



Chronic Poverty
Research Centre

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Key messages for policy makers

New York

September 17th, 2010



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Chronic poverty matters

- A large number of people
 - around half a billion are poor over long periods, whole lives, and children inherit parents' poverty
- For achieving the MDGs, especially beyond 2015
- Significant human and political costs of leaving it unaddressed
 - now, and increased costs later, dealing with irreversibilities



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The lessons of 5 years of research on chronic poverty and poverty dynamics for policy makers

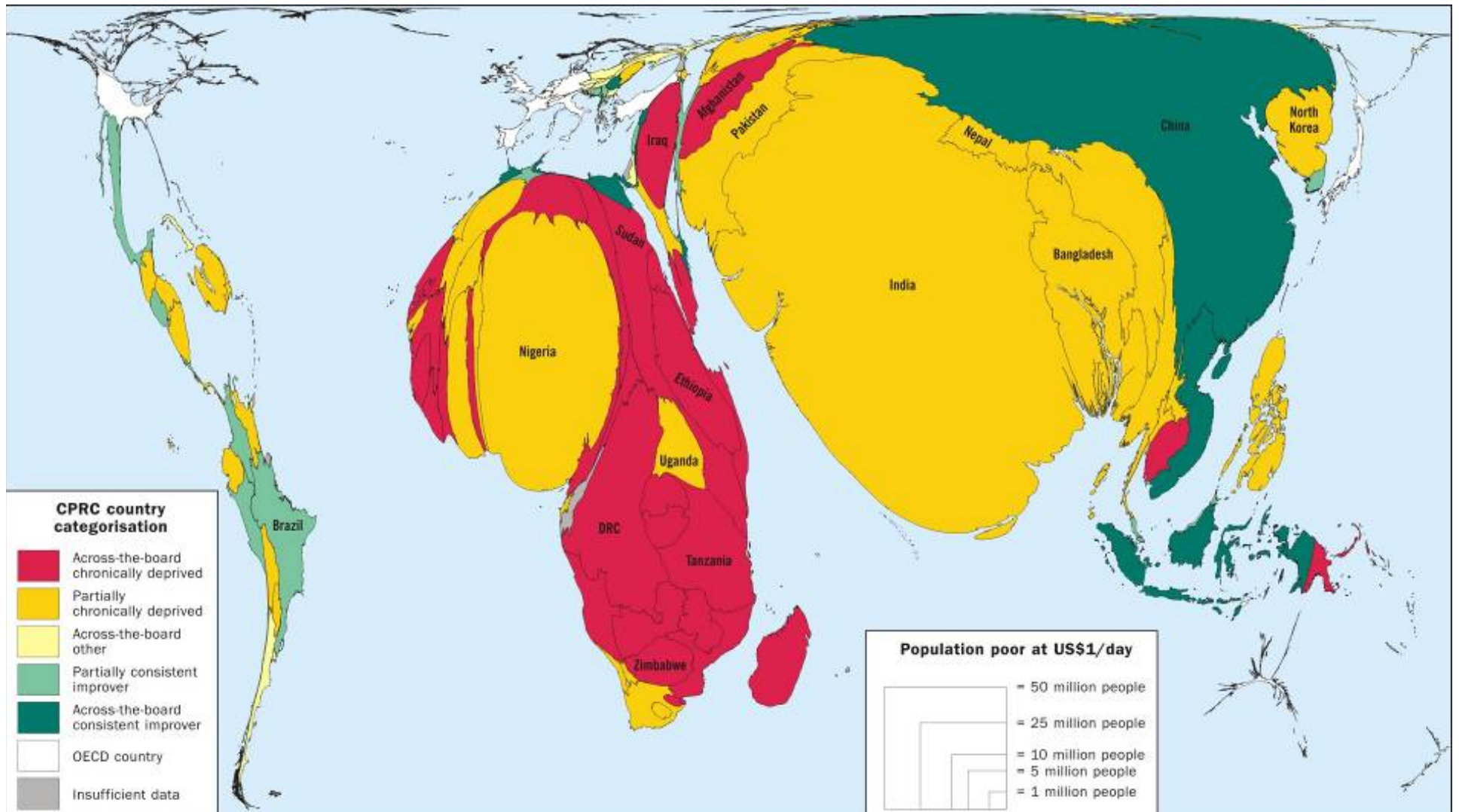
- Target audiences:
 - National policy makers: mainly in country: national reports a key vehicle. Focus: PRSs, national development plans, specific policies
 - International policy makers: MDG review; donor agencies
 - Practitioners & researchers
- Dissemination formats
 - Chronic Poverty Report ‘brand’



2nd Chronic Poverty Report 2008/9

- Country context critical – international agencies look for overarching story
- Poverty traps: different combinations of
 - insecurity,
 - limited citizenship
 - spatial disadvantage
 - social discrimination
 - poor work opportunities (limited growth, exploitative conditions)

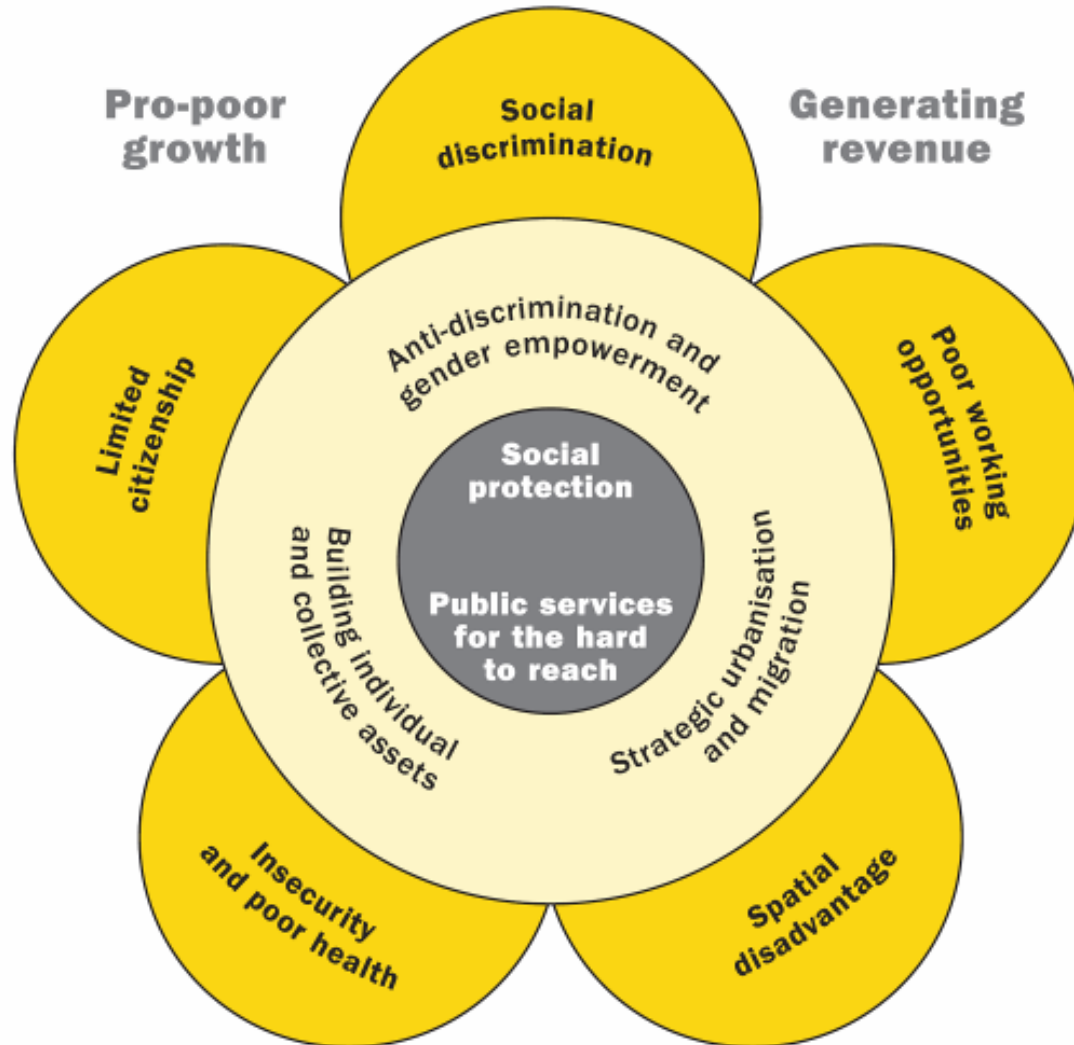
Tailoring policy responses to country context





What Works for the Poorest?

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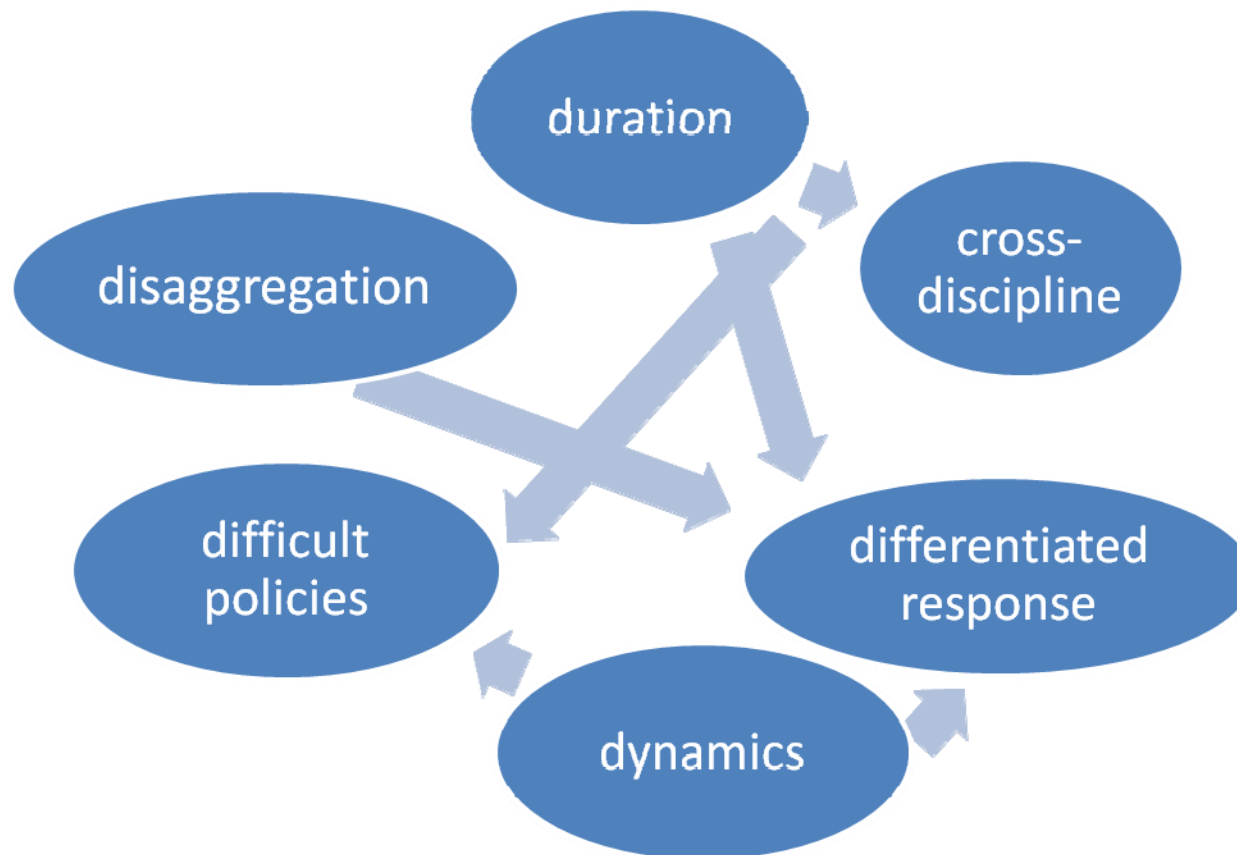




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Chronic poverty: the 5 'd's and a 'c'



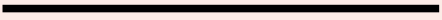









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Framework propositions 1

- Most severely poor people are chronically poor, but not vice versa
- Poverty dynamics: gradual incremental accumulation – rapid impoverishment; multiple/sequential shocks [next slide]
 - Adjust policies to support/prevent
- Inter-generational transmission: not only what happens in *utero*/childhood – events, processes, assets acquired/lost through the life course
 - Eg teenage girls and young women neglected in development discourse but important
 - Learn from policy/programme successes increasing women's agency
- Vulnerability strongly linked to chronic poverty:
 - Informal employment one important source – tax financed social protection as an entry point; controversial questions about regulation

Direction	Pattern	Depiction	Number of Cases
Stable	Smooth		8
Improving	Smooth		3
Declining	Smooth		2
Stable	Saw-tooth		135
Improving	Saw-tooth		76
Declining	Saw-tooth		30
Declining	Single-step		2
Declining	Multi-step		37
			297



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Framework propositions 2

- Assets, markets and protection need to work together to address chronic poverty
 - Eg education endowments & labour market: education policy needs overhauling
- Cross discipline focus on structures and processes underlying chronic poverty and dynamics
 - Elites and policy makers (and much research) looks at individual attributes: poverty blamed on the poor
 - Political (citizenship, rights based) approaches need ‘stretching’ to be useful against persistent poverty



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Leading policy implications

- Growth which includes chronically poor people on good terms
 - Contributes to just economic and social structures
- Progressive social change
 - Challenge to social orders underpinning chronic poverty
- Social protection
 - Practical entry point against chronic /extreme poverty, opening the way to address more difficult issues

National policy and actions are critical; international can support



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Leading policy implications 1

- Growth which includes chronically poor people on good terms
 - the basics of pro-poor/inclusive growth, especially employment intensity, and
 - improvements in the labour market
 - asset-markets-protection synergies: joint programmes, inter-ministerial working groups; inter-NGO collaboration
 - location: improved connectivity where there is potential for growth combined with and extending the reach of anti-discrimination measures: combine area-based & universal approaches
 - fiscal redistribution to enable capability enhancement, social protection, progressive social change
 - focus on teenagers and young people, especially vulnerable but also best able to escape poverty when conditions allow



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Leading policy implications 2

- Progressive social change: the chronically poor need good societies as well as good policies
 - Very context specific
 - May be few obvious policy levers (eg dowry)
 - Very difficult areas: eg challenging patriarchal systems on land tenure, inheritance...
 - Much experience to learn from (eg promoting teenage girls' and young women's agency through confronting discriminatory social institutions)



New social policy issues

- Inheritance (work in progress)
 - Law and policy = opportunities for attitude and behaviour change, public education
 - Public debate on rights in cohabiting and polygamous unions
 - Practical approaches to safeguarding property inheritance of vulnerable members of society: local tribunals, alternative dispute resolution
 - Links to local leaders
 - Preventive action – birth, marriage, death registration, including local
- Dowry – not disappearing in S Asia despite development
 - Need for innovation & experimentation
- Alcoholism & mental health
 - absence of preventive/rehabilitative strategies



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Leading policy implications 3

- Social protection: extend coverage and build systems
 - Long term as well as short term beneficial impacts (Oportunidades): child development, schooling, labour productivity
 - A complement to enhanced social services and growth policies
 - Scope for innovation (eg Uganda pilot),
 - Imperative of evaluation for political consensus



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What is new here?

- Pictures of poverty dynamics
- Inter-generational poverty not just about childhood and human development – also other life stages and material assets
- Assets-markets-protection synergy
- ‘progressive social change’, good societies
- Links between protection, social change and growth



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Implications for the MDGs

- Strong policy experimentation and evaluation required prior to 2015 on more difficult policy areas
 - eg Joining up asset building, protection and markets
 - significant role for NGOs as well as governments
 - political commitment to confront more difficult challenges – eg focus on agency of teenage girls and young women
- Strengthen MDG growth – employment agenda
 - National employment strategies linked to growth strategies
- Extend social protection as rapidly as possible prior to 2015 and evaluate rigorously
 - A new target?
- Education policies and focus of MDGs will need major overhaul in 2015