

High Demand to Find Pathways to Secure Food for Man

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Last years showed declining reserves of major food stuff due to further increasing world population, limited land resources and declining yield increases. As a result food prices increased rapidly and released increased social problems which partly even led to riots, since people were not able to pay their daily food.

Forecasts show, that world population will grow from about 6.7 billions today to about 9.1 billions in 2050 - an increase of about 50 % or about 81 million per year. Already today it is estimated, that more than 800 million people do not have enough to eat day by day or seasonally. It has to be worried, that this number will increase, if there will be no basic advances in food production, storage and proceeding. The development will hit particularly the people who do already struggle to feed themselves and their families because of very limited resources and income.

An increase of food production by using additional land seems to be only possible on a limited scale. The major productive land resources are already used. Further extension of arable land will come across environmental issues such as sustainability of land use, limited water resources or erosion. On the other side increasing fuel prices made biofuel production economically more interesting and so an additional competition for land was generated.

To overcome this arising problematic situation and to be able to feed the increasing world population on a sustainable way, we do have to support research to increase our knowledge about these fields. We do need innovations in the different areas to improve food production and food availability on a sustainable way. And last but not least we do have to bring this knowledge and innovations to the people who need this information in a way, that they are able to adapt it into their daily live. It is not sufficient to have scientific solutions as long as solutions are not adapted by the people. We still need more information about the socio-economic forces improving or hindering the adaption processes in different regions. These fields, which were not in the focus of the international community in the last decades, have to be followed forcefully to overcome this serious emerging situation.

Keywords: Development strategies, food security

The Competitiveness of Brazilian Rice in the World Market: A Comparative Advantage Approach

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Among cereals, rice represents a major source of food for an important part of global population. As rice world stocks fall and prices climb, the food security of many countries can be negatively affected. However, for rice exporting countries, new opportunities may arise from this new scenario, where currently only 7 % of total production is being internationally traded. New players may appear in the rice market while others may reduce their participation. Based on this assumption, this paper's aim was to analyse the international competitiveness of Brazilian rice considering the world market as well as some selected rice producing and exporting countries as potential competitors. As main producers in year 2005, based on the amount of produced paddy rice obtained from FAO data, China, India and Indonesia were considered; As main exporters in 2005, based on the monetary value of exports obtained from WTO data, United States of America, Uruguay and China were taken into consideration. For the analysis, the Revealed Comparative Advantage (RCA) Index was used. According to RCA-Index, a country would have a revealed comparative advantage and be competitive if the RCA-Index is higher than 1.0. The analysis considered the period from 1995 to 2005. The main findings were that, so far, Brazil has no comparative advantage in producing rice and exporting it to the world market. From the considered countries, in the past 10 years, Brazilian rice could only compete with Indonesian rice i.e., the RCA-Index used to be higher than 1.0. Thus, Brazil's participation in the world market depends on structural changes in the rice market as well as on issues related to cropping systems that may arise in the future.

Keywords: Comparative advantage, competitiveness, rice market

Economic Transformation – Theory, Empirical Evidence and Lessons from Successful Developing Countries

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Our research is motivated by encouraging signs of growth acceleration in Africa that may herald a new development era of rapid transformation. This paper provides an extensive literature review on development economics, empirical observations from successfully transforming countries and analytic narratives on Thailand and Mexico. We find that the traditional development theory is consistent with past experiences of countries that moved from low to middle income level. However, this theory needs to be broadened in the light of rising inequalities during transformation.

Successful transformation vitally depends on agricultural development and industrialisation strategies. An early withdrawal of attention away from agriculture slows down transformation and resulting inequalities have become a persistent development challenge. By-passing small farmers in the process of agricultural modernisation has marginalised a large group of the rural population. This has not only led to short term social tensions, but also made long-run poverty reduction and improvements in inequality an extremely difficult task, even after countries have reached middle income status.

Winner-picking industrialisation strategies and related policies have created big industrial sectors, but these sectors have often failed to establish close links with the rest of the economy. Increased inequality and the difficulties to make these “picked” sectors internationally competitive and to generate sustainable long-term economic growth are all painful lessons drawn from this type of transformation strategy. On the other hand, private sector-led manufacturing growth, which is more of a “home-grown” nature and starts from a realistic base, is likely to be more consistent with a country’s initial conditions and comparative advantage.

Unleashing agricultural and industrial growth potentials in Africa requires government action to significantly improve the business environment. Public investments in infrastructure and improvements of the institutional environment for doing business are critical. In agriculture, the most important policy action is the removal of urban-biased and industrial-biased policies in trade, marketing, taxes and many other macroeconomic aspects. The most important public investment is in rural infrastructure and agricultural research and extension. As in other countries, African farmers will use this opportunity to transform traditional agriculture and thereby contribute to the successful transformation of their economies.

Keywords: Africa, economic growth, inequality, transformation

Mapping Poverty: How Many Different Geographic Profiles can we Produce? An Application to Latin American Small Area Estimates

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The study of the geographic distribution of poverty has gained considerable attention in recent times. Several methods have been developed and tested in different countries with the aim of producing disaggregated poverty incidence estimates that can be portrayed in maps. For the case of Latin America, countries such as Bolivia, Brazil, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, and Paraguay have joined these efforts and produced updated geographic poverty profiles. These profiles can serve as support for the identification of priority areas, the allocation of public expenditure, and for policy making. As well, they can aid in the formulation of hypotheses as regard causal factors of poverty and the validation of estimation results. Poverty maps are created by classifying poverty incidence estimates into groups that reflect various degrees of poverty. Several classification approaches are available and very often, they produce different geographic profiles. In spite of this, most of the current poverty mapping exercises lack of precise documentation about the classification approach used and their rationale. This work reviews alternative classification approaches and their implications for map display and interpretation. Using data from selected Latin American countries, the analysis begins with the exploration of the spatial trend observed in the poverty incidence estimates. Afterwards, alternative classification approaches are used for the creation of poverty profiles and compared for consistency with the observed trend. The results clearly show how clusters of certain degrees of poverty appear or disappear depending on the classification approach used and how certain profiles deviate from the observed trend in the unclassified data. It is strongly recommended that poverty map makers evaluate the consistency of their displays with the data trend in order to transmit their findings, and that the proper documentation of the mapping process is included for an adequate map interpretation.

Keywords: Choropleth map, classification method, Latin America, poverty incidence

Time Allocation, Poverty and Gender: Evidence from Post-War Rwanda

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This paper analyses the impact of gender on time allocation in a developing country context, using household survey data from Rwanda. Even though more than a decade has passed since the genocide, Rwandan society still bears the demographic impact of the conflict, which killed many more men than women. In the aftermath of the genocide, the share of female-headed households increased sharply and many women became the principal income-earner of their household.

The paper addresses these issues by analysing the determinants of time allocation on domestic activities, such as water fetching and cooking, and on market activities, including wage work and self-employment. This paper contributes to the literature in two ways. First, it extends the framework of gender indicators and accounts for interrelations between different indicators. More specifically, the paper compares the impact of 1) gender of head, 2) the regime of intra-household decision-making processes, 3) an individual's position within the household hierarchy, and 4) civil status. Second, this paper applies the analysis both to the unit of the household and of the individual.

Methodologically, the paper applies probit and tobit estimations and differentiates between the participation in a particular activity and the intensity of time allocated to an activity, expressed as shares of total time. This approach accounts for the selection into an activity.

Results reveal three issues. First, household composition has the most important effect on how men and women, but also male-headed and female-headed households allocate their time. The presence of adult males particularly increases household time spent in wage work — an important income source that insures household income against agricultural risks in rural areas. Second, household hierarchy and gender are interrelated as women heads do engage more intensively in domestic tasks. Given that domestic tasks contribute less to the household income this may explain the higher incidence of poverty among female-headed households. Third, more time is devoted to wage work if the decision-making authority is concentrated in the head. The findings of this paper make a strong argument for the provision of basic infrastructure which might particularly increase women's time shares in market activities.

Keywords: Gender, household, poverty, Rwanda, Sub-Saharan Africa, time allocation

Value of Life at its Start: Socio-Economic Factors Affecting Health Status of Population

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This study aims at empirically estimating the affect of socioeconomic and health care services variable to the health status in Pakistan. The availability and access to health care services and the physical, and socio economic environment in which a person live, broadly determines disease pattern, health status and therefore the quality of life. Instead of income, this study uses intrinsically valued commodities like better health status in terms of reduced infant mortality and increased life expectancy as an indicator of success of health services outreach. Despite of economic growth, social and demographic indicators in Pakistan presents a dismal picture as infant mortality rate is still very high. Keeping in view the likely role of socioeconomic and access to health care, the study tries to analyse that what factors determines the health status improvement in Pakistan? And what is the role of health care access and inequality in explaining mortality and their causal relationship? This study is first of its kind that uses time series data from a developing country and applied cointegration approach. Augmented Dickey Fuller (ADF) and Philip Perron (PP) test employed to examine the issues of stationarity and unit root. Johansen cointegration approach is used to determine the cointegrating vectors. While short run dynamics is captured using general to specific methodology. Impulse response analysis (IRA) is employed by giving shocks to health care access and its impact on health status. The analysis helps in better resource allocation and target intervention, for better population health, in cost effective manner.

Keywords: Cointegration, health care services, health status, human development, infant mortality, life expectancy, Pakistan, time series model