

Poverty and Disability : A Panelist View

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Poverty- Disability : A TRAP?

- Disability can cause poverty and can occur because of poverty
 - Disability -> poverty:
 - loss of income due to unequal opportunity? ,
 - More expenditures – i.e, medical expenditures, and
 - less access to services
 - Poverty -> disability:
 - poverty and ill health can lead to disability;
 - poverty drives individual to engage in riskier work, increasing the chance of being disabled [For example, in Cambodia people may farm in areas known to be infested with landmines.

Does “disability” get space as development issue?

- Work on disability is very thin in developing countries
 - Lack of data
 - Lack of policy imperative
- Does lack of policy lead to lack of investment in data and vice-versa?
- Are MDG indicators adequately reflecting this imperative?

Improvement in survey/census questionnaires

- New surveys and censuses in developing countries are using questions promoted by the Washington Group
 - For example, the NRVA 2007/08 in Afghanistan uses a small set of questions on disability focus on functioning of basic activities

Economics of disability policy

- Disability benefits may affect labor supply and cause disincentive to work
- Example from the US
 - Sizable literature on the magnitude of the relationship between the generosity and accessibility of disability benefits and labor force participation.
 - Such academic debate is possible only with good data

Lessons from developed countries

- Data has helped elevate policy design and debate on disability
 - Systematic and well-organized disability programs lead data collection, both for administration and evaluation
 - Allowing policy makers to learn from experiments and fine-tune the programs
 - Moving from income support to equalizing opportunities?
 - What about rehabilitation and prevention?
- Learning from success and failures in other (developed countries) to stimulate this agenda