

A. KCP III CONCEPT NOTE TEMPLATE BASIC INFORMATION

Proposal Title	Giving community-based organizations (CBOs) a financial stake in local government performance: A field experiment in Burkina Faso
Theme	Service Delivery and Aid Effectiveness
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Country/Region	Burkina Faso / Africa
Managing Unit	DECIE
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Proposal Amount (USD)	\$50k
Partners (if applicable)	Burkina Faso Local Government Support Project (PACT); Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD); German Institute for Global Area Studies (GIGA); World Bank Governance GP and Transport and Digital Development GP

B. PROPOSAL DETAILS

1. Research motivation, objectives and alignment with the World Bank Group’s twin goals.

Research motivation and objectives

This proposed research tackles the persistent challenge of subpar local government performance in Burkina Faso, one of the poorest countries in the world. As part of a multi-year joint research program with the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD) and as part of the Bank-financed Local Government Support Project (PACT), we propose a randomized controlled trial (RCT) to test if the accountability of municipal governments in Burkina Faso can be improved by giving existing, influential local community-based organizations (CBOs) a financial stake in the performance of their municipal government. Selected partner CBOs are offered an annual cash grant, which is a function of the year-to-year improvement in their municipal government's service delivery performance. Municipal service delivery performance is measured and scored independently through Burkina Faso's annual municipal performance monitoring survey (SUPERMUN). Under the cash grant scheme, CBOs can maximize their payoff if they are able to nudge or pressure municipal decision makers to address shortfalls in municipal service quality. Importantly, the cash grants are not conditional on any specific actions the CBOs undertake – they are simply a function of the annual change in their municipal government’s performance. Thus, the intervention is designed to incentivize CBOs to use their own local knowledge, influence, and mobilization capacity to influence their municipal government to fix its biggest performance issues.

Together with our government partners in Burkina Faso, we designed this local government accountability intervention along three basic principles:

1. Partnering with existing CBOs: In countries with limited state capacity, community-based organizations are often among the highest functioning entities at the local level. There are over 6,000 registered CBOs in Burkina Faso, outside the capital province, and a substantial number of informal community organizations. Examples of community-based organizations include producer cooperatives, savings or credit groups, parent-teacher organizations, women's associations, hometown associations and other membership-based groups. In many municipalities, CBOs are the most effective community mobilizers, and many CBOs have significant organizational and financial management capacity, even in comparison with the municipal governments. However, they primarily exist to serve the interests of their member base. Our intervention therefore seeks to leverage the existing organizational and collective action capacity of CBOs for the community as a whole, by incentivizing CBOs to actively lobby for better municipal services.
2. Using local knowledge and ideas: Rather than prescribing specific actions to the partner CBOs, we believe that the CBOs themselves are best placed to determine what actions they could take to increase their municipal government's performance scores. Since their cash grants are tied to the actual performance of their municipal government, these incentivize CBOs to use their specific and highly localized local knowledge, influence and mobilization capacity to exert influence over municipal government performance.
3. Built-in cost-effectiveness: Since the cash grants to CBOs are solely a function of changes in municipal government performance, the overall costs of the approach relate to its effectiveness. If the financial incentives are ineffective and CBOs fail to have a positive impact on municipal government performance, little or no cash reward is owed to them. Even if the CBOs themselves have no impact but municipal government performance improves for exogenous reasons, project funds would benefit carefully selected, high-functioning CBOs and thus contribute to building Burkina Faso's civil society.

The intervention has been pilot-tested in 2015/16 with very encouraging results. Out of six pilot CBOs, five began to very actively participate in municipal governance, choosing to seek out solutions together with municipal decision makers, mobilize public pressure in under-served villages, or gather and disseminate information.

We are now applying to the KCP to pursue a nationwide randomized controlled trial, covering 170 treatment and 169 control municipalities. We seek to better understand (1) the types of strategies CBOs adopt to influence the performance of their municipal administration, (2) the reactions of local policymakers, and (3) whether the resulting accountability pressures lead to measurable improvements in the quality of municipal services. The intervention and initial data collection are fully funded through the Bank-assisted PACT project. Through this proposal, we seek funding to support direct research and capacity building costs for the implementation, analysis, and results dissemination of the RCT.

Alignment with the World Bank Group's twin goals

Burkina Faso continues to be among the poorest countries in the world and was unable to meet many of the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). A non-inclusive pattern of economic growth and the sub-optimal performance of the public administration have limited the impact of economic growth and stability on poverty reduction, anti-corruption and service delivery. However, prioritization of decentralization in the country's National Development Strategy (PNDES; 2016-2020) signals a strong government commitment to making decentralized service delivery a key approach to reducing extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity, with the government seeking to increase the share of central government budget transferred to local governments to 15 percent by 2020.

While the legal and political framework for decentralization is in place, progress towards the creation of effective local administrations has been slow, threatening to undermine public confidence in local government institutions. The critical challenge for the Burkinabe Government is to restore public confidence by rapidly strengthening local governance institutions, and by developing a modern and accountable administration that is capable of effectively and efficiently delivering high quality services and tangible development outcomes for all its citizens. Improving the enabling environment and operational effectiveness of local governments will help increase opportunities for improving the

quality of service delivery, in line with the government's objectives for decentralization. This, in turn, will allow decentralization to be rolled out more effectively.

The annual SUPERMUN municipal performance data collection, which we have developed and implemented since 2013 in collaboration with the PACT and a wide range of local stakeholders, will be the basis for the calculation of annual cash grant disbursements to CBOs. The SUPERMUN survey gathers data on the most consequential bottlenecks in municipal government performance and institutional capacity. The performance indicators are designed to comprehensively cover key areas of municipal services (primary education, health, water, civil services, administration) and to be maximally comparable across time and localities, amenable to independent measurement, and resistant to manipulation by local actors.

In addition to a set of institutional capacity indicators (such as sufficient staffing of the municipal government and tax revenue), the following service delivery indicators are collected:

- Difference in relation to the national average in the proportion of eligible students completing primary school in the municipality;
- Delay in the provision of school supplies at the beginning of the school year (measured in days);
- Proportion of schools with a functioning source of clean water;
- Proportion of schools with a functioning latrine per class;
- Proportion of births taking place at a health facility;
- Proportion of children aged 0-11 months receiving a set of recommended vaccines;
- Proportion of primary healthcare facilities receiving a sufficient supply of natural gas each month (for refrigeration);
- Proportion of population with access to a source of clean water (as defined by national standards);
- Proportion of newborns for whom birth certificates are issued.

These service delivery indicators are highly relevant for SDGs 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), 4 (Quality Education), and 6 (Clean Water & Sanitation). Our proposed work also contributes to SDG 16 (Strong Institutions), and to SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals) as every part of the research was conceived in close collaboration with the Government of Burkina Faso, Bank operational teams, and researchers from Burkina Faso, Europe, and the US.

Contributions to the research literature

Our experiment is motivated by the objective of finding a low-cost and potentially superior alternative to community monitoring interventions that rely on externally induced citizen participation. While effective in some cases (e.g. Bjorkman and Svensson, 2009; Barr et al., 2012), community monitoring and other "participatory" interventions in local governance tend to be costly and vulnerable to well-known sustainability problems (Mansuri and Rao, 2012), including elite capture (Platteau and Gaspart, 2003; Ensminger, 2012) and excessive demands on citizens (Khwaja, 2004). If external facilitation and funding flows are removed, "induced" participation typically does not continue on its own (Mansuri, 2013), which is a particular challenge in the context of community monitoring programs (ibid.). Our intervention eliminates the most controversial aspect of community monitoring approaches: the costly creation of new local institutions or collective action structures through extensive external facilitation or injection of funds. Instead, we leverage the existing collective action capacity and social influence of local existing CBOs. Unlike community monitoring programs, which require large up-front investments (Banerjee et al., 2010), our cash grants incentivize existing, well-functioning CBOs (CBOs are invited to apply for the scheme and are competitively selected). and are proportional to their actual impact on municipal government performance (CBOs are invited to apply for the scheme and are competitively selected). This implies potentially superior value for money.

Simultaneously, our intervention has the potential to avoid the adverse consequences of direct financial incentives to public servants. While pay-for-performance can improve service delivery (Banerjee et al., 2008; Basinga et al., 2011), it can also adversely affect the intrinsic motivation of service providers (Deci et al., 1999; Fang and Gerhart, 2012), their image motivation (Ariely et al., 2009; Belle and Cantarelli, 2015), and peer pressure to perform (Fuster et al., 2010).

Our intervention, rather than providing financial incentives to municipal administrations, incentivizes a third party (the CBOs) to hold the municipal administration accountable. Payments for CBOs, in turn, are not tied to specific actions. Instead, CBOs are given a stake in their municipal government's performance.

Importantly, activities of the CBOs targeted by our experiment continue to be the product of voluntary collective action. This distinguishes our intervention from the contracting of civil society organizations to deliver specific activities at the local level, as it is frequently practiced by development programs. Rather than being instructed with "best practices" or paid to perform specific actions, the partner CBOs are encouraged to develop their own strategies of influence, using their local knowledge and the resources available to them. By collecting data on the strategies that CBOs pursue out of their own motivation, our project also sheds light on mechanisms of informal accountability and civil society influence in local governance and on the underlying social and political norms.

2. Describe research questions to be answered, the associated analytical approach and methodology, as well as the type of data expected to use.

Research questions

We aim to answer four primary research questions:

1. If CBOs are given a financial stake in the performance of their municipal administration, will it cause them to actively hold local decision makers accountable for the quality of municipal services?
2. What strategies do the partner CBOs adopt to influence the performance of their municipal administration?
3. What accountability pressures do municipal decision makers perceive and how do they react to these pressures?
4. Do increased accountability pressures from local CBOs cause improvements in the quality of municipal services?

Analytical approach

We propose to answer these questions through a randomized controlled trial (RCT), which will allow us both to identify primary causal relationships (questions 1 and 4) and to shed light on the mechanisms through which the intervention works or fails to do so (questions 2 and 3). The experimental intervention targets local community-based organizations (CBOs) that have been identified as the highest-functioning and most influential local CBOs in their respective municipalities through an initial screening of local CBOs.

To screen potential partner CBOs, our government partner will organize an open competition among local CBOs, which includes a self-administered survey about the CBOs' membership base, resources, and activities. Simultaneously, we will collect information on municipal decision makers' perceptions of the influence of the different local CBOs. This process will be carried out across the entire country in approximately 349 municipalities, excluding only the two largest cities, Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, which have a different local governance structure. The screening process will identify the two highest-potential CBOs in each municipality prior to treatment assignment.

Treatment will be randomly assigned at two levels:

1. Municipality: treatment assignment will be block randomized by region and urban/rural zone (approximately 170 treatment municipalities and 169 control – while there are 349 municipalities in Burkina Faso excluding

Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso, we allow for the fact that a small number do not have functioning local governments and so therefore are not eligible for the intervention);

2. CBO: Within each of the 170 treatment municipalities, one of the two local CBOs that scored highest in an initial screening will be randomly selected for treatment. This provides an internal control group to measure within-municipality CBO treatment spillovers. The two highest-ranking CBOs in each of the 170 control municipalities will serve as a pure control group for CBO-level outcomes.

Outcomes and data

We have three primary categories of outcomes:

- A. CBO activism in municipal affairs. A group-based endline survey will be administered to the CBO leadership and active members. Information will be collected on the frequency of different forms of activism, including direct interaction with municipal decision makers, activities geared towards public pressure or awareness (e.g. radio appearances, coalitions with other groups, protests, etc.), interactions with service providers/facilities, and internal coordination (membership meetings, etc.). Additionally, municipal decision makers will be surveyed about their knowledge of and their interactions with the sampled CBOs.
- B. Perceived accountability pressures by municipal decision makers: Key local bureaucrats and a sample of local councilors will be surveyed about different forms of internal scrutiny, external scrutiny, public pressure, and proactive support from constituents they have experienced over the past year (including, but not limited to citizen inquiries, complaints, direct interactions with CBOs, etc.). Additionally, they will be asked to describe the likely public reactions to hypothetical performance issues. Finally, they will be asked to rate the influence of the sampled (treatment or control) CBOs in their municipality on specific aspects of municipal governance.
- C. Municipal government performance: Changes in municipal government performance will be measured through Burkina Faso's annual municipal performance tracking survey (SUPERMUN) at baseline and after the intervention. SUPERMUN indicators reflect national standards for (i) local government service delivery in primary health, education, water and sanitation, and civil services; and (ii) local government administrative capacity. The indicators were selected to highlight areas which are most consequential for citizen welfare, relevant across the county's ecologically and socially diverse regions, and which are within the domain of control of local governments. Additionally, municipal budgets and procurement plans will be collected to estimate the proportion of resources that have been allocated to fixing those performance issues that are relevant for the cash grant calculation.

Additionally, we will collect cost data on (i) implementing the intervention including advertising the scheme, identifying and training partner CBOs, and administering cash grants including the cash grants themselves; and (ii) administration of Burkina Faso's annual municipal performance tracking survey (SUPERMUN), even though this is administered independently of the research proposed here.

Finally, depending on funding we would like to include a well-structured qualitative component to provide rich contextual insight with which to better interpret the quantitative findings and to gain greater depth and nuance in the analysis of CBO strategies and how these are perceived and reacted to by local administrators and policymakers.

Power calculations for the primary outcomes of interest

We analyze outcomes at three levels: municipal governments, municipal decision makers, and CBOs. Since power is most limited at the level of municipal governments, we decided to carry out the RCT in the largest possible number of municipalities (approximately 170 treatment, 169 control). The estimated minimum detectable effect sizes (MDES) for each level of analysis are reported below.

CBOs: We plan to report omnibus tests for three families of indicators, each related to a specific outcome: (1) CBO activism in general; (2) CBO involvement in municipal affairs; (3) Perceived influence of CBOs. Outcomes (1) and (2) are measured through a group-based CBO survey, i.e. for each indicator there one observation per CBO. Outcome (3) is measured through a survey of municipal decision makers and is therefore clustered by CBO. We calculate with a medium intracluster correlation of 0.4, because all respondents in a cluster are asked about the same CBO, but not all are equally likely to have interacted with it. With 170 treated, 170 spillover, and 338 pure control CBOs, our MDES with power 0.8 (and conservatively assuming Bonferroni correction for three comparisons to attain an overall false positives rate below 0.05) is 0.35 SD for outcomes (1) and (2), and 0.24 SD for outcome (3).

Municipal officials: At the level of municipal decision makers we compare (1) perceived accountability pressures (omnibus test) and (2) the frequency municipal decision makers' interactions with CBOs (omnibus test). Both are measured via a survey of municipal officials and are thus clustered at the municipal level. If we survey 15 decision makers per municipality and assume an intra-cluster correlation of 0.4, our MDES with power 0.8 is 0.24 SD (adjusted for three comparisons).

Municipal government: We analyze three outcomes at the level of municipal governments: (1) Municipal performance scores; (2) Proportion of municipal budget directly allocated to the SUPERMUN performance indicators; (3) Proportion of municipal procurement volume related to the performance indicators. With 170 treatment and 169 control municipalities, our MDES at power 0.8 is 0.35 SD, assuming correction for three comparisons.

Overcoming threats to internal validity

Imperfect randomization: To ensure true random assignment of treatment and control conditions, the randomization will be carried out by the Principal Investigator. A list of only the treatment municipalities and treatment CBOs will be forwarded to the implementing partner.

Non-compliance: At the level of our implementing partner, the risk of non-compliance with the treatment assignment is minimal, given that the PACT has successfully carried out RCTs in the past and our close working relationship. At the level of partner CBOs, we consider refusals of the treatment unlikely, because the potential rewards should be very attractive to CBOs and the partnership agreement will only be offered to CBOs who have revealed their interest through applying (treatment will be randomly assigned, but to become eligible CBOs will need to apply).

Attrition and unit nonresponse: Little attrition is expected among CBOs, because the intervention targets established, well-functioning CBOs that are unlikely to dissolve. In the endline survey, nonresponse by individual CBO members is not an issue, because the survey is group-based. In the survey of municipal decision-makers we expect high response rates, due to the political weight of our implementation partner (PACT). To maximize respondents' availability, we will try to coordinate the endline survey with the annual municipal performance survey. If necessary, we will test for differential response rates by treatment status and make the appropriate adjustments.

Spillover effects: We minimize spillover effects between municipalities by restricting treatment eligibility to CBOs that only operate in a single municipality. Within municipalities, externalities on the activism of other CBOs (e.g. coordination or substitution effects) will be estimated directly, by comparing control CBOs in treatment municipalities to pure control CBOs.

Measurement error: To prevent endogenous measurement error, data collection procedures are identical across treatment and control groups. An equal number of CBOs will be surveyed in treatment and control municipalities. Data collection teams will be regionally based, and each team will cover treatment and control municipalities.

Hawthorne effects: To prevent results from being confounded by Hawthorne effects, we ensure that treatment and control CBOs (as well as municipal administrations) are (a) equally aware of the program and their potential future eligibility, and (b) are subjected to the same data collection procedures. The screening of CBOs and the endline survey is designed equally in treatment and control municipalities (screening occurs prior to random assignment). Ex ante,

applicant CBOs will know that there is a 50 percent chance that the program will be implemented in their municipality in the current phase (others may be covered later).

Overcoming threats to causal attribution

Information externalities: To rule out that treatment effects are driven by information spillovers from the partner CBO to municipal decision makers, municipal administrations in both the treatment and control municipalities will be presented with the same information that is also shared with the partner CBOs. This information will be presented in the form of a scorecard. This scorecard will also be posted publicly in the town hall, accessible to all municipal workers.

Research transparency: Our design will be pre-registered at the AEA social science registry. A detailed analysis plan will be added prior to the research team's access to endline data. Moreover, to ensure that our choice of estimation strategies, analyses, and data cleaning procedures is not affected by the results of the experiment, we plan to conduct at least one first pass of data analysis in a results-blind manner. For this purpose, our data collection firm will provide a data set with permuted treatment identifiers, while withholding the true treatment identifiers until we request them.

3. Describe how the proposal addresses the issues facing the Bank clients and operations as well as the implication of the policy relevance.

World Bank support for decentralization and local governance in Burkina Faso

Burkina Faso has undertaken various steps towards administrative and political decentralization since the early 1990s. The 1991 Constitution organized the local government system into territorial units (collectivités territoriales). The 2004 Code General des Collectivités Territoriales consolidated the role of regions and municipalities as the two levels of decentralized local government and shifted certain responsibilities for basic public service provision (for example in health, education and water) to the municipal level. The transition of legal responsibilities and decision authority for local service provision from the central government to local jurisdictions was not accompanied by measures that sufficiently addressed important implementation constraints, including insufficient capacity and decision autonomy of municipal governments and a lack of timely availability of funds. At the same time, accountability structures for municipal governments continued to rely primarily on top-down oversight (tutelage), a legacy of French colonial administration. Despite the existence of elected municipal councils since 2006, the direct accountability of municipal administrations towards their communities remains weak or inexistent, and citizen involvement in municipal governance processes was lacking.

The World Bank is supporting the decentralization process in Burkina Faso by addressing several of these challenges. The Bank-assisted Community-Based Rural Development Project (Programme National de Gestion de Terroirs; PNGT), first approved in 2000 and currently in its third phase, aims to enhance the capacity of rural communities and decentralized institutions for the implementation of local development plans (World Bank, 2013). In 2005, the Administrative Capacity Building Project (Programme de Renforcement des Capacités Administratives) was introduced to strengthen the central government's capacity in the planning, organization, and monitoring of the decentralization process. The Burkina Faso Local Government Support Project (PACT) was approved in 2011 with the objective of strengthening the central government's capacity for administrative and fiscal decentralization and the institutional capacities of municipalities, and to improve accountability linkages between local policy makers and citizens. Additional financing for the PACT was approved in 2017.

Building capacity for evidence-based policy making

Since 2013, our team has worked with Burkina's Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization (MATD, which houses the PACT project) to develop an ambitious program of policy innovation and experimentation in the area of local governance support. Our shared goal was to develop and test innovative solutions to problems of municipal

governance that could become the basis for future government programs. This has since grown into a research and capacity building initiative known as REGLAB (Recherche expérimentale sur la gouvernance locale au Burkina Faso/Experimental research on local governance in Burkina Faso; see www.reglab-burkina.org). As part of this research partnership, we have already implemented two large-scale RCTs, several ancillary research studies, and generated a wealth of data on municipal governance in Burkina Faso.

One of several outcomes of this research collaboration has been the establishment of a municipal performance monitoring survey (SUPERMUN). From 2018 onwards SUPERMUN will be jointly implemented by the PACT and the National Agency for the Promotion of ICT (ANPTIC; ANPTIC also implements the Bank-assisted eBurkina Project), with participation of the Association of Municipalities of Burkina Faso (AMBF) and several line ministries (Economy and Finance, Health, Primary Education and Literacy, and Water and Sanitation). Originally developed for an RCT of municipal performance scorecards, SUPERMUN now annually tracks a set of indicators of public service quality and institutional capacity at the municipal level. SUPERMUN data will be used in a variety of ways by government agencies and research institutes in Burkina Faso. Our proposed experimental intervention – the cash grant scheme for CBOs – will directly be utilizing SUPERMUN data. This illustrates the strong stakeholder engagement and the links between our work and government priorities, strong ties to Bank operations, as well as the study's potential for dissemination and policy influence within the Burkinabe government.

As a result of our REGLAB collaboration, policy innovation and experimentation has been integrated as an explicit objective of PACT's additional financing, which became effective in 2018. Through the PACT, the government has been actively involved in the conception and design of the CBO incentive scheme and has co-funded and implemented a small-scale proof-of-concept pilot of this intervention in 2015-16 with six CBOs. This pilot suggests that CBOs respond strongly to the cash grant incentive. Five out of six partner CBOs showed significant activism, adopting a range of strategies to influence municipal government performance. Some CBOs favored public pressure, drawing public attention to performance shortfalls and mobilizing under-served populations. Others chose to point out performance issues to local decision makers and to constructively lobby for the necessary investments in public services. Several CBOs successfully formed coalitions with other local groups to increase advocacy. One CBO went to great lengths by collecting highly localized information on public service access and identified localities that were under-served in multiple dimensions.

Based on the encouraging qualitative results from the pilot study, the PACT will fully fund the intervention costs for the full-scale RCT. The variety of approaches and the level of involvement of the CBOs in the pilot study leads us to expect that the cash grant intervention can tap into significant existing collective action potential. The proposed nationwide RCT will now examine if this translates into actual improvements in municipal services, if the CBOs' involvement is self-sustaining, and if distributive conflict over cash grants or crowding-out of intrinsically motivated civic participation pose potential risks to the sustainability of the approach.

Direct policy impact of the proposed research

The CBO cash grants experiment is directly relevant to the government's objectives of improving the institutional capacity and accountability of municipal governments and expanding access to public services for under-served populations, as reflected in its National Economic and Social Development Plan (PNDES). By targeting civil society actors and focusing on informal accountability mechanisms, it complements other accountability interventions implemented by the government and various development partners, which primarily target problems of formal institutional and political oversight.

Based on the results of the proposed experiment, the government is committed to scale up, down, or otherwise modify the CBO incentive scheme in the future. Prior to advocating for a scaling up and continuation of the cash grant intervention, we plan to carry out a second, cross-cutting experimental phase, in which the financial rewards to CBOs will be discontinued in half of the treatment group and introduced in half of the control group. This serves to evaluate the sustainability of the approach and its longer-term impact on CBO activities. Along with qualitative insights into the intervention's effects on local CBOs and municipal decision makers, this additional experimental phase will be an

important safeguard against potential negative externalities or unintended consequences. This second phase is, however, beyond the scope of the present proposal.

The nationwide coverage of the experiment ensures that the results are externally valid for all of Burkina Faso. The scale of the study will allow for subgroup comparisons across urban and rural areas, and across different types of CBOs. Knowledge of heterogeneous effects can inform analysts' beliefs about the potential impacts of the intervention in other contexts.

Broader policy relevance

By testing a novel and potentially highly cost-effective strategy in the otherwise crowded community engagement intervention space, the relevance of this study extends beyond its immediate policy impact in Burkina Faso. Relative to other community engagement and “social accountability” interventions, the potential advantages of the experimental intervention are that it does not require large injections external resources into local communities, refrains from “institutional engineering” at the local level, and avoids prescriptions of specific actions or intervention blueprints for CBOs. Instead, the intervention aims to leverage the existing social influence and local knowledge of CBOs, by incentivizing them to develop their own ways and means of lobbying for better municipal governance.

With respect to value for money, the CBO incentive scheme entails much lower intervention and monitoring costs than more “hands-on” approaches to promoting community engagement. If the program causes measurable improvements in the municipal government performance indicators, its cost-effectiveness will compare very favorably to direct interventions to improve the underlying performance indicators (e.g. skilled birth attendance, infant vaccination rates, the availability of school latrines, or the monitoring of the timely delivery of school supplies). This is especially true since the costs of rewarding CBOs increase with the effectiveness of the approach: if the intervention has no actual impact on municipal government performance, the amount of cash grants to CBOs is inherently limited. Moreover, the grant formula ensures that the CBOs gain financially not only from overall improvements in municipal services, but also from preventing services from deteriorating further. We expect actual payouts to range from zero to 1,000,000 FCFA (approx. 1600 USD) per CBO.

The conceptual and operational simplicity of the intervention contributes to the reproducibility of the experimental intervention in other contexts. The intervention consists of three main elements that can be reproduced in a variety of settings: (1) Externally generated information about the third party's performance (and performance deficits); (2) financial rewards that depend on the performance of a third party (in our case the municipal government); and (3) a modest amount of initial training and information dissemination to the cash grant recipients, along with encouragement to generate ideas and strategies of influence. We thus avoid the problem of high-dimensional, bundled, or highly context-specific treatments.

4. Describe the implementation plan, timeline, team members (consultants and affiliated organizations) as well as a brief description of roles and responsibilities of each key member.

Intervention overview

The experimental intervention will be carried out between February 2019 and September 2021. The intervention will consist of the following steps:

1. A census/stocktaking of CBOs is conducted each municipality;
2. An information workshop explaining the program is organized in every municipality and a call for applications is launched for local CBOs;
3. Eligible potential partner CBOs are selected, based on submitted applications;

4. Municipalities and eligible CBOs are randomly assigned into treatment and control groups;
5. Treatment CBOs receive a brief training about municipal performance scores and the cash grant scheme and are asked to hold a meeting to brainstorm about potential actions they could take;
6. CBOs will have a minimum of one full calendar year to implement their self-directed strategies. Depending on the timing of steps one through five, contingent on government procurement processes and potential implementation bottlenecks, they may have additional implementation months (e.g. if CBO training is carried out in August of 2019 as currently planned, CBOs will have the remainder of 2019 and all of 2020 to implement their strategies).
7. Cash grants are disbursed in September of the year following the full calendar year of implementation, after the next iteration of Burkina Faso's annual municipal performance survey (SUPERMUN) which takes place in July each year.

Cash grant scheme

The cash grant scheme is based on a formal partnership agreement between our government partner and the treatment CBOs. This agreement details how the cash grant is calculated. The promised cash grant is a function of the change in the municipal government's performance from the baseline situation (performance in the calendar year prior to training) to the endline situation (performance over the 12-month period corresponding to the full calendar year of implementation). It is calibrated in such a way that the potential payouts reflect both the relative importance of the different performance indicators to the national government and the increasing marginal effort associated with improvements on certain indicators. Moreover, the grant formula ensures that the CBOs gain financially not only from overall improvements in municipal services, but also from preventing services from deteriorating further.

Municipal performance scores

To track municipal government performance over time, we leverage Burkina Faso's annual municipal performance monitoring survey (SUPERMUN), which grew out of a municipal performance scorecard experiment our team has conducted with the government since 2015 and which. As of 2017, SUPERMUN collects data across all of Burkina Faso's municipalities (except for the two largest cities, Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso). SUPERMUN gathers data on the most consequential bottlenecks in municipal government performance and institutional capacity (for example, delays in the delivery of school supplies, broken water points, availability of latrines in primary schools, issuance of birth certificates, shortfalls in tax collection, and failures to execute procurement plans). These performance indicators are designed to comprehensively cover key areas of municipal services (primary education, health, water, civil services, administration) and to be comparable across time and localities, amenable to independent measurement, and resistant to gaming by local actors. The primary way in which a CBO can influence these municipal performance indicators is by nudging municipal decision makers and service providers to perform better. This is because the municipal performance indicators focus on key inputs by municipal administrations to local public services that are particularly vulnerable to administrative failure.

Timeline

Our implementation timeline, including data collection activities, is described in the table on the next page.

Implementation timeline

Activity	Timing (quarter / calendar year)	Status
1. SUPERMUN municipal performance data collection for 2017	Q3 / 2018	Fully funded; preparation in progress
2. CBO census	Q1 / 2019	Fully funded; contracting of implementing partner in progress
3. Information workshops at municipal level and call for applications from CBOs	Q1&2 / 2019	Fully funded; contracting of implementing partner in progress
4. Selection of two potential partner CBOs in each municipality	Q2 / 2019	Fully funded; contracting of implementing partner in progress
5. Random assignment into treatment and control of (i) municipalities and (ii) CBOs	Q2 / 2019	Seeking KCP co-funding for this activity, which is led by the research team
6. CBO training and brainstorming meeting, including detailed data collection of ideas and discussions during the brainstorming meeting	Q2 & Q3 / 2019	Fully funded; contracting of implementing partner in progress
7. SUPERMUN municipal performance data collection for 2018	Q3 / 2019	Fully funded
8. SUPERMUN municipal performance data collection for 2019	Q3 / 2020	Fully funded
9. Endline data collection	Q4 / 2020	Funding to be confirmed
10. SUPERMUN municipal performance data collection for 2020	Q3 / 2021	Fully funded
11. Disbursement of cash grants to eligible CBOs	Q3 / 2021	Fully funded
12. Analysis	Ongoing	Seeking KCP co-funding for this activity, which is led by the research team
13. Policy dialogue and dissemination	Ongoing	Seeking KCP co-funding for this activity, which is led by the research team

Team members

The team possesses a variety of skills and capacities, including experience in experimental field research in Burkina Faso. We have established a strong partnership with the government through ongoing policy innovations and randomized controlled trials and a collaboration on the development and institutionalization of Burkina Faso's annual municipal performance survey. Our field coordinator, based in Ouagadougou, maintains a constant dialogue and daily collaboration with the implementing team within the Burkinabe government, maximizing the likelihood that this work will translate into real-world policy change affecting millions. This is not an exaggeration: as we target improvements in municipal government performance, if we find the intervention to be successful and it is scaled up to all eligible municipalities (which only excludes the country's two largest cities) it would cover an area with an estimated 15.3 million residents.

Research team

- Malte Lierl – Principal Investigator. The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for the conception, design, and analysis of the experiment, methodology, quality control, and coordination of publications and scholarly outputs. Malte is an expert on local-level governance in developing countries, policy innovation and experimentation, and field-based behavioral research. He is a political scientist and development economist, holds a Ph.D. from Yale University, and is currently a Research Fellow at the German Institute of Global and Area Studies (GIGA)
- Marcus Holmlund – Co-Principal Investigator. The Co-PI contributes to research design, analysis, and writing and is responsible for the supervision of field activities relating to intervention implementation and data collection. He manages the collaboration within the World Bank (with the Governance and Transport & Digital Development GPs), with the Burkinabe government, and with development partners. Additionally, Marcus is responsible for outreach to stakeholders, global and local dissemination of findings for policy audiences, and grant management. Marcus is an Economist at the World Bank's Development Impact Evaluation Unit (DIME/DECIE).
- Felipe Dunsch – Research Implementation Specialist. Felipe's responsibilities include the management of field activities (such as survey programming, enumerator training), coordination with PACT, and the production and dissemination of knowledge products, including policy reports and data sets. He is a consultant at the World Bank's Impact Evaluation Unit (DECIE) and a specialist in implementing large scale randomized-controlled trials (RCTs). Felipe is a Doctoral student at the University of Hamburg.
- Sidiki Soubeiga – Implementation Advisor. Sidiki is a Burkinabe doctoral student in development economics at the University of Passau, Germany. He holds a Master's degree in Economics from the University of Ouagadougou and works as a consultant for the World Bank. Prior to taking up his Ph.D. studies, he served as the field coordinator for our local governance research program in Burkina Faso and continues to support this project by serving as an advisor primarily on project design and implementation.
- Sékou Koné – Field Coordinator. Based at the World Bank's country office in Ouagadougou, Sékou Koné has been working as the project's field coordinator or since 2017. He works closely with government partners to facilitate the implementation of experimental interventions and data collection activities, and is the primary in-country liaison with the PACT and with other Burkina-based partners.
- Lars Nordgreen – Research Assistant. Lars recently graduated with an MA in econometrics from the Toulouse School of Economics. He contributes to the collection, management, and analysis of data and to dissemination products, and has been working with our team since 2017.

Broader World Bank team

- Gabriel Dedu – Governance Specialist. Gabriel Dedu is the task team leader for the Local Government Support Project and is closely involved in those aspects of the research proposed here which affect project design and implementation.
- Axel Rifon Perez – ICT Policy Specialist. Axel is the task team leader for the eBurkina project which, among other things, contributes to the annual SUPERMUN municipal performance survey.

Primary government counterparts

- Oulla André Ouattara is the Director of Monitoring and Evaluation at PACT and de facto deputy project lead. He has been spearheading policy innovation and evidence-based program design at the PACT for the past five years.

- Benjamin Sawadogo is the PACT focal point for innovation in project design. He has been coordinating the implementation of various experimental interventions since 2014, cooperating with a wide range of government and civil society stakeholders.

Implementing sub-contractors

- CBO cash grant intervention implementation. An NGO will be recruited by PACT to implement the intervention, based on detailed guidelines developed by the PACT and the research team and under our joint supervision. This recruitment process is ongoing.
- External monitoring and initial data collection. A second organization will be contracted by PACT to conduct external monitoring and quality control of the activities of the implementing NGO, in order to verify treatment fidelity and contribute data (including on initial CBO brainstorming sessions) for the research proposed here. This recruitment process is ongoing.
- Endline data collection. A specialized data collection firm will be recruited to conduct endline data collection.

5. Expected collaboration between DEC and operations (regions and/or global practices) as well as collaboration between Bank staff and researchers and research institutions from developing countries. Brief description of the consultation has been done, if any.

The research described in this proposal builds on a long-standing collaboration between DIME/DECIE (and its research partner, the German Institute of Global and Area Studies), the Governance GP, the Transport and Digital Development GP, and the Government of Burkina Faso. Furthermore, the CMU is highly engaged in this work, as evidenced by an FY18 \$65k WPA allocation for our program of research on local government accountability in Burkina Faso. The work described here is built into two Bank-financed projects: The Local Government Support Project (supervised by the Governance GP) and the Burkina eGovernment Project (also known as eBurkina, supervised by the Transport and Digital Development GP). The research team worked with the GPs on the eBurkina project appraisal document and on the PACT additional financing project paper and related discussions with the Government, and the strong DEC/operations collaboration is maintained through regular communications, joint missions, and joint knowledge dissemination. Through the collaboration with the Government and GPs, the intervention described in this proposal and the SUPERMUN municipal performance monitoring system are fully funded. PACT also provides partial data collection funding for the research proposed here.

The concept for this experiment was first developed with PACT in 2013 at a workshop involving several government agencies. It is now formally incorporated in the project's additional financing which was approved in FY18. As such, the government provides contextual knowledge and implementation capacity, in addition to funding the intervention and initial data collection. A field coordinator, based in Ouagadougou, provides a critical link between the government's PACT team and the research team, and supports the project on operational and administrative aspects related to this work. This facilitates the pass through of information and knowledge between the research and project teams, supports capacity building for the government by engaging them also in the research implementation process using a learning-by-doing approach, and promotes their core role in the [REGLAB](#) research initiative to test innovative solutions to problems of municipal governance (REGLAB, or Experimental research on local governance in Burkina Faso, grew out of the initial workshop in 2013 and comprises a set of experiments, including the one described in this proposal).

6. Expected outputs and outcomes

Expected outcomes

The KCP-funded research will allow us to understand if direct financial stakes in local government performance can motivate CBOs to proactively fight for better municipal services. It will also tell us how they attempt to do so, whether this effectively increases accountability pressures on municipal decision makers, and ultimately if it improves the quality of municipal services. These insights, along with cost effectiveness calculations, will be published for scholarly and policy audiences and used by expert communities within and outside the Bank in designing the next generation of social accountability interventions.

Furthermore, the results of the RCT will directly inform the government of Burkina Faso's choice of whether to continue or discontinue the intervention. If continued, we will advocate for further experimentation, especially with the selective removal of financial rewards, to better understand the sustainability and long-term consequences of the approach, prior to advising on the scaling up of the intervention.

Outputs

1. Datasets

- **Census of CBOs:** The census of CBOs will cover all municipalities of Burkina Faso outside the two large urban centers (Ouagadougou and Bobo-Dioulasso). It will provide valuable information on the spatial distribution of CBOs in Burkina Faso and the prevalence of different types of CBOs and organizational forms, and will include both formally registered associations and informal collective action groups.
- **Endline survey of treatment and control CBOs:** We will survey treatment and control CBOs on both their internal functioning and their external involvement in municipal governance, via structured focus groups with CBO leaders and members. To our knowledge, no similarly comprehensive survey of local CBOs has been done before on a nationwide scale. Beyond the outcome measures for our experiment, the data will open avenues for ancillary and additional research.
- **Strategies of influence:** We will collect detailed data on the initial ideas and strategies of the treatment CBOs by observing the initial brainstorming sessions the treatment CBOs are asked to hold. This data will tell us how the treatment CBOs initially respond to the financial incentive, how they think about their own ability to influence municipal governance, and shed light on the pros and cons of different potential strategies of influence, from the CBOs' perspective.
- **Survey of municipal decision makers:** In addition to the survey on CBO activism, we will survey municipal councilors and executive decision makers on their interaction with CBOs and their perception of accountability pressures from civil society and the public.
- **Intervention costs:** We will collect cost information on all aspects of the intervention, including one-time and continuation costs, as well as potential scale advantages.

2. Scholarly publications and working papers

- **Experimental results:** Results of the experiment will be reported in a self-standing publication, targeted at a high-impact Political Science or Economics journal.
- **CBOs' strategies of influence:** A second scholarly publication will focus on describing the CBO landscape in Burkina Faso and analyzing the strategies of influence CBOs in the treatment group adopt to have an impact

on their municipal government's service delivery performance. The paper will seek to explain why some strategies of influence are adopted over others and what can be learned from this about effective ways of nudging municipal governments to improve their performance.

3. Evidence-based policy dialogue

- Insights gained from this research will be made accessible to policy makers in Burkina Faso via three platforms: (i) Ongoing dissemination of results (including descriptive results from each of the datasets) to PACT and other direct stakeholders through presentations, briefs, reports, and regular communications; (ii) A policy workshop as part of [REGLAB](#) (Recherche expérimentale sur la gouvernance locale au Burkina Faso), our ongoing research collaboration with the PACT and MATD in Burkina Faso; and (iii) Through the steering committee and the scientific advisory boards of SUPERMUN, Burkina Faso's municipal performance monitoring initiative, which includes multiple government, academic, and civil society stakeholders intervening in the field of municipal governance.

4. Further dissemination activities

- Academic audiences: We plan to present results of this project at least three academic conferences.
- World Bank Group: Results will be presented at internal seminars and dissemination events. We will also directly engage with GP staff leading decentralization policy dialogue and operations.
- Broader development community: Blogs, briefs, articles, and reports highlighting both final study results and intermediate research outputs produced from each of the datasets.

7. Proposal Budget

Activity	Expenditures under KCP			Total Expenditures over life of activity, of which		
	FY19	FY20	FY21	KCP	Bank BB	Other sources
Component 1: Research and operational services for the RCT	30	20	0	50	195	130
Component 2: Intervention implementation	0	0	0	0	0	600
Component 3: Endline data collection	0	0	0	0	0	200
Component 4: External implementation monitoring	0	0	0	0	0	130
Total	30	20	0	50	195	1,060

We seek KCP funding to support the work of the research team (Component 1), while PACT will fund most of the costs under Components 2-4. Further detail is provided below.

Component 1 (Research and capacity building services for the RCT) includes the direct and indirect costs of time and travel for the research team to conduct the work and support the processes described in this proposal, including

a full-time field coordinator based in Ouagadougou. The annual cost is \$125k for a period of three years, which we propose to fund through a combination of KCP (\$50k), annual WPA contributions from the CMU (\$65k per year, based on last year's allocation), existing grant funding (\$50k), and additional fundraising (\$80k).

Component 2 (Intervention implementation) includes all aspects of operationalizing the CBO grant intervention, including recruitment, selection, training, and compensation of partner CBOs. As part of this process, the implementing agency will produce process and cost data. This will be funded entirely through the World Bank-assisted PACT and is included in the project's procurement plan.

Component 3 (Endline data collection) includes endline data collection on two of our three primary categories of outcomes: (i) CBO activism in municipal affairs and (ii) perceived accountability pressures by municipal decision makers. The endline survey will take place in late FY20/early FY21 and will be funded through the PACT or through externally raised grant funding. Note that the third primary category of outcomes, on municipal government performance, will be collected through the SUPERMUN annual municipal performance survey which is funded separately (funding for this currently exists through FY22).

Component 4 (External monitoring) includes the cost of independent monitoring and quality control of the activities conducted by the implementing agency, to verify treatment fidelity and contribute data (including on initial CBO brainstorming sessions) for the research proposed here. This will be funded through the PACT and is included in the project's procurement plan.

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