Ultra-poverty and food insecurity in Nord Region of Burkina Faso

Children are often separated from families due to work, religious schooling or marriage

- Children are sent to work in gold mines, cotton fields or cocoa plantations in the South of Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast or other countries

When separated, children face high risk of exposure to abuse

- Working under hazardous conditions (e.g., carrying heavy loads, working with chemicals or underground) or being involved in the Worst Forms of Child Labor (e.g., slavery, debt bondage, transactional sex)
- Girls working as maids face risks of sexual abuse
- Boys sent to study in religious schools (Madrassas) are often forced to do hazardous work (e.g., begging on the streets) and may be exposed to corporal punishment.
STUDY ASSUMPTIONS

Assumptions about underlying causes of family separation, involvement in child labor and exposure to other child protection issues:

**Extreme Poverty**
- Trickle Up Program
- Economic strengthening (saving group, seed grants, etc.)

**Lack of information and cultural norms**
- ADEFAD’s Child Rights and Protection
- Parents unaware of negative effects of child labor (e.g., risks of sexual violence), undervalue the importance of education for girls.
STUDY DESIGN

- Screening of households (assessing for eligibility)
  - Ineligible
  - Randomization at village level (12 villages)

Control group ‘Wait List’
4 villages, 120 HHs

Trickle Up Group
4 villages, 120 HHs

Trickle Up Plus Group
4 villages, 120 HHs

Baseline interview (Fall, 2014)

12-month follow-up interview (Fall, 2015)
SELECTION CRITERIA

Selection criteria for villages:
12 poorest villages, comparable on socio-economic indicators (poorest yield for their crops, limited access to schools, clean water and limited NGO interventions)

Selection criteria for households:
1. Household classifies as ultra-poor;
2. Household has at least one child ages 10-15;
3. Male head of household provides permission for his wife and child to participate;
4. Eligible and consenting child and female caregiver (parent) can commit to study participation.
Economic empowerment strategies for women:

1. Savings group formation and training
2. Livelihood and household management training
3. Seed capital grants to jump-start or expand a livelihood activity (e.g. vending, animal husbandry).
4. Bi-weekly to monthly one-on-one mentoring and coaching on livelihood development
TRICKLE UP +
CHILD RIGHTS SENSITIZATION COMPONENT

Involves all members of the household and provides information about:

- The dangers of sending children away from home for work
- The negative consequences of early and forced marriage
- The importance of school enrollment, attendance and performance for girls
- Cultural attitudes and expectations around gender that underlie girls’ vulnerability to violence

Developed and delivered by a local organization, Aide aux Enfants et aux Familles Démunies (ADEFAD)
CONCEPTUAL MODEL

INTERVENTION COMPONENTS
- Economic Empowerment Program
- Child Protection Sensitization

CAREGIVER MEDIATORS
- Economic Well-being
- Women’s Empowerment
- Normative Beliefs about Child Protection

CHILD OUTCOMES
- Reduced Family Separation
- Reduced Child Exploitation and Exposure to Violence
- Improved Child Well-being
DATA COLLECTION

- Interviewer-administered surveys at baseline and one-year follow-up
- Administrative data from savings groups

Child’s Questionnaire (40 min)
- Demographics and family structure
- Child Education and Child Protection (Family Separation, Child Labor, Early Marriage)
- Emotional wellbeing (depression, self-esteem, trauma)
- Child abuse

Caregiver Questionnaire (60 min)
- Demographics and household composition
- Wealth and Food Security
- Child Protection (including for younger children & children living away)
- Parental Practices and Attitudes about Child Protection issues
- Caregiver’s Emotional Well-being (stress, depression)
- Women’s Empowerment (decision making power, financial autonomy, exposure to domestic violence)
CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

Implementation of Economic Empowerment Program
- Small number of local markets limit the opportunities for livelihood development
- Teaching basic accounting is challenging due to low literacy levels

Implementation of Child Rights Sensitization
- Lack of sufficient spots for girls in village schools, limiting the potential benefits of sensitization

Implementation of the evaluation study
- Culturally and contextually specific constructs and measurement tools (local definition of household, hazardous labor, abusive practices; household structure and dynamics of multi-generational and polygamous families);
- Seasonality of child protective risks and project activities
THANK YOU!

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