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P OVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

Emerging Issues, Experiences and Lessons

新千年 减贫战略

问题、经验与教训

Chief Editors: Zhang Lei Fan Shenggen

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This book consists of papers that were presented in an international conference on “Poverty Reduction Strategy in the New Millennium: Emerging Issues, Experiences and Lessons,” held in Beijing on May 23 – 24, 2006. The objective of this conference was to bring together international scholars and policy-makers to engage in a dialogue on the experiences and lessons in promoting growth and reducing poverty, particularly with regards to the role of governments at different levels, the private sector, NGOs, the civil societies and international organizations. The book is published so that the knowledge gained from the conference can be shared more widely. The chapters have not been peer – reviewed. The editors and conference participants have, however, given chapter authors substantial comments, leading to subsequent revisions for many chapters.

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Editors

致 谢

本书由2006年5月23—24日在北京召开的“新千年减贫战略：问题、经验与教训”国际研讨会上提交的论文结集而成。此次研讨会汇集了世界各地的专家学者和政府决策者，旨在交流各国促进经济增长和减少贫困方面的经验和教训，尤其是各级政府、私人部门、非政府组织、民间社团和国际组织在促进经济增长和减少贫困方面的作用。本书的出版有助于此次研讨会的成果得以更为广泛的传播。书中的章节均未经过匿名评审，感谢参会者和编委给予了很多中肯的评论，这些都有助于本书大部分章节的修改。

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编 者

PREFACE

The results of poverty reduction in the developing world are mixed over the past two decades. East Asian countries have generally been very successful in eradicating large – scale poverty. These countries include China, Indonesia, Thailand, and Vietnam where both the absolute number of poor and the percentage of population under the poverty line have dropped precipitously. South Asia (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Nepal) has achieved modest success by reducing the percentage of population under the poverty line from 60% in the 1960s to 30% today. However, the absolute number of poor has actually increased over time in the region due to the rapid population growth. At the other extreme, Africa has seen an increase in both the absolute number of poor and in poverty incidence. Even within successful countries such as India, China, Vietnam and Thailand, many lagging regions (such as western China, eastern India, northern Vietnam and northern Thailand) have shown a lack of progress in poverty reduction, and the poor are increasingly becoming concentrated in these regions.

Why are there such large differences in poverty reduction between countries and even across regions within the same country? What have been the major sources of rapid poverty reduction in successful countries (regions) and what are the major bottlenecks in poor countries (or regions) in their endeavor to reduce poverty? What lessons can be learned from these successes and failures?

Under this context, in November 2004, when the IFPRI Director General Joachim von Braun met with Liu Jian, the Director of the State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development of China, it was agreed to jointly host an international conference in 2006 by IPRCC and IFPRI to share the experiences and lessons, particularly emerging issues in poverty reduction across developing countries. This would be a follow up to the April 2004 China/World Bank conference on poverty reduction in Shanghai. It was felt at the Shanghai conference that China's poverty reduction experience should be widely disseminated and shared with other developing countries. The role of the government in China in reducing a large proportion of poverty through economic growth and government supported anti – poverty programs is particularly worth – noting. However, as China's poor population is on the decrease, it becomes more and more difficult to solve the poverty of the remaining poorest, China also needs to learn from other countries about how to better target the poor and to involve non – governmental organizations and the private sector to eliminate the remaining poverty.

More specifically, the objective of this conference is to bring together international scholars and policy-makers to engage in a dialogue on the experiences and lessons in promoting growth and reducing poverty, particularly with regards to lagging regions.

The planned conference was successfully held in Beijing on May 23 – 24, 2006. More than 100 policymakers, advisers, analysts, researchers, NGO representatives, and donors of development agencies from Ethiopia, Ghana, Uganda, Nigeria, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Mexico, USA, UK, and China attended the conference. A four day study tour was also organized for the participants to gain first hand experience on poverty reduction strategies and programs in Gansu province, one of the poorest provinces in China. A platform for future dialogue and networking among policymakers, advisers and researchers from these countries has been formed and it is expected that many such activities will be initiated in the future.

This book consists of various chapters presented in the conference that attempt to synthesize poverty reduction experiences in the past and challenges for further poverty reduction in the new Millennium in developing countries. The contents of these chapters are extremely rich, ranging from the role of governments, civil societies, the private sectors and international organizations, to local governance and public provision, and to factor and output markets and rural/urban dynamic linkages. The discussions and debates on the different strategies needed in different stages of development were also extensive; pointing out that one – size – fits – all strategy does not work. In the first phase, strategy should focus on reducing widespread poverty through broad based economic growth which reaches rural areas. In subsequent phases, more direct attention is needed to reducing the poverty and income inequalities that arise and persist despite reform by concentrating on lagging sectors and regions, as well as on poverty at the community and household levels.

Countries like China, India, Vietnam and Thailand have successfully completed the first phase of poverty reduction and now need to continuing their poverty reduction and addressing issues of income disparity and regional inequity.

Most Sub – Saharan African countries are still in the first phase. Investments in support of economic growth remain central to reduction of their mass poverty. In these countries, governments have the central responsibilities of forging a well – sequenced and coherent growth strategy, and of determining which public investments are required. Public investment in infrastructure and agriculture are the main areas needing attention. In recent years, some African governments have started to make progress. For instance, Ethiopia and Nigeria recently increased their public investments in agriculture and rural areas (World Economic Forum 2006). An improved response capacity to address emergencies and hunger crises must complement these strategies.

The book is organized into seven parts. The first part begins with an overview of the poverty reduction experience in China and in developing countries and includes three chapters. Chapter 1, by Liu Jian, highlights the achievements, experiences, lessons and challenges of Chinese anti – poverty reduction strategy over the past twenty more years, pointing out that government strategy has to be adjusted and adapted to the different stages of economic development. China's experience has shown that the agricultural growth led development strategy in the late 1970s and early 1980s was particularly successful in eradicating large number of absolute rural poor. This was followed by rapid rural diversification through the development of rural nonfarm sector in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Migration from rural and urban sector was a major driving force of poverty reduction in the 1990s. Today, a more targeted approach which fo-

cuses on poor communities, poor households and individuals is being pursued. Joachim von Braun's paper in Chapter 2 emphasizes the differing poverty reduction strategies needed for different types of countries as they have varying initial conditions, stages of development, and are distinct in terms social, economic and even cultural structures. One – size – fits – all strategy will not work. While the mutual learning among countries is important, countries need to develop strategies that fit into their specific context. He finally points out priorities for moving forward by engaging with more actors and the important role of research in generating evidence based knowledge which feeds into the policy making and strategy formulating process in order to achieve greater poverty reduction in the future. Chapter 3, by Hou Xi'an, highlights the particular experience of UNDP as a showcase on how international organizations have worked as a partner in assisting China in its effort to eradicate poverty and to draw lessons to be used for other developing countries.

Part two of the book specifically addresses the role of government in poverty reduction. Chapter 4 by Zhang Lei answers this question by using the evidence from practice in China. One cannot overemphasize the strong role the Chinese government played in promoting pro – poor growth and in implementing the anti – poverty program. The initial rapid poverty reduction in China came from growth in sectors upon the majority of poor depended such as agriculture and rural sector, not from a specific anti – poverty program. However, after this initial quick gain, the government launched an anti – poverty program by promoting economic development in poor areas. Again this was a very effective strategy as limited resources could be used to target the largest number of poor. In addition, economic growth can also generate government revenues that can be further used to target the poor population. The government has always been forceful in building human and physical capital including education, health, and infrastructure, thereby increasing poor's capacity to participating in the growth and employment process. The role of government campaigns (such as East – West cooperative poverty reduction) in reducing poverty has also been highlighted. The experience of Uganda was presented in Chapter 5 by John Okidi. The government's liberalization reform policy has led rapid growth in the country and the poverty rate has been reduced as a result. But the reduction in poverty has not been even. In particular, the farming sector has gained much less than the urban sector. The civil strife in Northern region has also limited the participants of residents in the growth process. This indicates that growth pattern has to be designed to be more pro – poor in the future. This has important implications for government policies to allocate more resources to the sectors and regions where poor depend on or reside. Chapter 6 by Xiaobo Zhang analyzed the effects of fiscal and political decentralization on economic growth and regional inequality. He argues that fiscal decentralization has to be accompanied by political decentralization in order to maximize the largest impact of government resources on both growth and reduction in regional inequality. Chapter 7, by Yao Yi and Xiaobo Zhang, points out that tax policies in poor region need to be reformed so that they can attract private investment as the current system involves heavy transition costs for private investment in poor regions.

Part three moves to the local governance and public provision. This part is particularly important as the poor are most directly affected by the service by local governments and communities. Chapter 8 by Chu Liming underscores the importance of the government in providing local public services to the poor. There is a gigantic gap between rural and urban areas and between rich and poor regions in the quality of ac-

cessing to various public service including infrastructure, education, health, technology and other services. Local governments including county and township levels lack sufficient funds to provide adequate services to their residents. There is a need to reform the current fiscal system to align the government functions and responsibilities with financial resources. Since the poor regions' tax base is small, they have to rely on the higher levels government to finance the services provide by the local government. To do this, the clear role, accountabilities, and responsibilities of various levels of governments have to be established. Chapter 9 provides important lessons in reforming local governance in India. The 1992 pass of the Constitution Act (73rd Amendment) paved a way for a new era in the democratic set up of the country and the local representative system is now constitutionized and should be democratically elected. It is obvious that local governance has improved as a result of reform. All villages have increased their development funds and public provision has been improved. However, while more developed villages are able to generate their own development funds, less developed villages depend more from the higher level governments. The increases of funds in developed villages have been much faster than poor villages. As a result, the difference in improvement of public services between villages has been alarmingly large. Therefore, democratization is important in improving local public service, but it's also not a panacea. Chapter 10 by Regina Birner and Nethra Palaniswamy compares public administration system related to agriculture between India and China. They underscore factors from both supply and demand sides in providing public provision to the poor. While China has strong capability in reforming and improving supply side, there is plenty room of also reforming the demand side. On the other hand, India's demand side capacity is strong, but its supply side is severely constrained by its bureaucratic administrative system. Although many of these factors are strongly influenced by their respective political systems, there have been many changes and reforms. They went further using agricultural extension as an example to illustrate reform options to improve services to farmers in both countries. Chapter 11 by Xiaopeng Luo and Xiaobo Zhang propose an interesting reform option of an entitlement exchange between local governments in rich and poor areas. For example, the number of government officials is fixed regardless of the size and economic development level of the region. While the best option would be to reform the government administration system to align the required government positions with needs, it is difficult to implement at this stage. The authors propose to create a national market for these entitlement government positions, so the local governments can trade these entitlements based on their needs.

Part Four of the book analyzes the role of the rural/urban linkages and input and factor markets in poverty reduction. Chapter 12 authored by Zhao Qiya uses Chongqing City to illustrate how rural urban development can be harmonized by better planning in investment and policies. China has implemented an urban biased policy for the last several decades, which has been the major reason of urban/rural divide. Correcting this bias and promoting stronger rural/urban linkages through integrated markets in labor, capital and product, through infrastructure development, and through political and institutional links will enable both rural and urban areas to gain. Through these strategies and policies, the rural/urban divide will disappear whether in terms of per capita income, poverty rate or geographic boundaries. Chapter 13 raises issues of imperfect land and labor markets in rural China due to high transition costs in these markets. The chapter concludes that the government needs to introduce policy and institutional changes to reduce

transaction costs and to increase farmers' participation in markets to improve their allocation efficiency among input factors such as land and labor. Chapter 14 focuses on the output market. In viewing the dimensions of poverty and the interaction with the market, the chapter highlighted the importance of space, of risk and vulnerability and of social exclusion and networks. An integrated framework for linking the various dimensions of poverty to market outcomes was then developed and supported by empirical evidence from various developing country contexts. A review of best practices to engaging smallholders in the market reveals that approaches have either focused on bridging smallholders to the market through value chain development or on enabling the market itself to develop in a way that reduces the transaction costs of participation for smallholders and the poor. An exciting research agenda lies ahead in uncovering what the potential of the new phenomenon of commodity exchanges sweeping across the developing world is for enhancing smallholder market participation and reducing rural poverty. The chapter has highlighted that the starting point for appropriate market development intervention is first understanding how markets actually work and in what ways the poor are adversely impacted. It has also emphasized that getting markets right requires a holistic agenda in which incentives, institutions, and infrastructure are aligned.

Part Five has five chapters related to poverty reduction strategy and policy in lagging or less – developed regions. It has four case studies from Gansu province in China, Ghana, Ethiopia and Guizhou in China. These four chapters each shows that many poor are increasingly concentrated to regions where natural resources are poor, access to infrastructure is difficult, and, in many cases, where ethnic groups reside. The government led poverty reduction strategy, together with external assistance (the World Bank) and active participation of local communities and individuals, has been a great success in Gansu. Similar to early stage of development in India and China, Ghana also faces regional unbalanced development. In these poor regions of North Ghana, agricultural – led growth is needed to achieve largest poverty reduction. Complementary avenues, however, are also needed, such as through improved migration and private investment. The regions are constrained by poor infrastructure and access to market. The state must play a leading role in investing in productive and social infrastructure as a way of facilitating the environment for private sector operators. The most important finding of Chapter 17 is the existence of large inequality among households within villages in Western China (Guizhou). Although agriculture still accounts almost for half of rural households' income, inequality among households mainly comes from nonfarm activities and their participation in migration outside of their region. In turn, this is caused by differences in human and physical capital, social networks and different ethnic background. This calls for a more targeted approach to use limited resources to ensure the access of these poor communities and households participate in growth process. Chapter 18 argues for a combination of policies and interventions in helping the poor in less favored areas using the Northern Highlands of Ethiopia as a case study. This combination would include promoting technology adoption, migration, increasing output prices, and cash for the work program. The final chapter in this section focuses on the regional distribution of income, fiscal spending and local tax revenues in Western China over the period between 1993 and 2002. The study finds that fiscal equalization policies, which are more effective in equalizing public service provision in western region, did not produce a significant income equalization effect. This implies that increasing efficiency of the government transfers, together with other government interventions such as those to integrate western China

into other regions, may receive equal if not higher priority.

The core of Part Six of the book relates to targeted approach and social safety nets. Both chapters emphasize that China should increase its efforts to focus on public resources and action to poor groups, communities and individuals. China indeed has begun to move to that direction. But most of these targeted programs are still designed to bring the poor to the growth or income generating process. While this has many merits and deserves to be applauded, it is the relatively richer segments of the poor who emerge from poverty. The extreme poor or those poor who do not have assets have difficulty gaining from the process. It is very likely that inequality within poor communities or poor groups will increase. Another challenge facing China as well as other countries is how to identify poor. Safety nets need to be established for those who will never be able to participate in development programs, for example, sick, elderly, and handicapped. In both targeting and establishment of safety nets, China has lot to learn from other countries like India and Latin America. The chapter on policy and experience of disadvantaged groups in India is particularly insightful. If a particular group is poor because of discrimination of the society against the group, special policies are needed to protect this group. The scheduled caste and backward class in India and non-Han minorities in China belong to these groups. Correcting certain social bias through government action will not only improve well-being of these particular groups, but also bring overall efficiency gain for the whole society by correcting labor market failures and to ensure a stable society which is a pre-condition for any long term economic growth.

The final part discusses the role of NGOs, international experiences and collaboration. There are many examples globally of NGOs effectively supporting national poverty reduction efforts by representing, mobilizing, and working with communities and civil society, although there remain considerable uncertainties. China has gradually recognized the important role of NGOs in poverty reduction. Further analysis on linkages and partnerships should be put high on international research and policy dialogue agendas. The role of international collaboration is also discussed. One important lesson is that the country has to be on the driving seat in terms of developing the poverty reduction agenda. The role of international agency should be limited to assisting by providing international expertise and to use aid for mutual learning. The specific experience of DFID is very important as its objective is to play a catalytic role and promote capacity building and mutual learning among different countries. The final chapter by Dessalegn Rahmato highlights his personal impression and reflection on the conference as well as the field trip to Gansu after the conference. In particular, he appreciates the opportunity to actual observe various poverty reduction schemes implemented in this poor province in western China. While he applauds the great success the province achieved in eradicating large number of poor out of poverty, he cautions whether such success can be duplicated in Afirca. Overall economic growth, strong governments, well established social network are important ingredients for the success in China. He argues for building fundamentals first instead of using a one-size-fits-all strategy borrowed from China.

Editors

前言

过去 20 年中，发展中国家和地区之间的减贫成效差别很大。东亚国家（中国、印度尼西亚、泰国和越南）实现了大规模减贫，绝对贫困人口数量和贫困发生率都大幅下降；南亚国家（印度、巴基斯坦、孟加拉国和尼泊尔）虽取得一定成就，贫困发生率从 20 世纪 60 年代的 60% 下降到目前的 30%，但由于人口增长过快，绝对贫困人口数量反而逐步增多；非洲地区贫困状况依然严峻，绝对贫困人口数和贫困发生率仍居高不下。即使在印度、中国、越南和泰国等减贫成效较大的国家，一些落后地区（如中国西部、印度东部、越南北部和泰国北部）仍然处于极度贫困的状态，减贫进程比较缓慢，贫困人口日益集中。

为什么不同国家乃至一国内部不同区域之间减贫成效存在差异？减贫成功的国家和地区快速减贫的主要原因何在？贫困国家和地区脱贫的主要制约因素是什么？其中的成功和失败带给我们什么启示？

为宣传和推广中国扶贫开发经验并且有效回答上述问题，2004 年 11 月，国际食物政策研究所所长 Joachim von Braun 和中国国务院扶贫办主任刘坚达成共识，由中国国际扶贫中心和国际食物政策研究所于 2006 年联合举办一次国际性研讨会，以交流各国在减少贫困中的经验和教训，尤其是发展中国家在减少贫困中新出现的问题。此次研讨会将是 2004 年 4 月中国和世界银行举办的上海全球扶贫大会的继续。在上海扶贫大会上参会者普遍认为，中国减少贫困的经验应该得到更为广泛的推广并与其他的发展中国家共享。在通过经济增长和政府支持的反贫困计划减少贫困人口的过程中，中国政府在大规模消除贫困中所起的作用尤其值得关注。然而，随着中国贫困人口的不断减少，解决剩余贫困人口问题的难度越来越大，如何更好地瞄准贫困人口，发挥非政府组织与私人部门在消除贫困中的作用等方面，中国也需要向其他国家学习。

主题为“新千年减贫战略：问题、经验与教训”的国际研讨会已按计划于 2006 年 5 月 23—24 日在北京成功举行。参加此次会议的有来自埃塞俄比亚、加纳、乌干达、尼日利亚、肯尼亚、泰国、越南、菲律宾、印度、巴基斯坦、墨西哥、德国、美国、英国和中国的一百多位扶贫政策制定者、政府顾问、政策分析者、研究者、非政府组织代表和发展机构的捐助者。会后参会代表前往甘