

Policy effectiveness of poverty maps: experiences from Mexico and Cambodia

Tomoki Fujii

Singapore Management University and the World Bank

May 11, 2006

*“More than a Pretty Picture: Using Poverty Maps to Design
Better Policies and Interventions”,
The World Bank, Washington DC*

Policy effectiveness of poverty maps

- **Poverty maps can be a powerful policy tool.**
- **Whether and how PM is used depend on the political and economic conditions of the country.**
- **“Just producing maps” is not enough to ensure effective use of poverty maps for policy making.**
- **Comparing experiences from different countries, it is possible to identify potentially important determinants of policy effectiveness**
- **Focus on political economy in production and application. Discussion based on experiences from Mexico (Miguel Székely) and Cambodia (my own).**

Political economy in production

■ Finding collaborators

- ◆ Statistical office (Mexico)
- ◆ World Food Programme, National Institute of Statistics and World Bank (Cambodia)

■ Creating Demand

- ◆ Involvement of potential beneficiaries (Mexico)
- ◆ Dissemination workshop (Cambodia)

■ Clear output objectives

- ◆ Human Development Report (Mexico)
- ◆ National Poverty Reduction Strategy (Cambodia)

■ Competition with similar maps/products

- ◆ Existing methods such as marginality index and basic needs index (Mexico)
- ◆ Not so much in Cambodia. Seila Cambodia commune database is a major alternative. (Cambodia)

Political economy in application

■ Acceptance of results

- ◆ Lack of participation / technocratic? (Mexico)
- ◆ Some areas are not intuitively correct (Cambodia)

■ How to use the map?

- ◆ The poverty maps are subject to errors.
- ◆ An input for improving the distribution of resources
- ◆ Estimates are not up-to-date. How do we cope with it?
- ◆ How to combine with other information
 - WFP Cambodia overlays the poverty map with other maps (nutrition, vulnerability to natural disaster, infrastructure, agricultural productivity, education, etc...)
 - Other organizations may have different information. How do we combine with their own information?
- ◆ Coordinate projects
- ◆ Potentially help reduce arbitrary decisions made by bureaucrats / politicians.