

ECONPOP

Project Catalogue

per 22.02.2013

Research on Economic Growth, Poverty Reduction, Reproductive Health and Population Dynamics

1 Fertility and Poverty: The role of gender and reproductive health

Project Owner:

NTNU SAMFUNNSFORSKNING AS

Project Manager:

Jensen, An-Magritt Professor

Project No.: 199408/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.4.2010-31.8.2013

2010: **612,000** 2011: **1,680,000** 2012: **677,000** 2013: **94,000**

Primary objective:

To understand the fertility stall in poverty contexts with differing gender systems and reproductive health problems.

Secondary objectives: First, the impact on gender systems in two different cultural and religious contexts will be explored to comprehend the interplay with fertility and poverty (sub-projects 1, 3, 4). Second, ways in which reproductive health and child mortality impact fertility and poverty in the household will be analyzed (sub-project 2). Third, findings from case studies and large scale surveys will be synthesized (sub-project 5).

Fertility has dropped below the replacement level in an increasing number of countries. The falls cut across world regions, economic development, cultures and religions. Within this general trend large variations prevail. Eastern Africa is a particular case where fertility remains high. Kenya stands out with a halt in decline at a fairly high level. Regional differences are substantial. This project will examine the development in the Christian Western Province and the Muslim Coast Province. Western had initially a sharp fertility decline but this came to a halt by the end of the 1990 and a slight increase in the recent years. By contrast little change has taken place in Coast Province.

This project will re-examine two case-studies in Bungoma (Western Province) and Kwale (Coast Province) carried out about twenty years ago. Both areas are rural and poverty is widespread. Upon this background recent development will be addressed. Five sub-projects are planned to examine linkages between fertility and poverty in differing contexts. The impact of gender (women and men) and reproductive health is emphasized. Existing data will be supplemented with new interviews in the two areas (through focused biographies) and with quantitative analysis primarily of KDHS.

2 Fertility outcomes and the roles of children in household risk management strategies in rural West Africa: the cases of Senegal and Benin

Project Owner:

FAFO - INSTITUTT FOR ANVENDTE INTERNASJONALE, STUDIER AS

Project Manager:

Bøås, Morten Forskningsleder

Project No.: 199426/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.1.2010-30.6.2013

2010: **1,325,000** 2011: **2,150,000** 2012: **1,415,000** 2013: **185,000**

The primary objective of the project is to produce a set of practical, knowledge-based policy recommendations to family planning and social protection policy and program designers. The policy responses recommended will be based on a) the research findings described under the secondary objective and b) an assessment of costs and likely relevance on ongoing interventions in the risk areas of the two countries.

To achieve this, the secondary project objective is to produce a concise, comprehensive and dynamic theory of the various roles and functions children have in the risk management in poor households in West Africa, including the role of fertility to

risk management efforts and the impact of women's bargaining power. The various components of the final theory will be supported by examples from existing, multi-disciplinary research findings as well as carefully designed empirical testing in two dissimilar settings within the region; rural Senegal and rural Benin.

The relationship between fertility and growth is often seen in view of a child quality-quantity trade-off. Low fertility allows for higher human capital investments per child, and thus considered favorable to economic development. On another front, good risk management is seen as a key to growth as the vulnerability caused by the lack of safety nets yields low-risk, low-return behavior among the poor. This project proposes to bring the two lines of research together by developing a comprehensive model of the roles children play in household risk management strategies, assuming the importance of this role to family investments and income.

Core hypotheses derived will be tested on a recently gathered data set from Senegal. Gaps identified will be filled by new data collection in Senegal and Benin, the latter serving as a most dissimilar case within West Africa. The model takes point of departure in existing research on children as i) insurance and pension providers, ii) parties in household diversification schemes (portfolio management efforts), and iii) an adjustable supply of labor. The model will furthermore take four critical factors into account: 1) household vulnerability, 2) availability of other risk management tools, 3) fostering opportunities to lower short-term costs related to investments in children, and 4) the influence of women in the household bargaining over fertility, risk management and child outcomes.

The project aims to provide policy recommendations on how to promote reproductive health and fertility reduction without making poor households more vulnerable and thus more risk adverse. To support the basis for policy advice, the project suggests complimenting analytical findings by a cost assessment of on-going interventions implemented by local partner institutions and international organizations. The project supports a PhD grant, an international advisory board, and two female scholars associated with universities in Senegal and Benin.

3 Implications of high fertility in developing countries - a multilevel analysis based on DHS data

Project Owner:

Økonomisk Institutt, UNIVERSITETET I OSLO

Project Manager:

Kravdal, Øystein Professor

Project No.: 199475/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.1.2010-28.2.2013

2010: **830,000** 2011: **675,000** 2012: **830,000** 2013: **155,000**

The primary goal is to find out how a woman's fertility (wanted and unwanted) and the level of fertility or population growth in the neighborhood/village/county/province affect various outcomes for her family: living standard index, and child mortality/nutrition/education. The child outcomes are also indications of the family's economic situation, and they have implications for later productivity.

One must obviously control for the educational level of the woman and the average education at the relevant level of aggregation, because these affect fertility and possibly also the outcomes under investigation. A secondary goal is to explore in detail the importance of individual and aggregate education (and its correlate, women's autonomy) for fertility.

Throughout the project, it will be taken into account that the key effects may be highly context dependent by including interactions. High-quality DHS data will be used.

see objectives above

Obviously, such knowledge about how important it is to try to reduce fertility and how socioeconomic development may help in achieving that is of great value to politicians and planners at several levels in several countries.

4 West African Reproductive Health Costs An in depth study into associations between poverty and access to emergency pregnancy health care

Project Owner:

Institutt for Helse og Samfunn, UNIVERSITETET I OSLO

Project Manager:

Sundby, Johanne Professor

Project No.: 199730/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.1.2010-30.6.2014

2010: **929,000** 2011: **1,460,000** 2012: **1,756,000** 2013: **855,000**

Aim: To examine how prevailing institutional and economic factors in Burkina Faso and the Gambia impact on the relationship between reproductive health, poverty and unmet need.

Objectives:

- 1) To describe the national-level policy context around reproductive health policy and its relationship to overarching poverty reduction strategies
- 2) To identify the determinants of access to and utilization of emergency care
- 3) To assess the direct and indirect costs, and long term (1 year) economic impact of resource mobilization strategies associated with care from the perspective of healthcare users, especially emergency care
- 4) To provide an in-depth analysis of women's social experiences as they navigate healthcare, focusing on their perspectives on the economic and social costs of care
- 5) To observe poor women's ability to negotiate good quality emergency pregnancy care (maternal and abortion care) in referral hospitals
- 6) To build West African research capacity

The relationship between reproductive health and poverty is widely acknowledged at the international level, as suggested by the inclusion of universal access to reproductive health among the targets for measuring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. Maternal and pregnancy-related health is an essential component of reproductive health and provides an appropriate vantage point from which to study the dynamics of reproductive health and poverty. Today, maternal mortality occurs almost exclusively in poor countries, and the unequal life chances of women in rich and poor countries is mirrored by inequities between rich and poor women within countries. Poverty is both as a cause and consequence of such poor maternal health outcomes.

The proposal is for a multidisciplinary research project in Burkina Faso and the Gambia into the dynamic relationship between reproductive health and poverty, focusing on women's use of pregnancy care, including emergency obstetric care and post-abortion care. It builds on and expands existing research collaborations between the research communities in both countries, the University of Oslo and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine. The project is timely and can feed into existing policy initiatives in both countries are seeking to protect women against the impoverishing effects of high healthcare costs relating to maternity care.

A work programme consisting of two complementary studies will use policy analysis, case studies, in depth ethnographic and quantitative economic methods to provide an in-depth analysis of the relationship between poverty and pregnancy-related health. In the Gambia the focus will be on women's use of healthcare throughout pregnancy, while in Burkina Faso the focus will be on women's use of abortion-related care.

The project will develop West African research expertise, contribute to the scientific literature and inform policy.

5 Gender of children, education and occupational choice in Nepal

Project Owner:

CHR MICHELSENS INSTITUTT FOR VIDENSKAP OG, ÅNDSFRIHET

Project Manager:

Hatlebakk, Magnus Seniorforsker

Project No.: 203341/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.12.2010-31.12.2013

2010: **400,000** 2011: **900,000** 2012: **900,000** 2013: **900,000**

Primary objective: To understand why rural households get many children and the implications for education and occupational choice.

Secondary objectives:

1. Analyze the three rounds of LSMS data from Nepal
2. Collect and analyze data from a district of Nepal
3. Four academic papers that report on methodology and econometric findings based on the two data-sources.

In rural Nepal households appear to have a target of at least two boys with the expectation being that at least one boy may get a good education and either a high income temporary job abroad, or a permanent job at home. In the project we want to test this hypothesis. If the hypothesis is correct, then we shall first expect that for otherwise similar households, meaning that we control for assumingly important household characteristics, households with two girls will have a larger probability of having another child. Second, we shall expect that for otherwise similar households, the households with two boys will invest in more education for one of them. Third, we will investigate whether the strategy is successful, that is whether these two-boys households are more successful in the labor market than otherwise similar households. As the costs also increase with the number of children, we will finally conduct an overall test of the strategies, that is we will see whether the probability of being poor depend on the sequence of boys and girls.

6 Workshop: Women's power, children's job? Managing the human capital portfolio of children as an empowerment strategy in Benin

Project Owner:

FAFO - INSTITUTT FOR ANVENDTE INTERNASJONALE, STUDIER AS

Project Manager:

Lunde, Trine Seniorforsker

Project No.: 221335/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.6.2012-31.8.2012

2012: **50,000**

The overall objective of the workshop is two-fold: (1) to anchor the conceptual framework in the local context and ensure that the research questions and proposed analytical strategy respond to local realities; (2) to align the research with the ongoing policy dialogue in Benin to ensure relevance and to strengthen the potential policy impact of research findings.

In addition to better anchoring the proposed research in the local context and linking it to ongoing policy dialogue and efforts, the workshop will further clarify partner roles in the data collection, analytical work and final dissemination.

The economic empowerment of women has become an indisputable long-term objective in development work. It is assumed to lead not only to the strengthening of women's human rights, but also to increased social stability and economic growth. The impact of women's bargaining power in promoting household consumption patterns that favor child-related expenditures has been repeatedly documented (see reference list). The research proposed will highlight the economic relationship of reciprocity in the mother-child nexus in societies with weak social safety nets. It will analyze the rich data from a survey recently fielded in Benin, designed specifically to address such issues.

Mother's protection of children's human capital investments may come at a price. More than men, women need the informal social protection of offspring in places where access to cash income, insurance and legal rights to property typically favor men. The proposed research hypothesizes that this affects not only women's fertility choices and investments in their children's human capital, but the very way the women strive to manage the human capital portfolio that their offspring

represent. The aim of the research proposed is thus to develop and disseminate knowledge suitable to promote the empowerment of women through social protection options that depend less on her reproductive behavior. To achieve these aims, analytical work will be carried out in close communication with a group of stakeholders in Benin. The Benin survey has collected data on indicators related to women's reproductive health and a variety of proxies of their empowerment status. The data is cross-sectional, but comprises several retrospective questions suitable for an assessment of her relative state of empowerment before the age of marriage and child bearing. This should within a well-developed analytical approach help reduce the type of identification problems that normally arise in this type of efforts to establish causality.

7 Workshop: Girls' Economic Empowerment - The Best Contraceptive? A Randomized Controlled Trial in Tanzania

Project Owner:

CHR MICHELSENS INSTITUTT FOR VIDENSKAP OG, ÅNDSFRIHET

Project Manager:

Tungodden, Bertil Seniorforsker

Project No.: 221366/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.6.2012-1.3.2013

2012: **51,106**

Main objectives:

- 1) Contribute to understanding of how young women make their fertility decisions: what information they take into account, what pressure they face and what constrains them.
- 2) Analyse the link between fertility decisions and an entrepreneurial mindset.
- 3) Measure the effects of changes in fertility decisions and mindset variables on short-term economic outcomes such as labour supply and income.

We use a randomized control trial approach to implement the following treatments:

An information campaign on health/reproduction/gender-equality: Our partner Femina HIP has vast experience in working on empowering young women on issues related to reproductive health and entrepreneurship, and will together with the research team design a tailored program for the targeted women. We will both provide practical information about preproductive health, such as information about reproductive health and rights and the consequences of risky sexual behavior. In addition, we will provide material related to a mindset change focusing on the importance of gender equality, rights and girls' empowerment. The information treatment will consist of both print material, and videos drawing on Femina HIP's 'Fema TV Talk Show'.

Entrepreneurship training to improve economic possibilities and outcomes: The other treatment will aim at expanding young women's economic opportunities, by providing them with entrepreneurship training to improve their skills of how to establish and run their own business. Entrepreneurship training may change and improve women's entrepreneurial mindset and business practices, and particularly young women may be very responsive to such training, as most of them are not yet constrained by family obligations or husbands controlling their economic lives and decisions.

In addition, we will offer some women both the information treatment and the entrepreneurship training, in order to see if there are important complementarities in how the treatment works; e.g. it may be the case that improved entrepreneurship knowledge is of limited importance if economic decisions are out of their hands and/or their reproductive health is poor.

8 GIRLS' ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT - THE BEST CONTRACEPTIVE? A Randomized Controlled Trial in Tanzania

Project Owner:

CHR MICHELSENS INSTITUTT FOR VIDENSKAP OG, ÅNDSFRIHET

Project Manager:

Tungodden, Bertil Seniorforsker

Project No.: 226977/H30

Project Period and Project Funding by the Research Council of Norway:

1.1.2013-31.12.2014

2013: **2,258,000** 2014: **1,561,000**

The main objective is to increase our understanding of young girls' fertility decisions and how these decisions interact with their economic situation.

Using a randomized controlled trial methodology; we will offer two different treatments to a randomly selected sample of girls: an information treatment and an opportunity treatment. By comparing the two treatments, we can shed light on what is more effective in changing the fertility and economic aspirations of young girls: providing information or changing their economic opportunities?

An ultimate goal of this research project is to inform the design of sound policies, and thus we will be particularly careful to develop a cost-effective intervention with scaling-up potential: all treatments will be evaluated and compared not only in terms of impact but also on their relative economic costs.

The main objective of the present study: Girls' economic empowerment, the best contraceptive?, is to increase our understanding of young girls' fertility decisions and how these decisions interact with their economic situation. The present study will take place in Tanzania where the majority of girls start childbearing at the age of 16 to 20 years, and will investigate the fertility decisions of girls when they are on the verge of making two of the most important decisions in their lives: What to do when leaving school and whether to start childbearing.

Using a randomized controlled trial methodology; we will offer two different treatments to a randomly selected sample of girls; an information treatment and an opportunity treatment. The information treatment will offer practical and empowering information about reproductive health, such as information about contraception and the consequences of risky sexual behavior, and information about gender equality, and women's empowerment. The opportunity treatment will aim at expanding the economic opportunities of girls, by providing them with knowledge on how to run their own business. By comparing the two treatments, we can shed light on what is more effective in changing the fertility and economic aspirations of young girls: providing information or changing their economic opportunities?

An ultimate goal of this research project is to inform the design of sound policies, and thus we will be particularly careful to develop a cost-effective intervention with scaling-up potential: all treatments will be evaluated and compared not only in terms of impact but also on their relative economic costs. The interventions are based on current practices of our partners, which make it easier to scale up successful parts of the project.