

Value Judgements workshop, 28-29 June 2012

Procedure:

On **Day One** of the workshop, different procedures were discussed by which to make value judgements, including:

- Participatory/deliberative processes
- Surveys
- Expert discussions
- Existing legal or other instruments
- Normative Theory
- Axiomatic justifications
- Crowdsourcing etc
- Combined methods

Which procedures are selected depends upon the context: time, cost, politics, knowledge.

At present these decisions are ad-hoc.

Can *any* of these be equally justified (criticised)?

In the next hour and a half we **cannot** go through the strengths and weaknesses and usually failures of each of the procedure in detail. The aim is rather to clarify the necessary components of a set of procedures.

Criteria:

The design of multidimensional measures inevitably requires a balancing of different criteria such as:

- Value-judgements
- Political Use
- Technical Accuracy

Each of these will have internal conflicts also.

The question is how *should* these be balanced in a real situation.

One option is to use the plural principles that ‘rule out’ bad measures, but leave a set than which none is worse. But who has the authority to choose within that set?

Another option is to come up with ‘industry standards’ to multidimensional measures that they should fulfil – in terms of each of the three criteria above – after which it doesn’t matter.

Another is to find an ‘umpire’ principle to adjudicate between them.

Day Two:

The Minister of planning has been given the authority to design a new official national multidimensional poverty measure, whose purpose is to reflect capability poverty, to inform policy design, reflect policy interventions, and inform the public.

Implicit in the purposes are several agendas and actors, such as:

- **Poor people:** To create a poverty measure such that if these capabilities were expanded, poor people's capabilities would be expanded.
- **Society:** To create a measure that generates social support for poverty reduction policies.
- **Political Leadership:** To create a measure that will be produced and used by the government, and that incentives poverty reduction.

Epistemological: The measure, being based in capability space, will implicitly or explicitly make a set of value judgments regarding **what people value and have reason to value**. These generate a need for information on values:

- What are the capabilities people value and have reason to value (dimensions & indicators)
- What is the relative importance of capabilities (weights)
- What is poverty (who is poor? cutoffs)

Key question influencing choice of 'ideal' procedure: Which of these are to be made by uniquely poor people, vs by society, vs by political leadership? If overlapping sets, how resolve conflicts? Constructive?

Legitimacy: The measure, being a tool for policy, requires the ownership, understanding, and support of a) citizens and b) policy makers in order to proceed. Their considerations also include:

- Incentives
- technical rigor, intuition, etc
- if process was complete

Costs: The costs associated with measurement design must seem justifiable. These include financial costs, technical burden, 'cost' of communicating the measure, and ease of use and interpretation.

1. What are the necessary components of the procedures she should suggest?

E.g.:

Must have:

- Poor people's input on
 - What is poverty (dim, ind, cutoffs, wts)
 - Who is poor

Etc.

2. How can competing criteria be balanced? Issues of authority

Value Judgements in Multidimensional Poverty Design: discussion sessions

Aim of each session is to discuss how to:

- make the value judgements inherent in this decision (options)
- balance normative, technical, & political issues (priority)
- update over time

Chair to summarize:

1. How would we suggest to those charged with designing the multidimensional poverty measure that they undertake the three steps above?
2. What pressing research questions have been noted?
3. (Does the question need to be reformulated or changed?)

Participants to contribute:

- **Literature** – please jot or email annotated biblio, stating why you propose each and what you see it adding (ophi@qeh.ox.ac.uk)
- **People / Projects** with expertise or research (as above)
- **Ideas** that you feel like sharing in writing

Purpose of poverty measure

For today, **we presume** that the value judgements pertain to the design of a long-term official measure of multidimensional poverty.

The poverty measure will inform policy design, and reflect positive change that can be influenced by public policy.

This is to be updated periodically (say every 2 years) using time series data that are nationally representative and can be decomposed by region and relevant social groups.

The survey design will take place after the measure is designed.