

Evaluation Report: Poverty and Social Welfare

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The World Bank has made an enormous contribution in this area, ranging from improving the quality of the data available, to improving capacity in their use, to innovative analyses and careful theoretical work. We will comment on the nature and limitations of these contributions before discussing some of the particular questions posed in the questionnaire. We present our overall findings before going on to discuss particular projects.

1. Improvement of the quality of the data

a) Primary data

The Bank has made an enormous contribution through the LSMS project to applied work on poverty. In our opinion this micro-survey based research has been at the cutting edge of much of the work in this area. The Bank has made the collective wisdom about these types of surveys available through the three-volume set, which we review separately. It has continued to produce research around key data quality issues, such as survey non-response. It is less clear to us how this research process is intended to dovetail with the operations of the existing statistical agencies. Does the Bank see ultimate success as being a world in which the production of all LSMS type data, policy evaluation work and poverty maps are undertaken by the relevant national statistical office and the Bank's involvement is reduced to being an international repository of data and developer of new ways of using such data for good policy work? In other words, does the World Bank want to work its way out of a job in the frontline of data production and within country policy analysis? If so, how successful have the LSMS and poverty mapping programs been in raising local capacity to take over these exercises?

b) Secondary data

A second strand of research within the Bank has been concerned with compiling country level poverty and inequality estimates from micro-datasets into databases on which cross-country and inter-temporal analyses can be attempted, such as the famous Deininger-Squire dataset and the database on the PovcalNet website. The strength of

this program was that it attempted to answer the question as to the impact of growth on poverty and inequality on the basis of much higher quality data than had previously been available. We are less certain that the data were always up to this task. Some researchers are of the view that secondary datasets of this type should not be made available, because they simply invite bad analyses. We believe that adequate health warnings were posted with the original dataset and the researchers cannot really be blamed for any abuses that may or may not have occurred.

c) Analyzing changes

Our own experience with South African data suggests that analyzing changes with successive cross-sections is a tricky and fragile undertaking. The key difficulties lie in ensuring that the questions are comparable, that the sampling weights used to aggregate up are correct and that nonsampling errors (e.g. non-response by the richest) are similar over time. These difficulties are multiplied if different types of survey instruments (income/expenditure) are spliced into the same series and if the analysis is conducted on the tails of the distribution. It is also clear that for many researchers and policy makers the key question of interest is not so much the level of poverty and inequality but the direction of change. It would therefore seem that a worthwhile research project for the Bank would be to explore whether (and how) different instruments can be reconciled, how easy it is to graft a panel structure onto an existing LSMS and appropriate tools for inferring dynamics from a series of cross-sections (e.g. synthetic panels).

2. Improving access to and capacity in the use of data

The Bank has been good in making LSMS datasets available publicly. In our experience this has had a very positive effect on the demand for econometric training and has led to an overall increase in the capacity to utilize these data. In turn, this has fed back into an increased interest in producing quality survey data. In this regard, the Bank has also made available many resources (such as the three-volume LSMS dataset, the Deaton book on the Analysis of Household Surveys) which have spread capacity.

The inequality and poverty web tools have taken transparency in research to a new level by providing easy access to the data bases and to any relevant technical literature

and also by allowing any analyst to go online to check the robustness of results when different sub-samples or different poverty lines are selected. Nevertheless not all of the data that are accessible via the Bank's website are properly documented. In our research for this report we downloaded the following datasets:

- The original Deininger-Squire dataset, which is still available on the Bank's website. The data sources were clearly labeled. There is no warning on the website that this dataset has been superseded.
- A dataset labeled "allginis.dta" on the website <http://econ.worldbank.org/research/inequality>. The gini coefficients are labeled to indicate where they originate, but there is no additional information supplied.
- The "World Income Distribution" dataset available from the same website, which does not carry any documentation for the 1998 figures.

We believe that it is desirable to make datasets available, so that other researchers can replicate published findings. Nevertheless some discussion of where the raw data are derived from would seem to be required – particularly if the published work does not provide this information either!

3. Innovative analyses

a) New techniques

The Bank has pioneered a number of extremely smart and sophisticated ways of using existing data, particularly the "poverty mapping" and "micro-simulation" technologies. While recognizing the theoretical rigor of these approaches, we have some reservations about how these innovations have been "rolled out" in practice, particularly in the case of the former.

"Poverty mapping" involves the integration of a national income or expenditure survey with census data. The quality of the map will depend on three areas that are complicated in their own right; namely, i) the quality of the baseline survey information, ii) the quality of the census (mainly demographic) variables, and iii) the quality of the modeling of the relationship between them. There may be cases where

incorrect stratification can smooth over pockets of poverty in areas that look better off on the census variables. In the case of South Africa, for instance, urban poverty supposedly tripled between 1996 and 2001 on the basis of the poverty maps (the estimates for 2001 were never officially released).

The main problem is that the entire package cannot be successfully automated. It requires carefully judged technocratic interventions. Our sense is that even though the national statistical agency invested heavily in this process, it never fully mastered it and that reliance on the Bank never ceased. Some patent oddities in the poverty map (e.g. that one province appeared richer than most South Africans believed it to be) could not be explained by the local statisticians, and when pressed queries were referred to Washington.

With time it may be possible to train up local officials so that the process runs better. We have some doubts on this score. More importantly, however, the Bank seems to have invested considerable intellectual and material resources in this “high-tech” approach while more low-tech approaches remain unexplored. In the case of South Africa, for instance, the poverty rates of municipalities based on the unofficial 2001 poverty map figures have a correlation coefficient of .9 with the poverty rates based on the 2001 census “income” variable, using a lower poverty line. In this case using the census information directly would arguably not lead to major targeting failures and would lead to greater transparency within the policy community concerning the statistical basis of anti-poverty resource allocations.

b) New issues

The bank has also done innovative work in the analysis of new issues. For instance the project on subjective welfare indicators has produced thoughtful work on how these indicators might be used to improve on the objective measures. In this case the Bank has wisely refrained from spawning a new industry. However, more generally, it is not clear to us how the Bank decides to extend research into some new areas rather than others and how it decided on the extent of its research investments into these areas.

4. Theoretical work

The Bank's work on poverty and inequality has been influential because it has tended to be data driven and has engaged honestly with a range of viewpoints. In some areas "think pieces" emanating from the Bank have helped to clarify contentious debates. For instance, Milanovic's work on different approaches to global inequality and Ravallion's work on globalization, growth and poverty are useful interventions. Similarly the Bank's empirical work on social safety nets has shown how institutional design may matter.

In short, there is little doubt that the Bank has made a significant contribution. Turning to the remaining questions we were asked to address in the overview: in our opinion the issues that the Bank has focused on have tended to be among the most important policy issues. As our discussion of the "poverty mapping" experience indicates, we suspect that Bank researchers have strong incentives to find clever, elegant and highly sophisticated techniques and issues to work on. The incentives to look for low-tech and perhaps more robust and policy sellable solutions are probably too low.

On the whole research in this domain has engaged a wide variety of literatures (ranging from youth culture to psychology). On the whole the research has shown understanding of the subject countries. For this research area an understanding of local policymaking processes is a key piece of local knowledge. It is less clear that the research has grappled sufficiently with the implications of these processes in translating new techniques into better policy practice.

As our data discussion above should indicate, we believe that data collection and dissemination has been a strong point. We do believe that some of the datasets available on the web could be better documented. We believe that maintaining a focus on data quality is vital. Thinking more carefully about how one captures the dynamics of the process of global development from national cross-sectional surveys would seem important. The Bank needs to be more uniform in addressing issues of data quality. Some research programs have developed fairly clear quality thresholds below which data are deemed to be too poor to inform policy. It is harder to define these thresholds as the analysis assesses changes over time or across countries. However, it

is still a useful conceptual exercise to have to take a position on the key benchmarks of data usability in any research context.

On the whole we feel that the Bank's research has been of high quality. Indeed a tricky theme that we have highlighted above is the trade-off that the Bank faces between cutting edge innovation in measurement and evaluation techniques versus the harder slog of convincing and empowering developing countries to found their policy making on appropriate data and technical work.

Assessments of the sampled projects

Project 1: Transfers

A. What specific questions or hypotheses did the study seek to answer?

1. The study looks at two themes: a) The determinants of private transfers and, in particular, whether there is the possibility that government transfers may “crowd out” private ones, b) the effectiveness of targeting government transfers to the poor through decentralized structures.

2. The question whether government transfers may “leak” to non-intended beneficiaries is potentially an important question. The key question for the policy maker would seem to be how much of this assistance is likely to leak and to whom.

B. Design and implementation

1. The methodology employed in the reports seems largely appropriate to the task of assessing the determinants of private transfers. In particular the methodology in the listed output is sophisticated and well executed. As it stands the study is unable to assess how important for policy this crowding out may be since we have little information on who the donors are. We would also have preferred to have seen separate analyses of transfer receipts and donations (instead of net transfers) to rule out a mechanical relationship between net receipts and income, e.g. if donations are constrained to be less than pre-transfer income.

2. The project shows an adequate understanding of the literature.

3. The data seem reasonably reliable and data limitations are discussed.
4. The conclusions are generally consistent with the research findings. The conclusion that “anywhere from 30 to 80% of private transfers could be crowded out for those in (roughly) the lowest quintile of pre-private transfer income” seems a bit strong given that we don’t know from where in the distribution these transfers have come.

C. Accessibility

1. The project reports and publications are accessible to an academic audience.
2. There are no immediate policy recommendations.

D. Results

1. “Anywhere from 30 to 80% of private transfers could be crowded out for those in (roughly) the lowest quintile of pre-private transfer income.” Private transfers go from rich to poor, may go from old to young or *vice versa*, and go disproportionately to female-headed households.

Project 2: Income Distribution

A. Objectives

1. The study looks at the determinants of growth and inequality across countries and time.
2. These issues are of critical importance for policy in developing and post-socialist countries.

B. Design and implementation

1. At the core of this project was the construction of the Deininger-Squire database (which happened prior to the period investigated here) and its analysis. The techniques used were broadly appropriate for the question asked, i.e. the macro relationship between growth, inequality and a set of explanatory variables across countries and time. The use of panel data approaches seems somewhat dubious given

that measurement error seems likely to be a large problem. Any specification that has country “dummies” in it is likely to be swamped by this problem.

2. The database and the articles pay considerable attention to other existing sources of information.

3. The reliability of the data has been called into question (e.g. in the review by Atkinson and Brandolini), but given the state of the art at the time, the dataset was better than anything else available. The problems of combining income and expenditure data as well as data collected on different bases are discussed in the text. The question whether secondary datasets of this sort add value or not is something that we will discuss in more detail below.

4. The conclusions are broadly consistent with the research findings. The authors were careful to note issues in relation to the data.

C. Accessibility

1. The Deininger-Squire dataset has been very accessible, through the World Bank’s website. It has been extensively used. The research outputs of this study have appeared in good journals and so have been accessible to the research community.

2. The policy recommendation that investment should be targeted (in preference to redistribution) seems to follow from the analysis. How robust these results are to different data and different specifications is not clear.

D. Results

1. The most striking policy-relevant finding is that promotion of investment is probably a better route for improving the lot of the poor than redistribution. Other findings are that there probably is no “Kuznets” curve, i.e. there is no inevitability that inequality has to increase in the process of economic growth. On the other hand there is no guarantee that inequality will decline by itself. Inequality seems fairly stable within countries but very different between them. This raises the prospect that understanding and dealing with inequality requires country-specific analyses of political and economic institutions.

Project 3: Social Protection

A. Objectives

1. The outputs look at the effectiveness of local institutions in providing social assistance and the impact such decentralized allocations have on the central allocation of resources.
2. This is certainly a critical issue for policy in developing countries and post-socialist societies.

B. Methodology

1. The methodology for evaluating the impact of the assistance programs in Albania and Vietnam is appropriate and well executed.
2. The Alderman papers advocating decentralization do not seem to view “local capture” (as discussed for instance by Bardhan and Mookherjee 2000) as a potential problem.
3. The data seem of reasonably good quality.
4. The conclusions of the study are consistent with the research findings. The particularities of the Albanian local institutions that mitigated the problem of capture might have been more fully analyzed.

C. Accessibility

1. The research outputs are clearly written and accessible to an academic and policy audience.
2. The studies are reasonably careful in limiting their policy recommendations to their particular countries.

D. Results

1. The Albanian part of the study suggests that local officials may be utilizing information that would be inaccessible to higher level officials. The targeting of

national grants to local authorities, however, could be improved. Indeed it looks to be politically determined. The Vietnamese study finds that the safety net does not seem to be well targeted and it has not been very effective in either helping to promote people out of poverty or to protect individuals from falling into poverty. This seems to be due again to bad targeting of grants to local areas, but also due to inappropriate local norms for giving assistance.

Project 4: Subjective Welfare

A. Objectives

1. This study has looked at some of the determinants of subjective welfare (i.e. how rich or deprived someone feels). It explores how subjective welfare measures might be used to calibrate “objective” poverty lines or choose appropriate equivalence scales. It has shown how a “subjective poverty line” can be calculated using perceptions of consumption adequacy.
2. The issue of whether policy benefits people **perceived** to be poor is probably of considerable interest to policy makers. Similarly ensuring that the official poverty lines are perceived to be correct is also important.

B. Methodology

1. Much of the methodology is innovative and well done.
2. The study seems aware of contributions from outside the domain of economics.
3. The data used seem of good quality.
4. The conclusions are consistent with the findings.

C. Accessibility

1. The reports are accessible and appropriate for an academic audience.
2. There are no major policy recommendations.

D. Results

1. The study shows that subjective welfare indicators can be successfully used to reflect on the adequacy of “objective” poverty lines and equivalence scales. Nevertheless subjective welfare is also influenced by a range of factors (e.g. personal trajectory, welfare in the surrounding area) which suggests that it cannot act as a replacement for the objective indicators.

Project 5: World Income Distribution

A. Objectives

1. The study attempts to derive the world income distribution and subject it to analysis. Trends in global inequality are analyzed.
2. These trends are an important part of the globalization debate and, as such, this issue is of importance for global policy makers.

B. Methodology

1. The methodology is appropriate and seems well executed.
2. The project discusses alternative estimates and estimation strategies in considerable detail, in the process clarifying where some of the divergences in the results may come from. It also explains very clearly how different conceptualizations of the problem may lead to different results.
3. There is some doubt about the reliability of the data. We could not find any documentation on the 1998 data used. The 1988 and 1993 data are documented on the <http://econ.worldbank.org/projects/inequality> website. The augmented “World Income Distribution” dataset (discussed further below) can be used to pinpoint which observations seem to have been included in 1998. It looks as though South Africa was in the sample for both of these years. The 1993 data are based on the LSMS while it is completely uncertain what the 1998 data might be based on. We suspect that it is 1997 October Household Survey data. These two surveys are simply not comparable. In eight countries, including Russia, the basis on which the 1988 survey was done (income) was different to the 1993 one (expenditure). These intra-country reporting shifts may not influence the measured **level** of global inequality much, but they may impact the measured **trend**.

4. The reported conclusions are consistent with the findings.

C. Accessibility

1. The outputs of the study (book, research articles) are very accessible to the intended audience. The book is very clear and readable.

2. The policy recommendations are very thoughtful and commensurate with the findings.

D. Results

1. The level of global inequality is very high. It seems to have increased in the post-War era, although the current growth spurts in India and China are decreasing global inequality, while increasing intra-country inequalities. Global efforts at redistribution need to ensure that these efforts are not regressive, i.e. benefiting very rich people in poor countries. Policies that create a global “middle class” are required.

Project 6: Patterns of Inequality

A. Objectives

1. The study involves an update and re-examination of the Deininger-Squire database on inequality. Trends in the evolution of inequality are examined.

2. This study is not directly relevant to policy, although it lays the foundation for analyses that may be of relevance to policy makers.

B. Methodology

1. The methodology used in the construction of the database, i.e. a re-examination of the principles underpinning the construction of the original D-S database and the appending of additional observations, is appropriate. The methodology used in the analysis of income trends (i.e. unweighted inter-country comparisons) seems inappropriate.

2. The article discusses the criticisms leveled at the database and examines alternative databases. The paper does not seem to be aware of Milanovic's critique of unweighted inter-country inequality analyses.

3. The authors are candid that this database (by its nature) still has problems with reliability. There are definitional shifts between countries and within countries over time. Measurement errors will be exacerbated if more disaggregated information (such as decile incomes) is used. For instance in South Africa the share of income going to the top decile between 1993 and 1997 apparently increases markedly. This is probably due to the fact that the 1993 study was an LSMS/consumption study while 1997 uses income from a general household survey. The authors note that the dataset should not be used for within-country analyses. Nevertheless any analysis with country fixed effects will have this sort of measurement error to contend with. This includes the "trend analysis" performed by the authors.

4. The conclusions are consistent with the findings. However, it is not clear how robust they are to changes in the data.

C. Accessibility

1. We cannot examine the database directly (the updated database does not seem to be separately accessible) but it has been folded into the WIDER database, which is accessible on the web. The report is clear.

2. The recommendation that greater effort be devoted to standardizing and disseminating micro-datasets is supported by their study.

D. Results

1. Data quality matters. It is possible to get different results if one relaxes the minimum data quality standards. Inequality seems persistent, although there is little evidence of it having increased.

Project 7: Looking Beyond Averages

A. Objectives

1. This is a huge project. In the official documentation three major components are listed:

a) *“Improved Poverty and Inequality Data.”* This includes sub-projects on the impacts of sampling and non-sampling errors on measured well-being, combining national accounts and survey data in order to measure changes in well-being, subjective measurement of well-being, combining qualitative and quantitative data, local area poverty mapping and impact evaluation.

b) *“Why Are Some Growth Processes More Pro-Poor than Others?”* This is a more specific question. However, it was addressed at international, national and household levels. At the international level cross-country poverty datasets were put together and analyzed. At the national level, there was a large project to develop tools to simulate changes in the income distribution of a country over time. At the local level there is microeconomic research analyzing the impact of income shocks on child labor, education and a range of other outcomes, research on the drivers of local inequality and the politics of local provision of public goods and a series of papers on decentralized targeting.

c) *Software and Data Base Tools.* The tools of poverty and inequality measurement and a cross-country poverty database have been made available on the web. Most ambitiously, a web tool is available that allows users to recalculate poverty results for any of the countries using any subset of that country’s datasets and any poverty line as well as to examine the cross-country growth and poverty results for any sub-set of countries and any sub-set of data.

2. It is critical for development policy to move beyond averages, to measure and monitor poverty and inequality outcomes, to evaluate anti-poverty programs and to interrogate the relationship between these outcomes and economic growth. However, not all of the topics are immediately relevant to policy implementation at the micro-level.

Two sub-projects are directed at broader debates over development policy. The cross-country growth and poverty project seems to show that a growing economy gives policy makers a better environment for poverty alleviation but that the specifics of the

growth/poverty linkage vary markedly country by country. This then motivates the micro-simulation project that develops a methodology to look at the key drivers of within-country changes in income distributions.

Then there is a series of sub-projects – including program evaluation, local area poverty mapping and the targeting of anti-poverty programs, understanding household responses to shocks and the development of rapid response methodologies – that are explicitly directed at policymaking.

All of the topics and objectives are data driven and we strongly endorse the argument that issues of data quality and the impact of sampling and non-sampling errors on measured wellbeing are directly relevant to policy. One wants to be as confident as possible about the data on which policy advice and analysis are based.

B. Design and Implementation

1. A defining feature of the methodological work in this project is that it is on the frontier. It is also very innovative. In at least three cases – poverty mapping, micro-simulation and rapid appraisal, new methodologies were developed in response to perceived need.

2. The work is always built up from a good description of the existing knowledge base. However, the understanding of the countries in question is variable across the project. Most of the within-country work is well grounded in the realities of that country. The cross-country work is far removed from specific country experiences and knowledge.

3. All projects give detailed descriptions of the data that are used and their limitations. As some papers clearly discuss a range of data problems in a single instrument poverty profile or incidence analysis, this sits very uncomfortably with the construction and use of cross-country, multiple survey databases. There are other examples of this within-project awkwardness. An important finding is that unit non-response seems to occur at the top end of the income distribution and that this makes

national sample surveys less reliable for inequality analysis than for poverty analysis. This is used to argue against the practice of taking means from national accounts data and combining them with distributional information from household surveys.

However, it is equally awkward for the micro-simulation work that is explicitly set up to examine changes in income distributions over time or the poverty mapping work that uses estimates derived from these household surveys as a sound foundation for imputing household well-being from unit record census data.

4. Yes they are.

C. Accessibility

1. Much of the work is technical, much of the research was written up in the form of technical academic papers and books that have been and will be published in top-rate academic journals. This is appropriate to signaling the quality of the research.

However, it is a world away from the policy community and even some distance away from the capacity within national statistical offices to understand and undertake such work. Even research that is motivated by tight policy relevance such as rapid response methodologies and poverty mapping requires a high level of technical competence if it is to be used appropriately in a policy situation.

2. Each piece of work is careful not to overreach on policy conclusions. However, different pieces of research across the project throw up tricky policy interactions for other pieces of research. For example the papers on targeting throw up a complex set of permutations about local political dynamics, local inequality and the correct balance between national and local discretion in targeting poverty alleviation programs. This has implications for the appropriate place of technical poverty mapping work in actual anti-poverty budget allocation processes.

D. Conclusion

This project contains a wealth of superb technical work. Because it spans a large and diverse range of sub-projects, it is hard to distill a set of key policy recommendations. Perhaps there is a case to be made for asking the members of the project team what the implications are of each sub-project and the project as a whole for policy practice.

8. Globalization – Middle-Income Strata

A Objectives

1. The study looks at the impact of openness on income distribution, particularly within developing economies.
2. This topic is of great interest to policy makers in these economies.

B. Methodology

1. The methodology seems broadly appropriate in theory; whether the data are sufficiently good to support these analyses is less clear. Models of **changes** in inequality are likely to be especially prone to measurement errors. Similarly decile income figures at the top and bottom are likely to be more contaminated with errors than summary measures for the distribution as a whole.
2. The study engages other authors and data sources.
3. There is some doubt as to the reliability of the data. The WYD (World Income Distribution) database is not documented properly, even though the data are available on the web. As with the updated D-S database, the database seems to mix different types of surveys and definitions.
4. The conclusions are broadly consistent with the research findings.

C. Accessibility

1. The papers are appropriate for and accessible to an academic audience. The WYD dataset is available on the web, although without appropriate documentation.
2. There are no real policy recommendations.

D. Results

The poorest in poor countries do not seem to benefit from increasing openness. Increases in democracy seem to improve the relative incomes of the middle deciles, while having only a limited impact on those of the top and bottom. Tariff

liberalization tends to increase the education premium (which one would not expect in poor countries) while also increasing wage inequality between sectors.

Project 9: Evaluating the Impact of Decentralized Conditional Cash Transfer Programs: A Study of Brazil's Bolsa Escola Program

A. Objectives

1. This study intends to investigate the impact of a cash transfer program on those treated, i.e. whether the educational outcomes for the children in families that received this support were better than for equally eligible children that did not. The study also intends to assess how the impact of the program is mediated by the particular institutions operating at the local level. This is interesting since there was considerable variation in how the program was implemented locally.
2. This study addresses a range of issues that are critical for policy in Brazil but also in all developing countries.

B. Methodology

1. The methodology seems excellent and innovative. The combination of secondary data analysis, collection of school records, interviews with teachers and collection of information on the characteristics of the municipalities seems to provide a very solid basis on which to assess the impact of this program.
2. The project seems to have a sound grasp of the available research and resources.
3. The initial report provides some confidence that the information on the municipalities will be of reasonably high standards.
4. The conclusions of the initial report are consistent with the findings.

C. Accessibility

1. The initial report and the proposals are clearly written and accessible.
2. The policy recommendation (subsequently acted upon) that there should be greater clarity about beneficiary selection is borne out by the findings.

D. Provisional Results

1. There seems to be considerable variation in how the program was implemented, with some of the variation explicable in political economy terms.

Project 10: Designing Household Survey Questionnaires for Developing Countries

A. Objectives

1. The purpose of the project was to build on extensive LSMS and other experience in conceptualizing, designing, administering and analyzing multi-topic household surveys to provide best-practice resources and information to those wanting to undertake multi-topic household surveys.

2. Such surveys provide the informational basis for the description and monitoring of wellbeing and especially poverty, for the examination of the coverage and incidence of government policies and for evaluating the impact of policies on wellbeing and on behavior. Thus, this project is critical for evidenced-based assessment of policy. Much of this information is not gathered by national statistical agencies.

B. Design and Implementation

1. Yes on both counts. The researchers were all intimately involved in the collection *and* analysis of such data. There are effectively two chapters per individual module. The first is a serious analytical review of the concept that is being measured, the issues involved in approximating this concept in a questionnaire, the LSMS approach compared with other approaches and then recommendations. These recommendations include how best to ask questions to minimize non-sampling errors. The project pushed well beyond best LSMS practice to derive a new set of core and non-core modules that were better than the current templates.

2. Yes on both counts. The project was explicitly directed at synthesizing frontier research and then using this to define best practice in survey design. The project starts to give prominence to the impact of non-sampling errors. Two issues that perhaps get less treatment than they could have are sampling itself and the measurement of

changes over time. There has to be more to say about sampling in a developing country context than this. Most importantly, as this sampling relies on the availability of a decent census and some sort of national statistical database, this is an area in which the quality of the LSMS information is conditional on non-World Bank local dynamics.

3. The project is foundational in the sense that it is directed at ensuring that a large amount of World Bank research is strong on these data dimensions.

4. The project builds on actual experiences in the field; including both successful and unsuccessful cases. The tone is very honest, even tabling the real possibility that sometimes no data are better than badly flawed data.

C. Accessibility

1. The write-up is clear, free of jargon and full of examples. The project is an excellent example of how to communicate technical material for a disparate group of government officials, academics, policy researchers and NGOs. This is a disparate group and many of the issues under discussion are technical. This includes being clear as to which audience is and is not being addressed in any specific chapter.

2. For this project, policy making can be interpreted as policy to ensure appropriate data production in developing countries. The project is clear that the LSMS process has to include participation from local policy makers and the local statistical offices. However, it is less clear on the tougher issue of how to integrate the LSMS process into national statistical information systems and make a lasting contribution to capacity. We discuss this further in the overall review of this research project. This is important because, at the end of the day, the major rationale for these surveys is to provide a quantitative basis for evidenced-based policy making *in these countries*.

D. Results

The project contributes to improving the quality and usefulness of the data generated from multi-user household surveys and launches the further research in survey methodology that has been conducted since its completion.

Research Quality Indicator Forms

1. Transfers

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed			X		
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives			X		
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework		X			
Empirical application		X			
Statistical and econometric methods		X			
Use of existing knowledge and resources					
Data					
Awareness of other data sources					
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging					
Survey design and sampling					
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)		X			
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations			X		
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence			X		
Appropriateness of the recommendations			X		
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences		X			
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues		X			
Provides a sound basis for policy			X		
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy				X	
Future analysis			X		
The development community in general			X		
Overall Quality of Research		X			

2. Income Distribution

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed		X			
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives		X			
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework			X		
Empirical application		X			
Statistical and econometric methods			X		
Use of existing knowledge and resources	X				
Data					
Awareness of other data sources	X				
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging	X				
Survey design and sampling					
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)			X		
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations			X		
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence			X		
Appropriateness of the recommendations			X		
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences	X				
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues		X			
Provides a sound basis for policy			X		
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy		X			
Future analysis	X				
The development community in general	X				
Overall Quality of Research		X			

3. Social Protection

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed		X			
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives		X			
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework			X		
Empirical application		X			
Statistical and econometric methods		X			
Use of existing knowledge and resources			X		
Data					
Awareness of other data sources		X			
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging					
Survey design and sampling					
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)		X			
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations		X			
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence		X			
Appropriateness of the recommendations		X			
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences		X			
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues		X			
Provides a sound basis for policy		X			
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy		X			
Future analysis		X			
The development community in general		X			
Overall Quality of Research		X			

4. Subjective Welfare

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed			X		
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives		X			
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework		X			
Empirical application	X				
Statistical and econometric methods		X			
Use of existing knowledge and resources		X			
Data					
Awareness of other data sources		X			
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging					
Survey design and sampling					
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)		X			
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations		X			
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence		X			
Appropriateness of the recommendations		X			
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences		X			
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues		X			
Provides a sound basis for policy		X			
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy			X		
Future analysis		X			
The development community in general			X		
Overall Quality of Research		X			

5. World Income Distribution

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed		X			
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives	X				
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework		X			
Empirical application		X			
Statistical and econometric methods			X		
Use of existing knowledge and resources		X			
Data					
Awareness of other data sources		X			
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging				X	
Survey design and sampling					
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)	X				
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations	X				
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence		X			
Appropriateness of the recommendations		X			
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences		X			
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues	X				
Provides a sound basis for policy		X			
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy		X			
Future analysis	X				
The development community in general	X				
Overall Quality of Research	X				

6. Patterns of Inequality

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed		X			
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives		X			
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework			X		
Empirical application		X			
Statistical and econometric methods			X		
Use of existing knowledge and resources		X			
Data					
Awareness of other data sources		X			
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging			X		
Survey design and sampling					
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)			X		
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations			X		
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence			X		
Appropriateness of the recommendations			X		
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences			X		
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues		X			
Provides a sound basis for policy			X		
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy		X			
Future analysis		X			
The development community in general		X			
Overall Quality of Research			X		

7. Looking Beyond Averages – A Research Program on Poverty and Inequality

	S	AA	A	BA	U
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed	X				
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives			X		
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework	X				
Empirical application	X				
Statistical and econometric methods	X				
Use of existing knowledge and resources	X				
Data					
Awareness of other data sources	X				
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloguing	X				
Survey design and sampling	X				
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)		X			
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations		X			
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence		X			
Appropriateness of the recommendations		X			
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences		X			
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues	X				
Provides a sound basis for policy		X			
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy		X			
Future analysis	X				
The development community in general		X			
Overall Quality of Research	X				

8. Globalization – Middle Income Strata

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed		X			
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives			X		
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework			X		
Empirical application			X		
Statistical and econometric methods			X		
Use of existing knowledge and resources		X			
Data					
Awareness of other data sources		X			
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging				X	
Survey design and sampling					
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)			X		
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations			X		
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence			X		
Appropriateness of the recommendations			X		
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences			X		
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues			X		
Provides a sound basis for policy			X		
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy			X		
Future analysis			X		
The development community in general			X		
Overall Quality of Research			X		

9. Impact of Decentralized Conditional Cash Transfer Programs: Brazil's Bolsa Escola Program

	S	AA	A	BA	U
<i>Please rate the following aspects of the project outcomes (or in the case of ongoing projects, design and intermediate outputs)</i>					
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed	X				
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives	X				
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework	X				
Empirical application		X			
Statistical and econometric methods		X			
Use of existing knowledge and resources	X				
Data					
Awareness of other data sources		X			
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging					
Survey design and sampling	X				
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)		X			
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations		X			
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence		X			
Appropriateness of the recommendations		X			
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences		X			
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues	X				
Provides a sound basis for policy	X				
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy	X				
Future analysis	X				
The development community in general	X				
Overall Quality of Research	X				

10. Designing Household Survey Questionnaires for Developing Countries

	S	AA	A	BA	U
Topics					
Importance of the issues addressed	X				
Clarity of the project focus and stated objectives	X				
Analysis					
Theoretical/conceptual framework	X				
Empirical application	X				
Statistical and econometric methods	X				
Use of existing knowledge and resources	X				
Data					
Awareness of other data sources	X				
Data compilation, cleaning and cataloging	X				
Survey design and sampling	X				
Output Quality					
Writing quality (clarity, organization, etc.)	X				
Clarity of conclusions and recommendations	X				
Extent to which conclusions are based on analytic evidence	X				
Appropriateness of the recommendations	X				
Appropriateness of output form (working paper, book, database, etc.) for intended audiences	X				
Availability of translated outputs where appropriate					
Extent to which research:					
Increases knowledge and understanding of the issues	X				
Provides a sound basis for policy	X				
Actual or likely impact of research on:					
Government policy	X				
Future analysis	X				
The development community in general	X				
Overall Quality of Research	X				

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