

It is hypothesised that the ultra-poor targeted by Fonkoze are likely, typically, to fall well below the extreme poverty cut-off value used by the World Bank and in national debate on poverty policy. In order to advocate effectively for these ultra-poor households, a key research challenge for Fonkoze is to accurately find methods to identify their target group in this wider context. Therefore, a major focus in the comparison of CLM households with HDVI data on poverty is to establish the best ways to frame the identity of the ultra-poor in order to ensure maximum resonance with national policy debate on poverty.

The rural and regional concentration of extreme poverty in Haiti is well established through national survey data and the analysis reported below focuses on the poorest within that group – the ultra-poor. The eventual purpose is to link the identification of this group with poverty policies. These policies include the development of a national social protection agenda and this analysis can provide a key resource to support an effective advocacy strategy for the ultra-poor.[6] This comparison provides the first assessment of CLM participants relative to a national measure of extreme poverty. The analysis therefore allows the research team to understand better how the CLM target group is positioned in relation to the emergent agenda around social protection and the currently used indicator, the HDVI. Ultimately, it provides the basis for communication and dialogue with government and development partners on the potential opportunities for scaling up the graduation approach.

BOX 3

Field research design

Fonkoze aimed to compare the targeting methods of its CLM programme to that of the HDVI. A survey was undertaken involving over 1,000 household interviews using the Ministère des Affaires Sociales et du Travail (Ministry of Social Affairs and Labor) *Kore Lavi* HDVI survey instrument for detecting the most vulnerable households. Data were collected in January and February 2017 in Bossou, part of a commune in central Haiti and where Fonkoze was selecting its newest cohort of CLM participants. A follow-up survey was also organised, after initial matching revealed gaps in survey coverage, mainly in remote and difficult to access areas.

During the selection of households for the CLM in this area, 1,595 households were identified as being in the two poorest groups and the CLM team made 1,595 household visits.[7] Of these 1,595 they selected 222 as CLM members. However, based on matching recorded geo-codes, the survey only identified a total of 200 households included in the CLM programme of which 178 had valid HDVI scores.[8]

Source: Author's own

Key findings: CLM and non-CLM household analysis

Key finding 1 – The CLM targeting approach successfully identifies ultra-poor programme participants

Households were grouped into four categories based on their HDVI level, with Category 1 being the most poor and vulnerable.

There were 1,185 households included in the analysis of which 178 were CLM households that had valid HDVI scores (Figure 3.1). This left 1,007 households that were in the HDVI survey but not selected for the CLM programme (non-CLM households) (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.1 CLM households

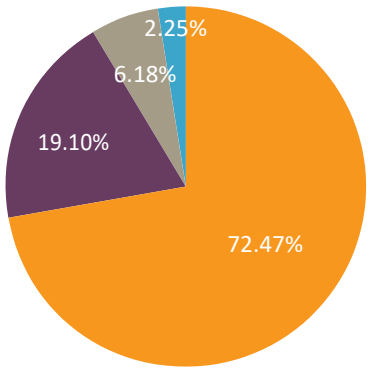
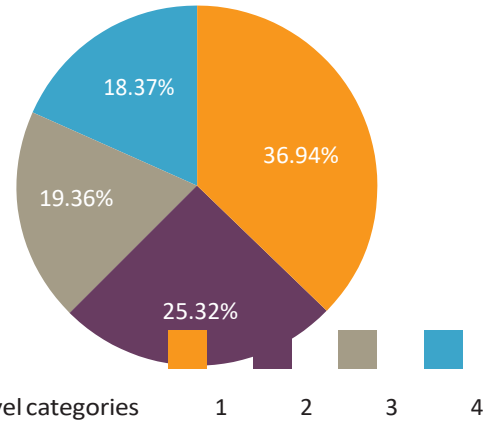


Figure 3.2 Non-CLM households



Source: Author's own

As Figure 3.1 demonstrates, over 72 per cent of the CLM households were classified as Category 1 (the most deprived) based on their HDVI scores. Nearly 20 per cent were in Category 2, also highly deprived, and only 8 per cent (or 15 households) were anomalous in that they were selected for CLM programme participation but were not categorised as most deprived by the HDVI scoring method. These anomalies were a surprise and were reviewed in depth. Twelve of the 15 households were revisited and the field report prepared demonstrated in some detail that, in fact, these households were indeed properly and correctly selected by CLM staff, with only slight queries about two households. This anomaly in results does however underline a limitation in large survey approaches; quality control might be an issue but there is an underlying problem in that the survey approach cannot easily address the complexities of household circumstances that affect poverty status.

After this initial categorisation, we compared the 178 CLM households (Figure 3.1) with the non-CLM households that were ranked in HDVI Category 1 in Figure 3.2. There were 372 households in this category. An independent t-test was carried out to test the difference in HDVI scores between the 178 CLM households and 372 non-CLM households in Category 1. The results showed a marginally significant difference between the two sets of households in terms of their HDVI scores with a lower score for the CLM households (Table 2).

Table 2 Most deprived households scored by the human deprivation and vulnerability index: difference between CLM participants and non-CLM participants

Households	Mean HDVI score
CLM	0.45
Non-CLM	0.48

t(548) = 2.3, p = .021,

Source: Author's own

This is an important finding since it affirms the efficacy of the CLM targeting approach in identifying their programme participants. As noted above, CLM households were selected from an initial grouping in the participatory wealth ranking that put 1,595 households in the poorest two groups (out of five) of the community wealth ranks showing a considerable effort was put into correct identification of programme participants. This identification was then verified through visits from senior staff.

Key finding 2 – Amongst the most deprived, CLM households are systematically poorer than non-CLM households, as shown by differences in variables such as household size

The two groups of households (CLM and non-CLM Category 1) were examined for evidence of other differences with respect to variables commonly used in poverty analysis.

Interestingly, the mean number of people living in the household is 4.7 for CLM households and 5.6 for non-CLM households. This difference was found to be statistically significant ($t(570) = 4.7, p < .001$). Whilst it is generally true that poverty is associated with *larger* household size there are some anomalies in this overall result; specifically, research on the ultra-poor, including from the first of the graduation programmes in Bangladesh, has demonstrated a discontinuity showing that ultra-poverty is associated with smaller family size. Ultra-poverty is associated with more limited command over labour.

Six other variables showing CLM households to be systematically poorer were: number of rooms in the house (1.67 compared to 2.19); roof type was different; distance to water (31.6 minutes walking time compared to 27.5); sanitation facilities (81 per cent open defecation compared to 71 per cent); female-headedness (56 per cent compared to 50 per cent); and dependency ratio (111 per cent compared to 102 per cent). These results, whilst statistically significant in only three

of the six variables – number of rooms, roof type, and dependency ratio – conformed to a general pattern of greater deprivation for CLM households. This was not true however for: remittances and financial support; floor and walls of the house; illiteracy; overcrowding; absence of food/restricted consumption; living with a chronic disease; and living with disability/injury, where results were essentially similar.

For the six variables noted above where CLM were more deprived than non-CLM households in Category 1, the same was true when comparing those non-CLM households with households in HDVI Categories 2, 3 and 4 (with the exception of female-headedness). This suggests that the national HDVI survey approach is quite accurate in identifying deprivation and vulnerability categories. The placing of nearly three-quarters of the CLM households in HDVI Category 1 confirms this. Given the intensity of effort in the CLM targeting approach it would be surprising if that were not true but sharpens interest in why 8 per cent of households selected were not in the two most deprived categories according to the national indicator. As discussed above, the 8 per cent of households in Categories 3 and 4 were reviewed carefully through field visits to these households in 12 out of 15 cases and all 12 did meet the CLM selection criteria, with a slight query about just two cases.

Key finding 3 – Survey methods alone may not be suitable for targeting graduation programmes at the ultra-poor

Further review suggests some specific limitations in the survey design in relation to the CLM eligibility criteria. Specifically:

1. The food security questions were poorly constructed with only two yes/no answers (compared to nine in the CLM approach to food security in their baseline after households have been selected; it is used as a benchmark, and repeated later to assess progress). The survey found 64 per cent of CLM households were food secure (and 63.4 per cent of non-CLM Category 1 respondents) yet food insecurity is a core part of CLM's selection criteria.
2. The survey has no information about assets, yet in the participatory wealth ranking used in selecting CLM households, assets are typically one of the most important criteria used in ranking households.
3. The survey asks about construction materials of the house but not about the condition of the house (so an old tin roof that provides no protection scores high); nor does it ask about ownership status, i.e. whether a house is occupied through squatting, renting, an informal claim through the woman's inheritance, an informal claim through the man's inheritance, or though purchase. These factors make a real difference in terms of quality and security of residence.

These limitations could be addressed of course through revision of the instrument but it seems very unlikely even then that there would be a good match between the poorest in the survey and the selection of programme participants as done by CLM.

The underlying lesson is that standalone survey methods might not be suitable for targeting graduation programmes. They are not able to reproduce the quality of assessment possible through the combination of methods used by Fonkoze.

Key finding 4 – A range of approaches are needed to build stakeholder support for ultra-poor graduation programming

The difficulties with survey methods leave a challenge for promotion of the graduation model in Haiti. To share the graduation approach with stakeholders and incentivise buy-in it would certainly be easier to offer a simpler form of targeting that could be executed by use of a questionnaire. In fact, the various steps involved in the CLM targeting mean it is difficult, even given the stated targeting criteria, to lay down precise guidelines since there is a final subjective element involving endorsement by senior staff. However, the CLM process approach to targeting is important to avoid a high burden of mistargeting which is potentially costly, since the programme cost per beneficiary is currently around US$1,800; and mistargeting might well have repercussions within the community, undermining acceptance of the approach.

Any scaling up through government and NGO partnership would require engagement of government planners and administrators, new NGOs, donors, and evaluators. The cost, if not the complexity, of the current targeting approach is sure to become an issue. The absence of survey-based programming also makes it difficult to estimate needs, hence budget requirements in any scaling up. This is not likely to be a real constraint in the immediate future given Haiti's poverty profile and, for the present, the community-based targeting approach might yet achieve buy-in, as in other countries, with good evidence of programme impact.

Evidence has certainly played an important part in the global promotion of the graduation approach though it does not come with any guarantees (Cable 2003). Fonkoze are deeply aware of this targeting dilemma and have experimented with a more populist approach in arranging for programme participants to visit the capital and advocate for the approach with stakeholders, as described in their advocacy study (see note 6). That study revealed challenges for programme participants in these interactions but they are surely worth pursuing, to put a face on the people targeted through the programme.

Immersion visits from officials, or even short engagement directly with the programme, is another approach Fonkoze has pursued, and again international experience suggests that they can be very beneficial in garnering stakeholder support. Even with the positive evidence of impact, there is a need in Haiti to do more to create broad-based stakeholder support through strengthening the appreciation of who is being targeted and the importance of investment in very careful targeting. This comes through familiarising stakeholders with the programme. An emergent lesson is that a variety of exposure approaches are likely to be central to scaling-up and worth the investment if they build stakeholder buy-in to ultra-poor graduation programming.

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Notes

[1] www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty

[2] This definition has been applied carefully to identify countries with the greatest burden of ultra-poverty rather than as a programme targeting approach.

[3] www.poverty-action.org/publication/building-stable-livelihoods-ultra-poor

[4] www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/

[5] In fact two poverty scores are generated; one based on Fonkoze's own prior research and one based on the national Poverty Performance Index (PPI) developed by Grameen Foundation.

[6] Fonkoze has implemented an action research programme on a national advocacy strategy involving citizen participation – including CLM graduates – as well as engagement with key stakeholders on their poverty priorities; see Simanowitz and Greeley (2017).

[7] These 1,595 households are a larger number of households than were included in the HDVI survey – and are only the two poorest categories of the wealth ranking. This difference was by design since the work plan initially specified survey coverage of 1,000 households, with the expectation that all CLM households would thereby be covered. That number was increased to 1,308 in total (of which 1,185 had valid HDVI scores) through a follow-up survey undertaken when a review showed that the first survey had not covered all the selected CLM households.

[8] These relatively small differences relate to errors in coverage, data recording and data omissions. Given that the comparison was based on work by two independent teams, at slightly different times and, in some places, difficult terrain, the results are in fact very satisfactory.

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