The Challenge

A major constraint in the understanding of development is the absence of long-term, representative, rich and high-quality data. Most data collection efforts are carried out at a single point in time and focus on only a few variables of interest, relevant to a particular policy question or impact evaluation.

Panel studies can offer rich, comparable, and representative data by regularly tracking individuals over an extensive period of time with a wide array of questions to capture both the natural and man-made environment in which they live. This relies on strong survey infrastructure, and experienced personnel ensuring high quality standards of the data collected.

Socioeconomic Panel

Innovations for Poverty Action (IPA) Philippines and the Global Poverty Research Lab (GPRL) at Northwestern University have partnered with the Philippines Institute for Development Studies and the University of the Philippines School of Economics to launch a twenty-year panel survey, tracking a sample of rural households Western Visayas.

The objective is to provide publicly available data for government actors, researchers, and practitioners to better understand the long-run processes of social and economic development. Most importantly, the panel will serve as a unique platform for enabling rigorous impact evaluations that test specific programs and policies designed to alleviate poverty.

The survey instrument will encompass over 500 questions covering household demographics, education, health, economic and social outcomes, and others. By randomly selecting barangays in rural Western Visayas, and households within these barangays, the panel will create a representative sample of rural households in the region.

We are partnering with researchers and organizations to run rigorous impact evaluations on the panel sample, as a way of leveraging data collection efforts and infrastructure already in place. Our priority is to run evaluations with high policy relevance for which long-run data will be important, as well as simple light-touch interventions with high expected impact, for which independent data collection would not be practical otherwise.

PSPS at a Glance

- **Location:** Rural Western Visayas (Aklan, Antique, Capiz, Iloilo, Negros Occidental)
- **Scope:** ~16,500 households across 750 barangays
- **2023:** First wave of data collection in August
  - Regular data collection every four years
- **2043:** Various interventions take place over twenty-year time frame
The panel survey will help shed light on five key sectors of policy importance:

1. Livelihoods
2. Environment
3. Health
4. Education
5. Labor and Migration

At the most basic level, this panel survey will collect demographic information, including age, education, family structure, etc. as well as economic outcomes like employment, household income, consumption, assets, food security, etc. Collecting these data regularly will showcase how the economic well-being and livelihoods of these households change over time.

Secondly, the panel survey will include questions on key priority sectors in the Philippines: educational outcomes, climate change effects, health, and migration choices. Through collecting information on these sectors, researchers and policy makers will be able to base policy decisions on high-quality data and feel empowered to rigorously test the impact of their programs through the platform of the panel.

IPA Philippines is seeking implementing partners—such as governments, NGOs, and multilateral organizations—who are interested in measuring the impact of their programs through rigorous impact evaluations as a part of this panel survey.

For more information about the Philippines Socioeconomic Panel Survey, please contact Tara Marwah, Policy Manager at IPA Philippines: tmarwah@poverty-action.org