



Sustaining Graduation

A review of the CLM programme in Haiti



Introduction

The *Chemin Lavi Miyò* (CLM) project was designed as an intervention to tackle extreme poverty at an individual level in Haiti. It is a multi-pronged livelihood protection and promotion scheme, belonging to the Graduation family, as first developed by BRAC in Bangladeshⁱ. The CLM project was piloted by Concern and *Fonkoze* over an 18-month period between June 2007 and December 2008, in three locations in Haiti – Boucan Carre, Pointe-a-Raquette on the island of La Gonave and Trou-du-Nord. In total, 150 female heads of household were enrolled in the pilot, 50 from each location. The programme was built around five core elements:

- (a) The comprehensive targeting of the poorest women in the community.
- (b) Support in the form of a cash transfer to specifically assist with basic needs, food security and health care for a six month period.
- (c) Establishing formal savings into which participants are encouraged to put a small amount of savings on a weekly basis.
- (d) Skills training and regular coaching (accompaniment) for a period of 18 months.
- (e) The transfer of two productive assets to assist with kick starting a sustainable economic activity – usually a choice between livestock (goats or chickens) or the local equivalent of \$40 to start a trading business.

Other elements were included based on an assessment of needs including enhancing access to education, water filtration, housing repairs and the construction of latrines, and the provision of health advice.

The overall purpose of CLM was to strengthen the productive assets and asset management of the extreme poor so they can graduate into one of two paths which will assure continuing and sustained progress out of poverty. The first is to join *TiKredi* the small loan programme that is the next step up from CLM in Fonkoze's tiered strategy and / or use their savings and existing assets to grow and diversify their capital base. The initial success of the programme, as identified in a number of evaluationsⁱⁱ, led to its expansion and by the end of September 2013 Fonkoze had graduated 2,364 CLM members (including almost 1,000 with the support of Concern), with a further 1,261 currently going through the programme.

In the final quarter of 2012 Concern and Fonkoze felt the time was right to revisit a sample of the beneficiaries included in the pilot phase of the exercise to see how sustainable the benefits received at Graduation had proven to be. The following presents some of the key findings of this exercise, a more detailed report is available on request.

Methodology

The results in the following are based on two specific pieces of quantitative data collection. The first compares 82 beneficiariesⁱⁱⁱ across the three locations at three points of time using a number of indicators drawn from a poverty scorecard (known as the *Kat Evalyasyon*). This collects data on a series of assets, assigning each a score based on analysis carried out at programme inception, and

was specifically designed to monitor beneficiary progress. The data was collected first in June 2007 (baseline), two years later in June 2009 (12 months after the end of the cash stipend) and in October 2012 (almost four years after graduation). While the questions used have remained reasonably consistent over time, making comparison possible, unfortunately no counter-factual is available for this group of beneficiaries, so it is not possible to attribute definitively the improvements to the CLM intervention.

The second compares a group of 45 beneficiaries in Boucan Carre with a group of 30 non-beneficiaries identified as being in a similar economic situation at the time of programme start-up. While this does not allow for longitudinal analysis it does give an insight into the extent the improvements in welfare can be attributed to the CLM intervention.

The data from the two specific exercises have been used to supplement each other, and are presented in the following under the same headings used in the original poverty scorecard.

Results

Changes in Housing (2007 to 2012): Information on the client's house was collected using seven specific questions covering the materials used to construct the house, roof and floor, whether the household owned the house and the land on which it stands, the number of rooms in the house and the type of toilet. In 2007 (at the Baseline) the majority of programme participant's houses were made from turf or earth (80.5%), the most common roofing material was straw (59.8%), with the remainder utilising Iron and almost all participants lived in houses with an earth floor (97.6%). Most respondents lived in two room houses (57.3%) and virtually all (97.6%) reported having no toilets, while 73.2% said they owned their own house and 43.9% said they owned the land on which their house stood.

By the time of the 2012 survey the most frequently cited construction material was Cement / Blocks with Wood / Stone, given by 42.7% of respondents, with 91.5% having iron roofs. While the majority of participants still lived in houses with earth floors, the proportion had decreased to 74.4%, with 19.5% living in houses with cement floor. Even though there was little change in terms of the average number of rooms in the house, with 56.1% living in houses of two rooms, there was a large increase in the proportion of respondents saying they had latrines made from cement (42.7%). The majority of those surveyed in 2012 (86.6%) said they owned their own house, and the land on which their house stood (62.2%).

Out of a maximum possible score of 18.5 points for the quality of housing, the mean score at baseline was 3.7, increasing to 7.2 at Graduation and continuing to increase to 7.8 in 2012. Looking at an individual basis, between baseline and graduation 96.2% (the equivalent of 79 beneficiaries) had a higher score, however four years later slightly more than a third of beneficiaries had slipped back in terms of their quality of housing, with 57.7% further improving their score. This translates into a small number of respondents (five) living in housing that was of poorer quality in 2012 than at the programme start in 2007.

Changes in Access to Goods (2007 to 2012): A series of six questions were included on the scorecard to measure information on goods available in the household, specifically dealing with the type of bed the beneficiary slept on, whether they had electricity, whether they owned a bundle of specific household assets, how much land she had, what she did with the land and whether she had livestock.

At baseline, the largest proportion of respondents (39.0%) slept on something on the ground, followed by an iron bed (36.6%), nobody had electricity, and very few respondents owned even a small radio or flashlight. In terms of quantity of land, the most common response was that they had a small plot or less (86.6%), and that they did nothing with this (69.5% of respondents); over half (58.5%) said they had no livestock. In the 2012 survey the most frequent response was that participants slept on an iron

(48.8%) or wooden (28.0%) bed, a large majority still did not have access to electricity, and a low 4.9% of respondents owned a black and white television or radio cassette. The proportion who said they did nothing with their land had dropped (to 56.1%), as had the percentage saying they had no livestock (30.9%), representing improvements over the baseline figures.

Again, when combining these responses into a single score, change can be seen between baseline, when the mean score amongst beneficiaries was 2.3 out of a possible 16, and the 2012 survey, when the mean score reached 4.1, however, this represents a considerable decline in the score for goods from the immediate post-graduation period, when the combined score was 5.9. This translates to slightly more than two thirds of respondents (53 or 67.9%) recording a decline between graduation and 2012, with 12 (15.4%) managing to maintain their 2009 level and 13 (16.7%) improving their goods score from Graduation. However, in the 2013 work carried on Boucan Carre sizable differences were observed between the beneficiaries and the comparison group, with 28.9% of beneficiaries having two or more large animals, compared to only 6.7% in the comparison group, similarly 63.3% of the counter-factual group had no animals, while only 4.4% of beneficiaries said this was the case.

Changes in Household Income: The third section deals with questions related to household income, but rather than trying to assess how much this income is, the focus was more on sources of additional income^{iv}. Clients were asked if they had a spouse or partner and if they did what kind of work he did and what proportion of his income he contributed to the household. The final question related to whether the client received money transfers from abroad. The mean score at baseline on this index was 2.1 out of 10, increasing to 2.8 by 2012, a decline from the immediate post-Graduation score of 3.3, but still one third above the baseline value.

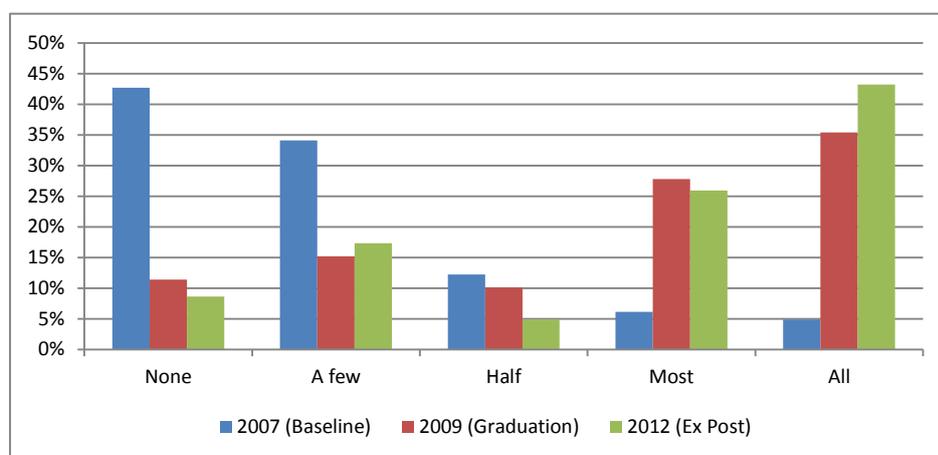
At Baseline, 67.1% of participants had a spouse or partner, for those who stated the type of work that he did, the most common response was that he was a day labourer or tenant farmer. Responses to the proportion of income contributed to the household were varied, and virtually nobody (92.7%) received a transfer from abroad. In the 2012 survey, the proportion of participants with partners had dropped slightly to 63.0%, though the range of activities they were engaged in had changed, with a much greater proportion (39.5%) now being engaged in farming or petty commerce. The proportion of income they contributed to the household improved with 40.7% giving most or all. Again, only a small proportion of participants were receiving transfers from abroad. This corresponds to 22 (27.2%) respondents having a score for income that was worse in 2012 than 2007, with 15 (18.5%) having no change and 44 (54.3%) having an improvement.

Basic Changes in the Client's Status: The fourth component of the Poverty Scorecard contains information on the client on five specific indicators – whether she can read and write, how many children she has, how many children go to school, how many times per week do they cook meat in the house and how many people live in the house. The score in 2012 had increased to 5.7 from 3.8 out of 13 in 2007, though this represented a slight slip from the 2009 score of 6.2.

At the start of the programme in 2007, 81.7% of participants could not read or write, 84.1% had four or more children and slightly over half (51.2%) lived in households of between four and six. In terms of school attendance, 42.7% said that none of their children attended school and for 34.1% a few attended, 91.5% said that they occasionally cooked meat in the household. By 2012, the proportion of respondents who could not read or write had fallen to 60.5% (though 27.2% said they could only read), the proportion with four or more children increased slightly to 87.7% and 48.1% of respondents lived in households of size four to six and 30.9% in households of seven to ten. However, the largest difference came in terms of the proportion of children who are going to school – in 2012, 43.2% of respondents said all of their children attended school and 25.9% said most did, compared to less than 10% who said this was the case at baseline. (See Figure 1 below for an illustration of the trend across the three points in time.) This is consistent with the comparison between the two groups in Boucan Carre, where 71.1% of participants said they sent all of their children to school (compared to 23.3%

amongst the non-beneficiaries) with no respondent saying they sent none of their children to school (compared to 46.7% amongst the non-beneficiaries).

Figure 1 Responses to the Question “How many children go to school?” (?)

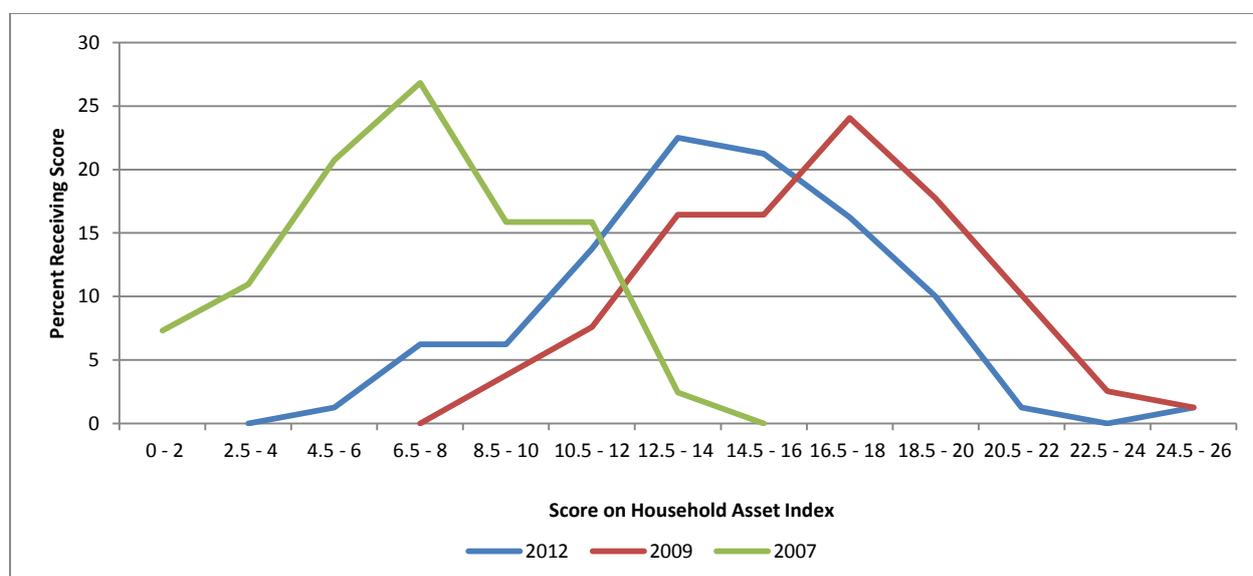


Similarly, the proportion of respondents who said they ate meat at least once a week had increased to 40.7% in 2012 though this represents a decrease on the 52.4% who ate meat at least once a week immediately

after graduation. This all translates into 65 (75.3%) respondents having a score on this sub section that was better in 2012 than 2007, with five (6.2%) having no change and 11 (13.6%) registering a lower score.

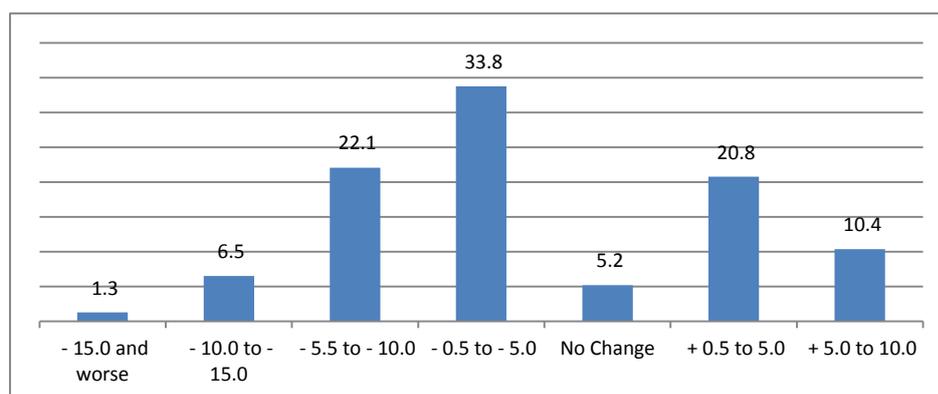
So, are clients better off now than at the start?: One of the most important intended uses of the poverty scorecard was that it would be able to keep track of a beneficiary’s progress during the implementation of the CLM programme, and during an exercise such as this to see what happened to them subsequently. To ensure comparability across years, the answers to 16 of the questions which could reasonably be expected to show some variance over time^v were included in a revised poverty scorecard giving a total maximum score of 42.5. Over time, the mean scores showed an increase from 7.2 at baseline to 16.6 at Graduation with a slight fall thereafter to 14.2 in 2012. The highest score recorded at any stage for any beneficiary is 25.5, recorded in 2012, still a long way from the maximum of 42.5. Figure 2 (below) shows the distributions of clients receiving specific scores for each year –at the baseline the spike, representing the most common ranges of scores, was between 6.5 and 8 (recorded by 26.8% of beneficiaries). In 2009 this spike came between 16.5 and 18 points on the scorecard, in 2012 this had dropped back to between 12.5 and 14 (for 22.5% of respondents).

Figure 2 Poverty Scores, 2007, 2009 and 2012



It is also important to consider how many people have not improved or have in fact decreased their score between different points of time. Between the 2007 baseline and the survey carried out in 2012, 96.2% of women included in the programme (equivalent to 77 participants) had a higher score; between baseline (2007) and graduation (2009), all except one (98.7%) recorded a better score. However, it is between the graduation (2009) and four years later (2012) that a downward trend is observed raising concern about households who slip back after graduation, underlining the importance of follow-up to ensure the benefits of the programme is sustainable for them.

Figure 3 Scale of the Decline from Post-Graduation (2009) to 2012



The scale of this downward trend is also important, the figure (to the left) shows it is possible to divide respondents into three clear groups based on changes in their *Kat Evalyasyon* score between 2009 and

2012. The first comprises the 24 (31.2%) beneficiaries who have continued on an upward trajectory after graduation; the second are the 30 (39.0%) who have maintained the same score or have registered a small decline; the third are the 23 (29.9%) beneficiaries who have recorded a sizable decline in their asset score after graduation. While the analysis shows that those who have managed to push on, are in general older and have a smaller number of children under five, understanding what happened to the group who have slipped back considerably needs more careful examination.

Conclusions and Lessons

The “average” level of household assets has increased considerably between the baseline and the survey carried out four years after graduation, most notably in the area of housing, but with a more disappointing result in the area of livestock holding. In fact the small “average” level of decline from six months after graduation to almost three and a half years later suggests that the benefits have been sustainable. However, behind these figures is the reality that while almost a third (31.2%) have continued to improve their asset holding after graduation and a further 39.0% have been able to maintain their improved standard of living (or have slipped back slightly), a further 29.9% have slipped back considerably. This suggests the need for more concerted follow-up with beneficiaries; however, given the specific context of Haiti, it is also distinctly possible that even those who have slipped backwards are better off than their contemporaries, the lack of a meaningful control group means this cannot be assessed however.

Within the overall score, different trends emerge across the various clusters of indicators, with the ones related to housing showing the largest improvement, likely a reflection of the fact Fonkoze provided each household with cement, tin roofs and labour to renovate their existing homes, in addition to the actual programme. However, construction materials were provided before graduation so it does not explain the continued improvement in housing between graduation (2009) and 2012 for a large number of the participants. On the other hand, of particular concern are the changes in livestock holdings and income earned from these. As these were passed on as part of the asset transfer, they were to be the means by which the beneficiaries continued progress out of poverty could be assured. However, the rather large proportion who report having fewer animals in 2012, compared to the six months after graduation needs to be examined.

In terms of being able to assess progress, over the six years of the programme, we have found that using a poverty scorecard based on ownership of selected household assets as a proxy for household income or expenditure is considerably easier for project staff to implement. The value of the tool is strengthened when ownership of the assets is observed to be closely correlated with poverty status based on the analysis of more complex household surveys. However, the appropriateness of some of the indicators included in the *Kat Evalyasyon* for monitoring purposes, as opposed to targeting, has to be questioned, and needs to be considered more carefully in the design of the monitoring and evaluation system.

The lack of a strong correlation between the *Kat Evalyasyon* score, and other measures included, such as the food security and the self-assessed acceptability within the community score are interesting, but not that surprising, showing they are measuring quite different things, and that such a programme impacts on many areas of the Extreme Poor's lives. The attention given to developing the *Kat Evalyasyon* poverty scorecard, while welcome, underlines the need to identify a scale that measures acceptability or empowerment, while existing tools, such as the Household Dietary Diversity Score, which currently exist, should be used in a consistent manner to record data and track changes over time.

This exercise represents a brief attempt to assess the sustainability of benefits from a Graduation programme a number of years after the beneficiary has moved on, however, it is based on a very small sample size and has been implemented in a rather unique and difficult context. It suggests that the benefits of the programme may indeed be sustainable over a longer time frame, but that this needs to be the focus of more research on the Graduation programme going forward.

Contact Us

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References

ⁱ See Hashemi, Syed M., and Aude de Montesquiou. 2011. "Reaching the Poorest: Lessons from the Graduation Model." Focus Note 69. Washington, D.C.: CGAP, March for a fuller description of this.

ⁱⁱ See for example, Huda, K., and A. Simanowitz (2010) Chemin Levi Miyo – Final Evaluation (24 Months) On behalf of: Concern Worldwide Consultative Group To Assist The Poor (CGAP) March 30, 2010

ⁱⁱⁱ It is acknowledged that collecting data on only 82 beneficiaries from the first cohort does leave us with a small sample size, however, comparing the results for this group and the bigger group in 2007 and 2009 suggests there are no significant differences between the groups.

^{iv} In a separate question respondents were asked to assess whether their incomes had increased, decreased or stayed the same in the past year, with 39 saying it had decreased, 32 saying it had stayed the same and eight saying it had increased. When this is correlated with the score on the 2012 Kat Evalyasyon, it is apparent there are very small differences between those who said their income had decreased (13.9) or stayed the same (13.8), but those who said their income had increased recorded a considerably higher score (17.3).

^v house, roof, floor, own house, rooms, own land, toilet, bedding material, electricity, assets (TV / Radio), land, use the land, livestock, read and write, children at school, cook meat