



## REACHING THE POOR: WHAT WORKS?

### An Invitation to Apply for Participation in a Project to Assess and Learn from the Record of

### How Well Health, Nutrition, and Population Activities Are Reaching Disadvantaged Groups

The World Bank's Thematic Group on Health, Nutrition and Population (HNP) and Poverty is pleased to invite applications for participation in a project designed to determine how well programs to improve Health, Nutrition and Population status are reaching disadvantaged population groups, and to find ways of reaching those groups more effectively.

Applications are invited from World Bank staff members and investigators in other institutions who are interested in working with the Bank on this issue. Applications may be from analysts who require financial support from the project, and also from investigators who already have financial support from other sources and would like to contribute to and gain from participation in the project's activities.

#### **Background and Objective**

The recent increase in concern for HNP conditions among the poor has led to numerous efforts to document those conditions. The resulting growth in knowledge has made it increasingly clear that the situation of disadvantaged groups is unacceptable. It is also beginning to suggest that many health, nutrition, and population programs are less effective at reaching the poor than the better-off, and that the programs thus may well be contributing to rather than alleviating poor-rich disparities in HNP status.

The principal objective of the "Reaching the Poor" project is to build upon this initial work by assessing more fully the record of HNP initiatives in reaching the poor; and to draw upon the assessment's findings to identify ways of designing HNP programs that can reach disadvantaged groups more effectively. In order to achieve this objective, the project will seek to:

- Take stock of how well or poorly the HNP programs and initiatives undertaken in order to improve HNP conditions among the poor are achieving their immediate objective of reaching needy population groups;
- Begin identifying the reasons why the programs and initiatives have or have not been able to reach the poor groups that are of highest priority to them.

In addition, the project hopes to:

- Demonstrate the value and feasibility of regularly monitoring HNP programs and initiatives from a poverty perspective, so monitoring of how well HNP activities reach disadvantaged groups can become a regular feature of HNP program design and implementation.
- Pave the way for the further, considerably more ambitious investigations that will be required to explore fully such important issues as why any ineffectual initiatives covered are not doing well; whether those initiatives that are reaching disadvantaged groups are bringing about the intended improvements in the groups' HNP status; and whether the initiatives are providing services efficiently and/or are likely to prove sustainable.

### **Approach**

The basic technique employed in work undertaken through the project will be “incidence analysis” – that is, assessment of the socio-economic or other poverty-relevant characteristics of the people who are reached by a program or policy, compared with the characteristics of the people not reached or the population at large. Such a comparison permits an assessment of how well programs and policies are reaching the most disadvantaged population groups at greatest need, and thus the degree to which they are “pro-poor.”<sup>1</sup>

It is hoped, however, that much of the project work will be able to go beyond simple incidence analysis of an individual program. In many situations, such analysis can be very useful – for example, in challenging unwarranted complacency on the part of those responsible for an important HNP initiative that is not reaching the poor nearly so well as generally believed. However, it is also quite limited. Incidence analysis only identifies how well or poorly a program is reaching the poor; it cannot determine the reasons for any deficiencies in this regard that it reveals; and it thus cannot provide guidance about how to correct those deficiencies. To find ways of correcting deficiencies, a deeper investigation is required: a comparative incidence analysis of several programs, for example, which can direct attention toward the characteristics of the most successful in reaching the poor; a set of focus group interviews with poor people not served by an HNP program directed toward disadvantaged groups, oriented toward determining why they do not use the services made available; etc.

The definition of “poverty” to be used in the project is broad. Poverty-relevant characteristics include income, expenditure, or assets and similar indicators of economic status; and other further manifestations of poverty such as gender, ethnicity, or further forms of social exclusion. Also to be included is poverty as defined through community-based participatory assessments.

### **Project Design**

The project features the encouragement, preparation, discussion, and dissemination of analyses of HNP programs and policies from an incidence or distributional perspective. To this end, it will use two principal mechanisms:

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<sup>1</sup> Further information about this approach, in the form of an introductory reading list on incidence analysis and the closely-related technique of benefit-incidence analysis, is available electronically in the “library” section of the World Bank’s hnp/poverty website: [www.worldbank.org/poverty/health/index.htm](http://www.worldbank.org/poverty/health/index.htm), or as hard copy from Dr. Manju Rani, HNP/Poverty Thematic Group, Room G7-035B, Mail Stop G7-701, The World Bank, 1818 H Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20433, U.S.A.. Dr. Rani’s e-mail address is [mrani1@worldbank.org](mailto:mrani1@worldbank.org); her fax number is U.S.A. 202-522-3234; her telephone number is U.S.A. 202-473-2062..

- Program and Policy Analyses. The project will provide support for preparing a small set of incidence analyses of HNP projects and policies. Some of these will be commissioned; but the majority will be identified through the competitive procedure outlined in the following section. In addition, the project will invite the active participation of analysts engaged in analyzing HNP activities from a poverty perspective with support from other sources. The procedure for identifying these analysts is also described below.
- Technical Workshops and Professional Meetings. The project will organize meetings of project-supported and other analysts, of country policy-makers, and of representatives from interested technical assistance agencies.

**The project will proceed in four phases:**

- Identification of Analyses. Analyses to be included in the project will be the process presented below; and initiation of case study preparation.
  - Organization of Technical Workshops. The workshops will be designed in the first instance to help analysts directly associated with the project refine their work. But they will also be open to others wishing to learn more about and possibly apply incidence analysis to other HNP projects. The first such workshop will take place in late June or early September 2002. Subsequent workshops will be organized as required and available resources permit.
  - Holding of International Conference. The completed analyses will be presented and discussed at a professional conference designed to produce evidence-based recommendations for the design of more effective poverty-oriented HNP programs and initiatives. The conference will be held in the late fall of 2003.
  - Publication and Dissemination of Outcomes. Two types of project outcome will be published and widely disseminated: the most instructive incidence analyses produced through our in association with the project, and the conference recommendations. A special priority will be given to effective dissemination of these materials in developing countries.

**Coverage**

- Type of Program or Policy: The project welcomes participation of analysts and policy makers concerned with reaching the poor through any type of program or policy directed wholly or partially to improving HNP conditions. These can be either large-scale ongoing service activities, or smaller experimental projects.

Given the limited time and funding available, most applications are likely to deal with programs and policies already in progress, through the collection and assessment of the additional data needed to measure or understand incidence, and/or the analysis of existing data from an incidence perspective. However, applications covering new experimental activities are welcome.

- HNP Topic: Applications dealing with programs and policies related to any HNP-relevant topic will be carefully considered. Because of resource limitations, however, priority will be given to a limited number of topics, especially in judging applications seeking project funding for analytical work. The priority topics are those figuring most prominently in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and appearing most frequently in Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) prepared by the governments of highly-indebted poor countries receiving debt relief from the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

The MDGs, adopted at a September 2000 special session of the United Nations General Assembly attended by nearly 150 heads of state and government, constitute the closest extant approximation of a global consensus about development objectives. The HNP activities appearing PRSPs are those to which governments of especially needy states attach highest priority in their efforts to assist the poorest people within their countries. The emphasis being accorded to such MDG and PRSP measures calls for a special effort to ensure that programs and policies undertaken to achieve them reach the poor as effectively as possible.

The HNP topics figuring most prominently in the MDGs and PRSPs, and thus to be given priority for project funding, are:

-- Infant and Child Health. MDG four and almost every PRSP call for a major reduction in under-five mortality. Because mortality even in upper income groups in highest socio-economic groups remain well above the attainable minimum, it cannot be taken for granted that progress toward this goal will benefit primarily the disadvantaged. This argues for a careful look at how well current infant and child health programs, such as integrated management of childhood illness (IMCI) and immunization initiatives, are reaching poor groups; and for identifying approaches that will allow them to do so more effectively.

-- Reproductive Health. Reducing maternal mortality is the topic of MDG five; and improving reproductive health often appears as a PRSP goal. Further, there are signs of particularly large poor-rich differences with respect to attended deliveries, the maternal mortality measure featured in the MDGs. The incidence of attended deliveries and other maternal mortality measures thus deserve careful examination – as do determined efforts to find ways of effectively correcting the especially serious poor-rich imbalances that appear to exist.

-- HIV/AIDS, Malaria, Tuberculosis. MDG six, devoted to combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, provides specific targets for HIV/AIDS and malaria incidence; and it also refers prominently to tuberculosis. These three diseases are also the focus of a major new multi-agency initiative, the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria. Because of this and the commitment of other agencies, the volume of resources being devoted to these diseases is extremely large; and it becomes particularly important to ensure that these resources reach and benefit poor population groups to the greatest extent possible.

-- Nutrition. MDG one calls for a reduction in poverty and hunger, and recommends using the prevalence of malnourished children as a principal indicator for measuring progress toward this objective. Since malnourishment itself is an important manifestation of poverty, any progress toward this goal can be seen as contributing to poverty alleviation; but reductions in malnutrition among those who are also socio-economically, ethnically, or otherwise disadvantaged would be even more beneficial, by combating “double deprivation.” This will require a greater nutrition program focus on those who are not simply malnourished, but who are disadvantaged in other ways as well.

### **Application Preparation and Submission**

Two types of application are invited. The first type is from prospective participants who will require financial support for their work and participation in the project meetings. The second type is from HNP professionals who have or can obtain financial support from other sources, but who would nonetheless like to participate in the project in order to gain from and contribute to the planned interactions with other project participants.

- Applications Requiring Financial Support: The project is in a position to make approximately 10-12 awards of up to \$40,000 each for analytical work that can be completed within 12 months of funding.

Applications for one of these awards should be no longer than ten double-spaced pages. Applications should include a:

-- Program/Policy Description. A description of the HNP program or policy that is the subject of the application, with an emphasis on its potential importance for disadvantaged population groups.

-- Literature Review/Hypothesis Statement. A review of the relevant technical literature, and statement of hypotheses produced by this review and/or by the applicants knowledge of the program/initiative to be analyzed.

-- Presentation of Data and Analytical Technique. A presentation of the data to be used, and of the analytical technique to be employed in analyzing those data. Of particular importance in this regard will be a clear statement of the procedure for determining incidence that is planned: that is, the method to be used in assessing the socio-economic status or other poverty-relevant characteristics of the people reached and not reached by the program or policy being covered. When the research is to rely on survey, the application should include information about the survey design and questionnaire, and the population covered.

-- Budget. An estimated budget for expenses up to a maximum of \$40,000; and timetable, for a period of up to 12 months. (It is anticipated that most expense will be for the time and travel costs of consultants/staff involved in data collection and analysis. No more than 25% of a project's total can be used to cover World Bank staff salary and/or travel costs.)

-- Names and Qualifications of the investigator(s) who designed and will be undertaking the project-supported analyses. Of particular interest will be information about the roles and qualifications of participating developing country investigators.

-- Institutional Endorsement. A statement of support from the manager of any World Bank staff member applying to participate. Applications from outside the Bank should be accompanied by letters from the director or other authorized authority of the applicant's institution, indicating support for the application.

Both World Bank staff members and outside investigators are welcome to apply.

**Applications are to be submitted, no later than April 19, 2002, to: Dr. Manju Rani, HNP/Poverty Thematic Group, Room G7-035B, Mail Stop G7-701, The World Bank, 1818 H Street, N.W., Washington, D. C. 20433, U.S.A. Dr. Rani's email address is [mrani1@worldbank.org](mailto:mrani1@worldbank.org); her fax number is U.S.A. 202-473-3223; her telephone number is U.S.A. 202-473-2062.**

Successful applicants for financial support will be expected to attend all investigators' workshops and the international conference referred to above. The project will make available any necessary travel funds required for this purpose over and above the amounts provided through the awards, so that workshop/conference participation expenses need not be included in the application budget.

Successful applicants will also be expected to submit their completed manuscripts for possible inclusion in the project publication. Publication costs will also be covered independently from the budgets of the individual awards, so that there is no need for including them in the application budget. Project participants whose manuscripts are not accepted for inclusion in the project publication will be free to seek alternative outlets.

- Applications Not Requiring Financial Support: In order to encourage others to undertake incidence analyses of HNP initiatives, the project invites participation from program managers and analysts in a position to arrange financial support from other sources. Particularly welcome would be participation by representatives of HNP initiatives wishing to undertake incidence analyses of their own work, with support from their initiative budgets or from other donor agencies.

Successful applicants will be expected to cover all costs of their participation, including the expense of attending meetings as well as undertaking analytical work. But they will otherwise be considered as full project participants. That is, they will be invited to present and discuss their work at all project meetings, and welcome (although not required) to submit their completed manuscripts to be considered for inclusion in the project publication(s).

The format for applications for non-funded participation is similar in nature to that for applications for the financial support described above. However, they may be briefer, and no budget will be required.

Applications from investigators wishing to participate in the initial technical meeting described above should be submitted to Ms. Manju Rani at the address and by the date indicated above. Applications received at any later date will be considered for inclusion in later stages of the project.

### **Review and Award Procedure**

Applications will be reviewed and awards made by a selection committee of HNP professionals, drawn from the staffs of the World Bank and other institutions, who are both knowledgeable and free of potential conflicts of interest arising from association with any of the applications. The selection committee will make its awards on the basis of three criteria:

- Project Importance and Interest. Highest priority will go to projects that are both important in themselves, carry significant implications for the design of other HNP initiatives, and for which no incidence information is currently available.
- Technical Quality. In order to qualify for funding, an application will need to present an analytical approach clearly capable of identifying the poverty-relevant characteristics of the population groups, and of determining the proportion of total program/policy benefits that reach those groups that are most impoverished. Highest priority will be given to research designs that provide comparative incidence assessments for two or more programs, and/or help explain why as well as whether the programs studied are or are not reaching disadvantaged groups.
- HNP Topic. For applications seeking project funding, highest priority will be given to those dealing with one or more of the four broad topics described above, in the section on coverage. However, applications for funding that deal with other topics are also welcome and can be considered for support, and/or for assistance in obtaining financial support from

other sources. The HNP topic covered will not be a factor in considering applications that do not seek project funding.

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