Poverty Data Disaggregation: Experiences and Suggestions of China

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Disaggregated poverty data is important for most of the Countries

- The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
  - Pledge: No one will be left behind
  - 17 Goals and 169 targets
  - “Sustainable Development Goal indicators Should be disaggregated, where relevant, by income, sex, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability and geographic location, or other characteristics, in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (General Assembly Resolution 68/261).”
It is especially important in China

2020 poverty alleviation objective of China

- To insure all people in rural area with enough food and clothes, basic education and medical care, and housing safety
- To insure all poor people in rural area living under the current rural poverty line ( 2300 yuan a year = 2.3 USD a day) to be out of poverty
- To narrow the gaps in income and basic public service between poor rural areas and the average level of rural China
- To insure all poor counties to be out of “poor” (poverty headcount rate <2%)
It is especially important in China

- Huge population: 1.37 billion persons
- Rapid urbanization and huge size of migrant population: 169 million rural migrant workers
- 56 ethnic groups
- 6 administrative levels:
  - National level
  - Province: 31
  - Prefecture-level city: > 300
  - County/district: > 2,800
  - Town/township: > 40,000
  - Villages/communities: > 700,000
It is especially important in China

Large income equality:
2015 per capita disposable income

- Income ratio between urban residents and rural residents: 2.73:1
- Regional income ratio among east, middle, west and northeast area: 1.67:1.09:1:1.24
- Income ratio between the highest 20% and the lowest 20%: 10.5:1
- Gini index: 0.462
Concerns in poverty data disaggregation

1. What do we have?

2. What do we need?

3. What could we do? And how to do?
What kind of the disaggregated poverty data do we have – China

Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) annually provides/could provide following data by province, rural/urban, income group, sex, age, occupation, educational attainment, household type

- Income/consumption poverty index
- Rate of household in different types of dwellings
- Rate of household with living facilities/owned durable goods/access to public facilities or services
- Rate of persons with certain educational attainment and above/skill training /medical care/pension program

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- Enrolment rate of Children
- Proportion of households with access to financial services
- Proportion of household participating in decision-making on community affairs?
What kind of the disaggregated poverty data do we have? –China

- Mortality rate of infants/children below 5 years old
  - Population census (every 10 years): detailed disaggregated data by household and individual characteristics and by region
  - Administrative data: annual data only by large regions
  - National Children Sampling Survey (1990)

- Data on health or diseases
  - National Health Services Survey
  - Administrative data: by province
  - Ministry of Health and Family Planning
  - Once in 5 years

- Data on family violence
  - Special survey/interview
  - Women federation/NGO
  - Not periodically
The demand for more disaggregated data ....

Poverty size and headcount rate

- Need more disaggregated data by household characteristics and demographic characteristics
  - by farmer household/household with combined occupation/non-farmer household
  - by ethnicity
  - by educational attainment
  - by disabilities
  - ........
- By sex, age, ethnicity in poor areas
- By lower administrative level
  - by county
  - by village

National level
- Province: = 31
- Prefecture-level city: > 300
- County/district: > 2,800
- Town/township: > 40,000
- Villages/communities: > 700,000
The demand for more disaggregated data ....

Housing condition, children schooling

- By native residents/rural migrant workers
- By location of migrants
- ......
How to improve data disaggregation?

- By improving the current surveys
- By establishing new data sources
  - Sampling surveys
  - Administrative data
- By improving the utilization of current raw data
Example:

Poverty size, poverty headcount rate, living condition

Solution 1: improve the HIES
Solution 2: built new surveys
Solution 3: built new administrative data collection system
Solution 4: adopt new tools or methods
Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES)-NBS

- Periodicity: Annually
- Sample size: 160,000 households covering all the districts and more than 1/3 counties in 31 provinces of China
- Data collecting:
  - income and expenditure information is collected through diary-keeping of surveyed households in the whole year
  - Characteristics information of individual/household/community is collected through questionnaire interview at the end of quarter and year.
Solution 1: improve the HIES

Do we involve the target groups in HIES?
- Vulnerable groups
- Ethnic groups
- Migrant labors
Vulnerable groups

- Illiteracy / disabled persons …
  - It is difficult for them to keep diary or respond to the self-administered questionnaire

- Solutions adopted
  - An assistant interviewer in each sample village was employed to assist them keep diary on income and expenditure
  - In some urban areas, the surveyed households could send voice message or call directly to county-level survey team office instead of keeping diary by themselves
Ethnic groups

- All the members of surveyed household cannot speak Chinese or Mandarin

- Solutions adopted:
  - A local interviewer of the same ethnic group is employed to facilitate communication
Migrants

- Most of migrants migrate from rural area to urban area.
  - It is difficult to involve them in the sample for a whole year, due to frequent mobility of rural migrants.
Solution 1: improve the HIES

How to make target groups visible in the household survey?

- Proper variables and indicators
  - Comprehensive
  - Comparability
  - Relevance for policy
  - Burden of respondents

- Enough sample size
  - Cost
  - Manpower
Reform of HIES since 2013

- Improve sampling method to better cover migrants
  - Dwelling sampling method was adopted instead of household sampling method.

- Improve data collecting method to better grasp income and expenditure information of migrants
  - Questionnaire interview instead of keeping diary for part migrant household.

- Add variables about ethnicity, disability....

- Add the sample size of 40,000 households to improve the reliability of disaggregated data
Could HIES of post-reform satisfy the demand for the disaggregated data?

**Poverty size and poverty headcount rate**

- **By more characteristics of household/person**
  - by farmer households/households with combine occupation/non-farmer household
  - by ethnic groups
  - by educational attainment
  - by disability

- **The reliability of disaggregated data need to be evaluated**

- **By sex, age, ethnicity of poor areas**

- **By lower administrative level**
  - by county
  - ...
Could HIES of post-reform satisfy the demand for the disaggregated data?

Housing condition, children schooling----- N

- By native residents/migrants
- By location of migrants
- ......
Solution 2: built special household surveys--NBS

National Poverty Monitoring Survey-NBS (from 1997 to now)
- Add 40,000 sample households in poor areas on the basis of HIES.
- Provide disaggregated data by household characteristics and individual characteristics for poor areas.
- Compare the difference between poor areas and the average level of the national/province.
- Insure enough sample size in poor areas.
- Collect data related with poverty alleviation program.
Solution 2: built Special household surveys

- Special Survey on Rural Migrant Workers-NBS (from 2015)
  - New survey with the sample size of 40,000 rural migrant workers in urban area
  - To provide detailed disaggregated data for migrants
  - To reflect the issues concerned by migrants, such as employment, housing, children education, integration with native urban residents
Solution 2: built Special household surveys

- Monitoring Survey for mini-ethnic group--- National Commission of Ethnic Affair
  ✓ To collect related data from 2119 villages of mini-ethnic groups
Solution 3: built new administrative data source

- Poverty alleviation information system
  - Since 2014
  - Administrative data used for the implementation of targeted poverty alleviation program
  - By Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation of State Council
  - The objective is to involve every poor household/person
Solution 4: Adopt new tools or methods

- Poverty mapping
  - Second National Agricultural Census + HIES
  - Poverty headcount rate by county

- Integration of administrative data system
  - Poverty alleviation information system
  - Low-income group information system
  - Disabilities information system
  - Citizen ID registration system

- Began from 2016
Suggestions to international statistical community

- Specify required and optional disaggregated indicators for 2030 agenda
  - Required disaggregated indicators: for international comparison
  - Optional disaggregated indicators: for domestic comparison
  - Suggestions about data source

- Unify the classification and definition of disaggregated indicators
  - Disability

- Develop new tools for data disaggregation and promote the use of new tools
Thank you!