

# Pre-Analysis Plan: Informal Taxation by Chiefs in Rural Sierra Leone

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## I Motivation

My starting point is the literature on informal taxation that suggests it's regressive (poor HHs pay more as share of income), more than formal taxation

- Olken and Singhal (2011) define informal taxes as: Contrib. Other authors include user-fees here, but regressiveness in these payments might come from relatively rich households relying less on these services.
- Van Den Boogaard et.al. (2019) studies this problem for Sierra Leone and find similar patterns (informal taxation is regressive, as well as expenses in user-fees). Importantly, chiefs play an important role in informal taxation in SL

## II Research Questions

1. Are citizen in rural Sierra Leone taking costly actions to avoid informal taxes by chiefs?
  - (a) Is there evidence of poorer households facing a higher burden of taxation?
2. Can explicitly progressive schemes to fund public goods be an alternative to informal taxes by chiefs?
  - (a) Do citizens engage in more or less costly actions to avoid contributing to a public good?
  - (b) Does the distribution of possible distortions become more progressive relative to what happens under informal taxes by chiefs?

## III Experimental Design

TODO