



NOPOOR POLICY BRIEF

août 1

2017

The NOPOOR project is funded by the European Union under the 7th Research Framework programme (theme SSH), Grant agreement nr. 290752

NOPOOR “Enhancing Knowledge for Renewed Policies against Poverty”

Content

- WP3 - Poverty: dimensions, processes and interaction..... 2
- WP4 - Impact of international aid on poverty..... 4
- WP5 - Impact of globalisation and international migration on poverty 6
- WP6 - Inclusion/exclusion in social networks, work and cities 9
- WP7 - Education and Social Protection to alleviate poverty..... 13
- WP8 - States and political systems..... 18
- WP9 - Emerging issues and Poverty Scenarios in XXIst century..... 23

WP3 - Poverty: dimensions, processes and interaction

Policy Brief No.6

Jann Lay, Sarah Linde

Employment and decent work in the 2030 agenda for sustainable development (2016)

This policy brief describes how employment and decent work are incorporated into the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and discusses the implications. While it supports the prominent role of decent work in the SDGs, it criticizes the implied policy prescriptions and proposes some entry points for context-specific development agendas for growth and employment generation.

Policy Brief No.14

Jeremie Gross, Catherine Guirkinger, Jean-Philippe Platteau

Activation of food markets and food security (2015)

How to reduce poverty, vulnerability and food insecurity in remote areas is a complex issue that has not been settled till today. In order to mitigate the food access problem in rural areas of Sahelian countries, many aid organizations and governments have supported programs of cereal banks. This policy brief presents the results of a study aimed at evaluating the impact on food security of such a community- and market-based intervention. The positive and large impact found on food access and nutrition – especially in more remote areas – confirms that well-functioning food markets are crucial for food security and nutrition. The study also highlights that food reserve interventions like cereal banks can play an important role in activating local food markets in the Sahelian context.

Policy Brief No.20

Eric Patrick Feubi Pamen, Mathias Kuepie

An Application of the Alkire-Foster's Multidimensional Poverty Index to Data from Madagascar (2017)

The Multidimensional Poverty Index has broadened the measurement of poverty but still lacks some important dimensions of poverty. We propose here the Malagasy Multidimensional Poverty Index (MALAMPI), which is an augmented-MPI. In addition to the standard MPI dimensions

(health, education and living standards), we add an additional and highly important dimension, namely employment, which is generally the sole means of production owned by poor or deprived people.

Policy Brief No.26

Abdoulaye Diagne

Which factors lead to entry and exit of poverty ? A meta-analysis on the dynamics of poverty in developing countries (2017)

no abstract

Policy Brief No.45

Philippe De Vreyer

Mesurer la consommation : leçons d'une recherche au Sénégal. (2017)

Ce Policy Brief présente les stratégies développées par la science économique pour estimer la véritable consommation individuelle à partir de la consommation totale du ménage. Après un bref rappel des enjeux autour de cette question et de la réflexion développée pour y répondre, un dispositif d'enquête innovant développé au Sénégal est présenté, ainsi que quelques résultats originaux.

WP4 - Impact of international aid on poverty

Policy Brief No.1

Jean-Philippe Platteau

A new approach to the role of development aid for poverty reduction. Trading-off needs against governance (2015)

A criticism that is frequently levelled against the current pattern of aid allocation is the coexistence of 'aid darlings' and 'aid orphans' among recipient countries. It subsists in spite of the coming to the fore of a new approach to development cooperation that emphasized policy dialogue, country ownership and the need to get rid of conditionalities and reform overload or high transaction costs. Heralded by the Paris Declaration (March 2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (September 2008), this approach also privileged new aid modalities, General Budget Support (GBS) in particular, considered to be especially suitable to meet the above objectives. Yet, results proved rather disappointing and ex post conditionalities were soon re-introduced, leading to suspension or disruption of GBS in countries such as Nicaragua and Honduras. Donor agencies that are well-known for their rigour, such as SIDA (Sweden) and DFID (United Kingdom), have even decided to give up budget support and return to aid modalities – programmes and projects – that better lend themselves to monitoring and sanction in the event of non-compliance with set conditions.

Policy Brief No.9

Thomas Barsbai, Rainer Thiele

Governance does matter for the Allocation of Foreign Aid (2016)

Acknowledging that the effectiveness of development cooperation depends on the quality of governance in recipient countries, donors may still give foreign aid to poorly governed recipients because of a dilemma they face: those countries most in need typically also lack good institutions. This policy brief shows that donors resolve this dilemma by bypassing weak state institutions and delivering more aid through NGOs and multilateral organizations. In doing so, they may however forego the opportunity to help improve local institutions and thereby foster long-run development.

Policy Brief No.15

Finn Ole Semrau, Rainer Thiele

Why Emerging Donors Give Foreign Aid and what this implies for the Global Aid System (2016)

This brief analyses the aid allocation decisions of three important emerging donors – Brazil, China, and India. We find that these donors are not exclusively focused on pursuing economic and political interests, and that they differ quite substantially in what drives their aid allocation. Fears that they cannot be integrated into the existing aid system and are about to establish a rival aid architecture therefore appear to be somewhat overblown.

Policy Brief No.18

Joaquin Morales Belpaire, Elena Serfilippi

Strategies and performance of new donors: The political economy of development nongovernmental organizations (2016)

This policy brief presents A Game-Theoretical Perspective of how NGOs Interact with Host Developing States and on How to Make Decentralized Aid more Efficient.

Policy Brief No.32

Anke Hoeffler, James Gichuki

Finance for Development: Are Sovereign Bond Issues in Sub-Saharan Africa Supporting Sustainable Development? (2017)

In the past sub-Saharan African countries have mainly relied on grants and loans from bilateral and multilateral donors to finance development. However, since 2006 this has changed considerably: Fifteen countries have now issued sovereign bonds. This brief provides an up to date overview of these bond issuances and discusses the associated opportunities and risks

WP5 - Impact of globalisation and international migration on poverty

Policy Brief No.2

Flore Gubert

The new European Agenda on Migration: what can be learnt from recent academic research? (2015)

This EU Policy Brief overviews the recent accumulated knowledge relating to each one of the three objectives presented by the European Commission in the European Agenda on Migration. The aim is to provide research insights on both their relevance and the possible ways of achieving them. It starts with a synthesis of what is known about the global migration scenario for the future and about the attractiveness of Europe as compared to other regions. It then draws upon the burgeoning literature on remittances to discuss ways of channelling them towards more productive use in migrant source countries. It ends with a discussion on the links between migrants' integration and rights and development.

Policy Brief No.5

Jean-Marc Siroën, David Andrade

Trade Agreements and Core Labour Standards (2016)

Over the last two decades, a growing number of free trade agreements have included social and labour provisions. This Policy Brief investigates the repercussions of such clauses on the ratification of what are seen as fundamental ILO conventions and on workers' rights practices. An empirical estimation indicates that labour provisions have not played a significant role in improving labour practices, and that their effect has been limited to the ratification of ILO conventions. This gap highlights the importance included in trade agreements.

Policy Brief No.23

Lisa Chauvet, Flore Gubert, Sandrine Mesplé-Somps

Can migrants be a vehicle of political changes in Africa? Some insights from a Malian case study (2017)

This policy brief investigates the potential role of African migrants in the strengthening of African democratic institutions by taking Mali as a case study. By conducting different survey among

migrants and non-migrants, we observe that migrants and returnees coming from democratic countries are more prone to be interested in politics and tend to participate more to associations or village and commune councils. However, expectations with regards the capacity of migrants abroad and returnees to consolidate democratic institutions in their country of origin should not be too high.

Policy Brief No.25

Hery Ramiarison, Mamy Ravelomanana

Attracting FDI to Export Processing Zone: A potential tool to reverse poverty trend in Madagascar (2017)

Productivity growth in non-resource sector is generally considered as a successful strategy to reverse poverty trend. This policy brief investigates the possibility of addressing the challenge of productivity growth in Madagascar's garment industry by the promotion of FDIs in the Export Processing Zone. Evidences show that this industry has enormous potential to reduce poverty through growth enhancing effects, high productivity, and employment and wage effects. However, poor business climate as well as weak institutions and lack of capacity to promote good governance impede the full exploitation of this potential.

Policy Brief No.34

Martha Castilho, Aude Sztulman, Marta Ménendez

The free trade zone of Manaus: a model for development? (2017)

The Free Trade Zone of Manaus (FTZM) was created in 1957 as a policy instrument to generate employment, promote industrialization and enhance regional integration of the Brazilian Amazon, as well as a way to affirm the sovereignty of the Amazonas state on this remote region. This policy brief presents the relative economic and social success of the FTZM for the municipality of Manaus, but also highlights how this industrial strategy has failed to spread its benefits to the entire state of Amazonas. Policy responses are required to promote poverty reduction and to enable the poorest of the poor to draw advantage from the economic dynamism of the FTZM.

Policy Brief No.38

Fatou Cisse, Ismael Fofana

The economic partnership agreement between the EU and West Africa: Are they really benefit for West Africa? (2017)

Liberal theory contends that trade is an engine of growth and free trade agreements are the catalyst towards achieving that growth. The EPA negotiated between West Africa and the EU proposes free-trade agreements. But, are this EPA really benefit for West Africa? This policy brief seeks to answer this question. Our empirical estimation indicates clearly that opening African markets for European products will have disastrous impact to the small economies in West Africa, especially when there is no accompanying programs.

Policy Brief No.51

Gerhard Niedrist

Redefining the application of the European Union's human rights clauses (2017)

No Abstract

WP6 - Inclusion/exclusion in social networks, work and cities

Policy Brief No.17

Shantanu Khanna, Deepti Goel, René Morissette

An analysis of earnings inequality of paid workers in rural India from 2004/05 to 2011/12 (2016)

Earnings inequality in rural India declined sharply between 2004-2005 and 2011-2012. We find that the change in returns to worker characteristics was responsible for this decline, whereas the change in the distribution of worker characteristics had an inequality increasing effect.

Policy Brief No.27

Nguyen Thu Phuong, Pham Minh Thai, Xavier Oudin, Laure Pasquier-Doumer

The role of household businesses in the economy of Vietnam (2017)

The household businesses and the informal sector play a key role in the Vietnamese economy and it will do so in the mid-term. It is a major player in the promotion of inclusive economic growth by providing jobs for a large segment of the population, by its flexibility, by the dynamism of one of its segments, and by the large room for improvement of its productivity. Yet, it is up to now largely left out from public policies. By collecting new data on this sector, the NOPOOR project has contributes to raise the attention of the policy makers in order to achieve more productive employment and to tackle the vulnerability of its workers

Policy Brief No.33

Martin Benavides

Opportunity or Challenge: The Role of Social Networks in Reducing Domestic Violence in Metropolitan Poor Contexts of Peru (2017)

The purpose of this document is to analyse how social capital can help women cope with domestic violence in urban contexts of poverty and segregation, where although high levels of this phenomenon have been registered, most of the abused women aren't denouncing the acts of violence against them. The results presented below are based on two NOPOOR research conducted in Lima, Peru.

Policy Brief No.35

Razak Oduro, Regina Oforiwa Amanfo

Advancing out of poverty in Ghana: the role of the livelihood empowerment against poverty (leap) program (2017)

In this policy brief, we present an analysis of a household survey conducted on the utilization of the receipt of Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) cash transfers in Ghana. The focus of the study was to track and ascertain the contribution of the LEAP program in reducing poverty and vulnerability in the lives of beneficiaries. The study revealed that making a difference in the lives of the poor beneficiaries in the short-term by improving school attendance of children, incentivizing children to stay in school, households being covered by health insurance and are able to purchase limited agricultural products. However, the findings suggest that there is little or no guarantee for a sustained poverty alleviation in a much longer term because the LEAP cash amounts were not enough to cater for the needs of all household members. We recommend that LEAP takes a social investment approach in the lives of the poor with aim to facilitate beneficiaries into a sustainable employment and economic opportunities.

Policy Brief No.36

Isabelle Guérin, Youna Lanos, Sébastien Michiels, Christophe Jalil Nordman, Govindan Venkatasubramanian

The use of social networks in a self-inflicted macroeconomic shock context: Demonetisation in India (2017)

The demonetisation that occurred in India in November 2016 has created an unprecedented shock. Among other objectives, the measure has been presented as an efficient mean to promote a less cash economy in order to formalise the economy and to promote social protection. Drawing on ground-breaking data collected in rural south-India, this note expresses serious reservations about the stated goals. In the short run, due to the importance of cash in the Indian economy (98 percent of transactions are estimated to be in cash), this measure had strong impacts on employment, daily financial practices, and network use for more than three months, as people relied more strongly on their networks to sustain their economic and social activities. Rather than fighting against it, demonetisation has mostly strengthened the informal economy, while probably marginalising further those who lack networks. In the long run, and in a context like India, where state social protection is still weak and where governmental schemes are known to obey to patronage and clienteles' networks, having a dense network of relatives, friends and patrons ready to help when needed remains the essential form of securing everyday life and the future. Eliminating such arrangements without offering alternative protection would be counterproductive. While cash less policies flourish in various parts of the world, we believe our findings have major implications and seriously question the merit of such policies, especially for the most marginalised segments of the population.

Miguel Flores

Spatial Poverty Traps and Gender-Based Violence in Mexican Municipalities (2017)

This brief highlights the importance of using the spatial temporal approach to study inequality and poverty in relation to incidences of violence across and within different areas to increase the effectiveness of antipoverty efforts, such as those in regional planning and as local policies interventions. It presents the results of a research that depict the extent to which poverty and violence are concentrated in Mexico. The results proved evident that poverty is only significant over space and not variant over time, exemplifying that poverty traps are caused due to geographic areas with high incidence of poverty. The paper further analyses how the spatial distribution of poverty can depict significant concentration areas of high genre-based violence levels across the country. As well as, the research views the role of poverty traps and other contextual factors explaining genre-based violence in Mexico. The overall trend renders that poorer municipalities, located far from urban areas, run a higher risk of female homicide.

Edgar Aragón

The Dilemma of Microsavings as a Financial Inclusion Tool: Regulatory and Market Trends in Mexico (2017)

Prior to 2001, almost all microfinance institutions (MFIs) which offer credit and savings services to the poor in Mexico were part of the informal economy. As the government committed itself to formalizing them in order to secure people's savings, it faced major operational and political obstacles. Ten years later, new legislation allowed private actors to generate business models targeting the poor and expanding financial inclusion, but which also set up a fierce competition to profit from the "base of the pyramid". This brief discusses the policy dilemmas involved in the process of expanding financial inclusion in Mexico. Further, it focuses on the lessons learned which can be applied to developing countries with an innovative private sector in the process of implementing digital and mobile technologies in the financial sector.

Mathias Kuepie, Michel Tenikue

Siblings' Social Network and Labour Market Outcomes in Niger: Are There Any Spillover Effects? (2017)

In this study, based on Niger 2012 Labour force survey, we assess the importance of the effect of siblings' networks on Niger labour market integration and the potential heterogeneity of this effect. Our main result is that there is a spillover effect: for any given individual, having elder siblings in a given sector of activity increases his own probability of also integrating that sector. For those in particular whose siblings are in the fruitful public or private sectors, this means that they have additional chances to integrate these coveted sectors. We also show that siblings' network is gender sensitive: its effect is maximal when both siblings are of the same gender. Another important result which emerges from this study is that the siblings' network acts as a substitute in case of poor human capital or family background resources.

WP7 - Education and Social Protection to alleviate poverty

Policy Brief No.10

João Saboia

Minimum Wage, Income Distribution and Poverty in Brazil (2016)

Since the 2000s, the minimum wage in Brazil has been going through an intense process of growth. Although no well-defined rule for its periodical adjustment existed until recently, the political and economic situation of the country favoured the granting of real increases. The result is that the minimum wage grew by 74% in real terms between 2003 and 2013. Currently the minimum wage receives each year the correction of inflation by the national index of consumer prices, as well as a real increase according to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rate recorded two years earlier. This rule was created in 2011 through Law 12/382, it was renewed in 2015 and should remain valid until 2019. Brazil is known for its great social inequalities that are reflected in the unequal distribution of income and wealth. Since the 2000's, however, the main income distribution indicators experienced a great improvement. The Gini index of the household per capita income distribution, for example, fell from 0.583 in 2003 to 0.527 in 2013. Similarly, poverty rates also fell sharply. The proportion of poor households was reduced from 28% to 12% over the same period. Figure 1 illustrates these results.

Policy Brief No.11

Laure Pasquier-Doumer

Exclusion of indigenous children: The role of aspirations in Peru (2016)

This brief highlights a particular mechanism underlying the exclusion process of indigenous people in Peru. It presents the results of a research that analyse the role of aspirations in inequality persistence between ethnic groups in the context of Peru. Do indigenous children invest less time in their education because they have internalized discriminatory values and consequently adjusted downward their aspiration? Or do they invest less time because poverty and the lack of information prevent them from desiring to achieve high goals?

Policy Brief No.13

Lena Lavinas

Conditional Cash Transfers: pros and cons (2015)

Before the 1990s, poverty alleviation programs usually relied on donations in kind, but during the decade, through Latin American countries, there was a shift in favour of monetary income transfers tied to specific eligibility criteria or conditionalities. Generally speaking, however, their contribution to poverty reduction is relatively modest, and focuses on alleviating extreme poverty. In addition, although they continue to expand around the globe, these schemes fail to be shaped as an unconditional right and are unlikely to address resource inequality.

Policy Brief No.16

Tran Ngo Thi Minh Tam, Laure Pasquier-Doumer

Full-day Schooling and Educational Inequality in Vietnam. The impact of lengthening the instructional time on inequality the case of Vietnam (2015)

This note briefs how policies aiming at lengthening instructional time affect the inequality of opportunity, with an application to the Vietnamese context. As a consequence of the too low instructional time to ensure the basic primary curriculum in Vietnam, the private tutoring has become increasingly widespread among families who can afford it, causing inequalities in accessing the quality of basic education. In this context, full-day schooling has been initially implemented to deal with the deficiency in instructional time. But it might also contribute to the equality of opportunity in education by filling the gap in instructional time between children of different social background. However, the specificity of Vietnam in the implementation of this policy where the switch to full-day schooling is largely funded by the families and the communities makes this policy unable to reduce inequality of opportunity.

Policy Brief No.19

Kirsten Sehnbruch, Nurjk Agloni, Walter Imilan, Claudia Sanhueza

Social Policy Responses to Disaster Scenarios of the Chilean State to the Earthquake and Tsunami of 2010 (2017)

This policy brief illustrates that the reconstruction effort carried out by the Chilean state for the 2010 earthquake and tsunami was inadequate in the context of a natural disaster. Chile should

establish a social policy structure for natural disasters that allows for a rapid response to a social emergency based on universal or near- universal allocation criteria.

Policy Brief No.24

Miguel Pellicer, Patrizio Piraino, Eva Wegner

The Impact of the Perception That Inequality Is Inevitable on the Demand For Redistribution: (2017)

This policy brief presents a novel way to understand the often observed disconnect between low-income citizens' concerns about high inequality and a lack of demand for redistribution, using the case of South Africa. The proposed mechanism underlying the lack of demand for change is the perceived inevitability of the large gap between the rich and the poor. Providing urban low-income individuals an international comparison of inequality in South Africa with other countries reduces their perception that high inequality is inevitable and significantly increases the demand for government to engage in redistributive policies. The demand for redistribution, and the willingness to engage in civil action to achieve it, may first require the belief that change itself is possible.

Policy Brief No.28

François Joseph Cabral

Social protection: what about young people not in employment, nor in education, nor in training? (2017)

The purpose of this paper is to assess the phenomenon of Senegalese young people who are neither in education, nor in employment, nor in training (NEET). It addresses the following questions: what is the extent of NEET ? What are the key drivers of this phenomenon ? What type of policy can be implemented to fight against it ?

Policy Brief No.29

Ashwini Deshpande

Education and social mobility: the critical role of high school years (2017)

The paper seeks to understand factors that account for differences in upward social mobility for individuals from different social backgrounds. Higher education could be an instrument to facilitate upward social mobility; however, it is equally true that those who enter higher education are also

those whose parents are highly educated. Thus, higher education could actually account for inter-generational persistence, rather than inter-generational mobility, i.e. it might not facilitate individuals with poorly educated parents to attain higher education and thus, reap the rewards in the labour market through better paying jobs. This research seeks to understand how social identity (caste) and class (economic status of the parents) affect the possibility of upward mobility, and finds that high school performance plays a critical role in later life outcomes.

Policy Brief No.31

Marta Ochman

An assessment of the gender dimension of Mexican Social programs: ways to improve gender integration in poverty policy (2017)

This policy brief provides an assessment of conditional cash transfer programs aimed at reducing extreme poverty and improving the social and economic conditions of impoverished women, implemented in Mexico from the 90s onward. Because of the design weaknesses, these programs have not only been unsuccessful in reducing extreme poverty but also have fallen short in empowering women in Mexico. Gender-inclusive social programs, particularly Oportunidades and more recently Prospera, have had negative impact on poor women's well-being despite the attempts to enhance their economic autonomy. This can be attributed to its maternalistic design, which enforces traditional gender roles, and put additional workload on women. This Policy Brief emphasizes the importance of considering women as citizens with rights, and persons with independent aspirations, instead of viewing them as development bearers and means to the efficient implementation of governmental programs. To this end, the Policy Brief offers recommendations to ensure an effective way of enhancing the material conditions of the family by modifying the dimension of power from within (Meza et al., 2002), and offering women a greater control over the resources provided to them.

Policy Brief No.39

Basudeb Chaudhuri

Supply or demand? How politics influences the implementation of the Mahatma Gandhi national rural employment guarantee act in Rajasthan (2017)

The drop in expenditures under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) between 2011 and 2015 does not reflect satiation of demand for work. Supply-side factors play an important role in limiting the amount of work available. This dilutes the key objective of the Act – that those in need of work will be guaranteed it. In light of the supply-side

rather than demand-based nature of MGNREGA, “discouraged” workers are more likely to wait for work to be provided than actively register demand for it.

Policy Brief No.43

Miquel Pellicer, Patrizio Piraino

The impact of non-personnel school resources on educational outcomes: evidence from South Africa (2017)

The paper studies the impact of non-personnel funding on school outcomes in South Africa. The results show a small but positive effect of resources on student throughput during the last years of high school, and on the number of students writing the matriculation exam. However, additional resources do not translate into a higher number of successful exams, leading to an overall negative effect on pass rates. It is suggested that these findings may have to do with schools reacting to the per-pupil nature of funding.

Policy Brief No.46

Gaye Daffé, Mbaye Diène

Which social protection policy to face the large vulnerability of Senegalese households? (2017)

This note presents the results of a study which had the objective of identifying good social protection policies which are tend to reduce vulnerability of households in Senegal. It aims to evaluate the gap between these needs and real levels of social protection of the most vulnerable households.

FR version

Quelle politique de protection sociale face à la grande vulnérabilité des ménages sénégalais? (2017)

Cette note présente les résultats d'une recherche dont l'objectif était d'identifier les bonnes politiques de protection sociale susceptibles de réduire la vulnérabilité des ménages au Sénégal. Son but est de faire l'évaluation de l'écart entre les besoins et les niveaux réels de protection sociale des ménages les plus vulnérables.

WP8 - States and political systems

Policy Brief No.3

Mark Orkin, Mireille Razafindrakoto, François Roubaud

Governance, peace and security in Burundi, Mali and Uganda (2015)

This EU Policy Brief provides an evidence-based connection between two important international processes regarding governance, peace and security (GPS). The one is the measuring of GPS by national statistics offices (NSOs) in Africa, which is already reporting under the auspices of SHaSA (see box 1). The other is the recent consultations among political and technical stakeholders, supported by the UNDP and latterly the UN Statistics Division, on defining measurable indicators for the ten targets of Goal 16 – on peace, justice, and accountable institutions (see box 2 on p.2) – of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These were due to be considered at a Special General Assembly of the UN in September 2015.

Policy Brief No.4

Mark Orkin, Mireille Razafindrakoto, François Roubaud

La situation socio-politique au Burundi vue d'en bas : état des lieux et aspirations citoyennes pour éclairer les stratégies de sortie de crise (2015)

Ce policy brief fournit une lecture des soubassements de la crise politique au Burundi, qui a débuté en mars 2015. Il est basé sur les résultats du module Gouvernance, Paix et Sécurité harmonisé au niveau africain (GPS-SHaSA) et réalisé en 2014 auprès d'un échantillon de 13 000 personnes. Il propose un certain nombre d'éléments pour une stratégie de sortie de crise.

Policy Brief No.7

Marina Dodlova, Anna Gioblas, Jann Lay

Pro-poor Politics (2016)

This document highlights the role of political institutions for the adoption and design of pro-poor policies on the basis of cross-country comparisons. Understanding the potential of specific features of political institutions to interfere with social policy and its objectives needs to be taken into account when designing and supporting anti-poverty programs in developing country contexts.

Policy Brief No.8

Franklin Oduro, Regina Oforiwaa Amanfo-Tetteh

An Empirical Study into the Expectations, Preferences and Behaviour of Ghanaian Voters towards their MPs in Constituencies with High Incidence of Poverty (2016)

This policy brief examines expectations, preferences and behaviour of Ghanaian voters towards their Members of Parliament (MPs) during elections. Informed by a study conducted in constituencies with high incidence of poverty, ahead of the 7th December, 2012 elections, the study revealed that Ghanaian voters (44%) are very much interested in public affairs. Further, the study showed that Ghanaians (59%) actively participate in community meetings. In spite of the active nature of adult Ghanaians, in terms of interest and participation in public affairs, Ghanaians appear to have very limited knowledge and understanding of the core functions and responsibilities of MPs. For instance, majority of respondents considered the ability of their MPs to draw attention to the developmental needs of the constituents, provision socio-economic development of constituents, and lobbying of developmental projects as the core functions and responsibilities as against the constitutional assigned functions, which are lawmaking, representation and oversight of the executive. Another significant revelation from the study, which is a determinant of voting decisions, is that 84% of respondents indicated that they are „to a large extent“ influenced by the extent to which a candidate can directly provide personal resource, provision of development projects in the constituencies and the ability of the candidate to help many people. These findings show that voters“ voting intent is not based on the competence of the candidates to perform their core mandate of MPs, but the ability of MPs to provide developmental projects to the constituents. We recommend in this study the need for intense and continuous civic and voter education by Ghana“s constitutional body, the National Commission for Civic Education (NNCE), and other Civil Society Organizations for citizens to appreciate the role of MPs, issues on elections and accountability, and above all, on the civic and political rights of citizens.

Policy Brief No.12

Giulia Camilotti, Jean Philippe Platteau

Fighting Harmful practices: the case of female genital cutting (2016)

How to fight women hurting customs is still an open question. Legal bans and grass-root based programs have been implemented to stop female genital cutting, but there is still little evidence on their impact. We present here some empirical findings on anti-FGC interventions in Senegal and a discussion on the theoretical underpinnings of these policies.

Policy Brief No.21

Marie Boltz, Karine Marazyan, Paola Villar

Evading the family tax: a costly hide-and-seek strategy evidence from a lab-in-the-field experiment in Senegal (2017)

In developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, individuals frequently transfer a substantial share of their income to members of their social networks: members of the household or extended family, friends, and neighbours. This informal redistribution shape the social and economic lives of individuals: it represents a safety net, but is also driven by social motives such as social status seeking or strong redistributive norms (Platteau, 2000, 2006, 2014).

Policy Brief No.37

Marie Boltz, Isabelle Chort

The risk of polygamy and wives' saving behavior (2017)

In a polygamous society, all monogamous women are potentially at risk of polygamy as their husband may decide to take a second wife. This study focuses on how the risk of transition from a monogamous to a polygamous union affects the decisions of women in terms of savings.

Policy Brief No.41

Mireille Razafindrakoto, François Roubaud, Jean-Michel Wachsberger

Elites, démocratie et gouvernance : clivage entre le pouvoir et les citoyens à Madagascar (2017)

Madagascar's long-term economic trajectory is a true puzzle. Not only has Madagascar's GDP per capita been declining steadily since independence in 1960, but each time the country has embarked on a path to growth, this has been stopped in its tracks by some socio-political crisis. This brief focuses on an overlooked, yet crucial role of elites in the Malagasy tragedy. Taking a survey of a representative sample conducted by the researchers, it presents a sociography of the elites, their reproduction strategies and their values. The discrepancy between the elite class's position(s) and the wishes of the vast majority of the people is indicative of the split between these two groups. The analysis shows to what extent one of the main challenge for the Malagasy authorities lies in establishing a new social contract between the elites and the rest of the population

Policy Brief No.42

Mohammed Awal, Franklin Oduro

The quality of governance and inclusive development (2017)

In this policy brief, we examine the impact of the quality of democratic governance on inclusive development outcomes in Ghana. The research question that informs this study is: what forms of democratic politics and bureaucratic capacity are conducive to producing pro-poor inclusive developmental outcomes? We suggest in this paper that Ghana has managed to institutionalize democracy and an improved governance that has fostered sustained positive economic growth. However, while the country has addressed poverty and emerging social vulnerabilities, through economic growth and social protection policies and programmes, institutional and bureaucratic challenges still remain in the governance of the emerging pro-poor inclusive development agenda.

Policy Brief No.47

Farzana Afridi, Vegard Iversen, M.R. Sharan

Women political leaders, corruption and learning: evidence from a large public program in India (2017)

We identify the impact of gender, caste and political affiliation on the governance of a large poverty alleviation programme in India (NREGA), in a context where local people are in a position to closely monitor the actual against the prescribed allocation of public funds.

Policy Brief No.54

Mavis Zupork Dome, Awal Mohammed, Franklin Oduro

Involvement of Citizens in policy making at the local level in Ghana: Authentic or Superficial ? (2017)

Citizen's voices are very crucial in democratic and developmental processes. In Ghana, this has been made possible through the decentralization process introduced in the 1980s, which attempts to create space for citizen participation in decision-making process. The policy brief brings out the polarity between implementers of local governance system and the citizens who are been served on the availability of such spaces and effectiveness of the decentralized structure in creating space for participation and in meeting the needs of the people.

Policy Brief No.55

Hugo Ñopo, Ana Paula Franco, Mauricio Ibañez

Challenges and Opportunities for the Vulnerable Youth in Peru (2017)

In this policy brief, we document a panorama of the situation of vulnerable youth in Peru, highlighting their main challenges and explore some avenues for policy options.

WP9 - Emerging issues and Poverty Scenarios in XXIst century

Policy Brief No.22

Jean-Philippe Platteau

Constraints to innovation in developing countries: evidence from the Peruvian highlands (2017)

This policy brief is aimed at identifying the constraints to innovation adoption in agricultural production in developing economics. It focuses on the effect of a program aimed at activating a market for technical innovations in the region of Highlands in Peru. The authors find that innovations, who were supplied by local extension agents, were widely adopted and that liquidity constraints played only a limited role. These are important findings at a time when population growth and greater prosperity mean the world's food production will need to double over the next three or four decades while growth of food production is seriously impeded in developing countries owing to a lack of yield increase.

Policy Brief No.30

Isabelle Bonjean, Jean-Philippe Platteau, Vincenzo Verardi

Innovation Adoption and Liquidity Constraints in the Presence of Grassroots Extension Agents: Evidence from the Peruvian Highlands (2017)

This policy brief is aimed at identifying the constraints to innovation adoption in agricultural production in developing economics. It focuses on the effect of a program aimed at activating a market for technical innovations in the region of Highlands in Peru. The authors find that innovations were widely adopted and that liquidity constraints played only a limited role. They show that this is driven by two main reasons: (1) some key innovations were cheap and/or divisible and (2) the extension agents lifted liquidity constraints by providing credit to help the purchase of inputs.

Policy Brief No.40

Jean-Marie Baland, François Libois, Dilip Mookherjee

Forest degradation economic growth in Nepal 2003-2010 (2016)

Debates on the relation between economic growth and environmental degradation do exist since old times. On top of a deep understanding of the context in which the question emerges, a proper

answer this critical question requires a deep understanding of the direct effects of growth on natural resources as well as the feedback responses by affected population. This brief investigates how the huge reduction of poverty that Nepal experienced over the last decade has affected Himalayan forests. It then analyses how households, the primary collectors of forest products have reacted to the change in their ecological, institutional and economic environment. Based on the Nepalese experience, the policy brief draws conclusions and suggests recommendations which could guide action in other context as well.

Policy Brief No.44

Rafael De Arce, Eva Medina, Gloria Pérez-Salazar, Delia Visan

Defining scenarios of future poverty: a prospective assessment and relevant preventive policies (2016)

No abstract

Policy Brief No.48

Eva Medina, Sonia Chager

Taking advantage of demographic dividend for poverty reduction in sub-saharan Africa (2016)

This policy brief examines how Sub-Saharan African countries could take advantage of the demographic dividend in their fight against poverty.