

**The Effects of Measuring Poverty –
Indicators of the World Bank**

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DFG Research Center (SFB) “From Heterogeneities to Inequalities”

Whether fat or thin, male or female, young or old – people are different. Alongside their physical features, they also differ in terms of nationality and ethnicity; in their cultural preferences, lifestyles, attitudes, orientations, and philosophies; in their competencies, qualifications, and traits; and in their professions. But how do such heterogeneities lead to social inequalities? What are the social mechanisms that underlie this process? These are the questions pursued by the DFG Research Center (Sonderforschungsbereich (SFB)) “From Heterogeneities to Inequalities” at Bielefeld University, which was approved by the German Research Foundation (DFG) as “SFB 882” on May 25, 2011.

In the social sciences, research on inequality is dispersed across different research fields such as education, the labor market, equality, migration, health, or gender. One goal of the SFB is to integrate these fields, searching for common mechanisms in the emergence of inequality that can be compiled into a typology. More than fifty senior and junior researchers and the Bielefeld University Library are involved in the SFB. Along with sociologists, it brings together scholars from the Bielefeld University faculties of Business Administration and Economics, Educational Science, Health Science, and Law, as well as from the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) in Berlin and the University of Erlangen-Nuremberg. In addition to carrying out research, the SFB is concerned to nurture new academic talent, and therefore provides doctoral training in its own integrated Research Training Group. A data infrastructure project has also been launched to archive, prepare, and disseminate the data gathered.

Research Project C5 “Conceptions of Global Inequality in World Society”

This project deals with the emergence of a global semantics of inequality within world society. Through three comparative case studies it traces how ideas about global social inequality that draw on various aspects of heterogeneity have developed in international organizations, both programmatically and on the policy level. In addition, the project is particularly interested in the question of whether it is specific global discourses, e.g. on issues of justice, the climate, environmental protection, security etc., that serve as the main vehicles for the emergence of such a global semantics of inequality.

The main project goal is to describe shifts in semantics of inequality in world society and to map this shift in a detailed fashion in the context of the case studies. In particular, these case studies focus on reports, statistics, and policy statements of three international organizations (World Bank, UNDP, OECD). Changes in notions of inequality, which are reflected in semantics have effects on how ‘progress’ in development is quantified, and it has a tangible effect on the projects and measures of international organizations. These semantics emerge within a cycle of communication between national and international, public and private actors concerning problems in economic and social development.

The text corpus to be analyzed includes development-related reports, statistics, and policy statements of international organizations. These are supplemented by reports, policy proposals, and working papers (“nonpapers”) written by administrative units within the organizations. Negotiation protocols will be analyzed in order to determine how specific ideas have gained entry to and shaped the semantics of inequality. In this process, the project will seek to identify more directly the different actors involved in the formation of particular notions of inequality, most particularly organizational staff, representatives of member states, representatives of other governmental and nongovernmental organizations, or experts from the academic community. These groups of actors do not only participate in the formation of certain ideas on inequality, but to some extent are also addressees of specific measures or proposals, e.g. member states which benefit from a programme and who then possibly also adopt these notions of inequality within their own programs and policy formulations. Such an approach is also able to account for the influence of NGOs on the forms of observation and the subsequent policy formulations by international organizations.

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The Effects of Measuring Poverty - Indicators of the World Bank

Katja Freistein and Martin Koch

Abstract

The use of indicators has become a practice almost without alternatives in the realm of global politics. The World Bank – as both a credit institution and knowledge producer – uses various indicators and related instruments to measure poverty. The paper explores the different effects of using these instruments, studying numerical indicators, maps and narrative forms of poverty measurement. While primarily focused on knowledge and governance effects in the field of poverty, the paper also turns to the function indicator use has for organisations.

Keywords: poverty measurement, indicators, governmentality studies, World Society studies, World Bank

1. Introduction

A number of international governmental and non-governmental organisations deal with the eradication of extreme poverty. One of the most influential agenda-setters in this field is the World Bank.¹ Although the World Bank is foremost a major lending institution for financial loans, generating and distributing knowledge has always been a major task of the World Bank. Money and loans have rather been seen as lubricants or means to bring certain ideas forward, agendas and policies as well as general ideas about how to achieve development. The ‘Bank’ has thus claimed to acquire and pool relevant knowledge about development and the eradication of poverty. It developed and sees itself as a “knowledge bank”– as James Wolfensohn put it in 1997, “both as an imprimatur institution as well as a producer of knowledge” (Kapur 2006). Part of this generation of knowledge is developing indicators for assessing problems and measures as well as success or failure of policy programs. To this end,

¹ The World Bank or more precisely the World Bank Group comprises five institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), The International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID).

the World Bank has developed various quantifiable indicators and measures.² While useful and omnipresent in all policy fields, indicators have also been criticised and discussed as instruments of exerting power and subduing alternative knowledge (Arndt/Oman 2007). This is where we link up to in pondering the effects of indicators.³

More narrowly, we will here concentrate on indicators to assess poverty. Poverty reduction is one of the most accepted, yet at the same time controversial goals of global development policies. Drawing on insights on human rights indicators and others (Espeland/Sauder 2007; Merry 2011; Rosga/Satterthwaite 2009),⁴ we aim to show here the functions and effects of global poverty indicators, focusing on the case of the World Bank. Since much in-depth and inspiring research has already been conducted on the phenomenon of poverty itself, on the usefulness of certain indicators and the preferability of others (on a similar debate, see Anand et al. 2009), we will here study what effects the use of poverty measuring have had. Our observations are focused on the global development discourse in a broad sense as well as on the World Bank itself.⁵ Since the World Bank is undisputedly one of the most dominant agencies of development both in material and non-material terms, it is a case in point to demonstrate the function and effects of global indicators.

Beyond the study of one set of indicators we will also take into account various other technologies of poverty measurement and their effects, since they are closely related to the quantifiable indicators such as the poverty headcount ratio or the poverty gap. The intricate web of indicators and related instruments is already a potential result of the effects we assume, namely what Sally Engle Merry calls *knowledge and governance effects* (2011: S84), explicitly framing them as ‘sociological aspects of the expansion of indicators’. We will draw on these considerations in order to discern the political consequences of employing poverty indicators. Furthermore, we identify a third function of indicators, broadly called *organisation effect*, which pertains to the power of indicators not only exerted by the organisations that produce them but also on the organisations themselves. In order to account for these effects we situate our analysis in a broader theoretical framework of both Foucault-inspired governmentality studies that focus on technologies and rationalities of governing and on

² Following Davis et al. 2011 (6), we summarise various forms of quantifications under the idea of ‘indicators’, including indexes and global maps.

³ The World Bank serves here as an exemplary, but particularly well-suited case in point for the effects of indicators. In a more general line of argumentation we could also scrutinise other international organisations or states and their use of indicators in a similar analysis, perhaps coming to comparable results.

⁴ An earlier version of the paper was written for a workshop dedicated to the work of Sally Engle Merry on global (human rights) indicators.

⁵ While the very question how single countries have been affected is a worthy and important subject, it is beyond the scope of this paper and has been subject to much research already.

World Society theory, in particular neo-institutionalist concepts of social reproduction in the global sphere.

Our paper is divided in three parts. In a first step we prepare the ground of our research and briefly introduce the significance of measuring poverty. To that effect, we trace debates about poverty measuring in order to show what problems have been identified so far. In a second, more empirical step, we show the broader effects of poverty measurement, giving examples of the common techniques used in this context. In doing that, we aim at scrutinising the effects of poverty measurement and its presentation in indicators, measures, graphs etc. Finally, we will discuss the role of poverty measures against the overall idea of indicator use in global politics. In sum, the overall ambition of this paper is to show some of the effects of indicators of and on the World Bank.

2. Measuring Poverty

The idea of alleviating poverty has a relatively recent history in the efforts of the World Bank and is inherently connected with the overall idea of development. Since its foundation in 1944 the World Bank has followed a development agenda, starting with the support of Europe that helped it recover after World War II. The fight against poverty was initiated by McNamara, who came to the World Bank in 1968. He changed the focus of the Bank's agenda to going beyond infrastructure projects and set up projects to deal with basic human needs and poverty reduction, creating an economic environment that particularly the poorest people would benefit from. In his Nairobi speech in 1973, he proposed the term "absolute poverty" and defined this as a condition of deprivation that falls below any rational definition of human decency. The idea also marks a matter of great urgency – which until now is reflected in debates about the successes and failures of fighting poverty (Berger 2007; Mahendra Dev and Ravi and Galab 2006; Nayak and Basu 2005; Ravallion 2009).

Although the fight against poverty did neither dominate nor drive the World Bank in the following years, it nevertheless became a central chapter of the Bank's history. Today, we find a close linkage between development and poverty. The World Bank of today has a poverty reduction strategy that is intended to help aid recipient countries to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). They detail a country's plan to promote growth and reduce poverty through implementing specific economic, social and structural policies. However, before elaborating plans how to fight poverty in particular countries the World

Bank needed and still needs to define poverty with indicators in order to measure poverty at first and the results of initiatives thereafter.

The World Bank⁶ defines its task as helping the poorest people in the poorest countries (World Bank 2007). Thus, it differentiates on a fundamental level who is understood as poor, namely countries and people. In particular, two organs within the World Bank dealing with development and global inequality and managed by 188 member countries are of particular importance: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association (IDA) (Staples 2006). The IBRD concentrates on reducing poverty in middle-income and creditworthy poorer countries, whereas the IDA focuses exclusively on the world's poorest countries. It aims to reduce poverty by providing loans and grants for programs that boost economic growth, reduce inequalities, and improve people's living conditions. Thus, IDA complements the World Bank's original lending arm (the IBRD) that was established to function as a self-sustaining business and provides loans and advice to middle-income and credit-worthy poor countries. Whereas IBRD operates for all its 188 member countries and is organised like a cooperative, IDA lends money on conditional terms and offers its assistance to the world's 82 poorest countries. Those IDA operations positively affect 2.5 billion people, the majority of whom survive on less than \$2 a day.

The World Bank claims to act for the benefit of poor people. In contrast to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Union, who define poverty in relational terms as the level of income under 60% of the median household income, the World Bank defines poverty in absolute terms. Extreme poverty is defined as living on less than US-\$ 1.25 per day and moderate poverty as less than US-\$ 2 per day (Ravallion and Chen and Sangraula 2008). Therefore a threshold is chosen to indicate what poverty means in the world's poorest countries.⁷ According to the authors, 1.4 billion people, or one quarter of the population of the developing world, lived below the threshold of US-\$ 1.25 per day and 2.7 billion people lived on less than US-\$ 2 a day in 2005.

⁶ The World Bank or more precisely the World Bank Group comprises five institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), The International Development Association (IDA), the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) and the International Centre for Settlement of Investment Disputes (ICSID). We focus in the article on the IBRD and the IDA.

⁷ Ravallion, Chen and Sangraula (2008) discussed that they could have chosen a poverty line according to US standards, in this case however 95% of the world population are poor.

Much of the debate about poverty and how to measure poverty has indeed been dominated by economists at the World Bank. Leading analysts like Milanovic, economists like Firebaugh, Dollar or Ravallion have thus not only been involved in discussing the issue but in framing and, to a certain extent, directing how we think about poverty (Milanović 1998; 2011; Firebaugh 2003; Ravallion 2001; 2003; 2010a, b). In these discussions, the enormous impact (or perhaps even self-referentiality) of concepts, figures and ideas of how to measure poverty on actions of the Bank is palpable; alternative approaches that take into account the multi-dimensionality and bitter realities of poverty or explicitly introduce alternative conceptions were hardly heard in these debates, although this has changed over the last years.⁸

While societal actors from developing countries and other globally active non-governmental have raised alternative issues, they have not played a major role in the official poverty reduction debates.⁹ However, the World Bank has also responded to changes in its environment – including academic debates, non-state actors’ criticism or programmes of other international organisations – and both introduced some non-monetary poverty expertise (such as the ‘voices of the poor’ study, published in March 2000)¹⁰ and reports discussing multi-dimensional poverty. Poverty is inherently about income and, more rarely, other issues of well-being (e.g. health, education, environment). Even the majority of academic and policy papers concerned with poverty refer to the World Bank, since it is perceived as a, or even the central actor.

The point of reference for most monetary indicators of poverty is the so-called ‘poverty line’, separating the poor and non-poor in a given context, usually the nation-state. Different measurements, including the above-mentioned poverty headcount as well as the poverty gap and squared poverty gap, serve to make different statements about entities and their relation towards the poverty line, i.e. as above or below the line, distance from the poverty line and relations within a group with a certain distance from the poverty line.¹¹ By definition, poverty can be measured in contrast to non-poverty (however heterogeneous a group of non-poor

⁸ For instance, recent attempts to introduce multidimensional poverty indices have gained momentum. Some approaches include the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI, <http://www.ophi.org.uk/policy/multidimensional-poverty-index/>) as well as the related multidimensional poverty index, introduced in the 2010 Human Development Report by the UNDP (<http://hdr.undp.org/en/statistics/mpi/>).

⁹ Again, this may change as rising demands by civil society groups to be included or at least consulted may actually be heard, see, for instance, Bogdandy/Goldmann 2008.

¹⁰ See

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/0,,contentMDK:20622514~menuPK:336998~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:336992,00.html>

¹¹ See

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/TOPICS/EXTPOVERTY/EXTPA/0,,contentMDK:20242881~isCURL:Y~menuPK:492130~pagePK:148956~piPK:216618~theSitePK:430367,00.html>

could be), particularly in the case of absolute poverty, and with regard to certain political (or national economic) entity. Since these presuppositions are debatable, the World Bank has been strongly criticised for its approach(es) towards measuring the poor. Tiwari, for instance, criticises that measuring poverty according to a monetary threshold is a determination of poverty from an abstract point of view by a researcher that has only little in common with how poor (and not counted as poor) people are affected by poverty (Tiwari 2009). Further general criticisms point to the definition of poverty that is too narrowly considered if it just concentrates on income. Income matters but poverty means low consumption, wealth and social security and not just income (Headey 2008), which mirrors demands for non-monetary definitions of poverty.

Reddy and Pogge (2010) identify three flaws of the World Bank's approach. They assert that (1) the Bank uses an arbitrary international poverty line that is not adequately anchored in any specification of the real requirements of human beings. It is at best limited to pure nutrition but neglects further human needs. (2) It uses a concept of purchasing power "equivalence" that is neither well defined nor appropriate for poverty assessment. They describe the World Bank's approach as inherently "money-metric" that cannot be easily overcome without dispensing the approach. Finally (3), the World Bank extrapolates incorrectly from limited data and thereby creates an appearance of precision that masks the high probable error of its estimates (Reddy and Pogge 2010; Subramanian 2009). Therefore, Reddy and Pogge suggest taking into account beside income other aspects of poverty such as malnutrition, infant mortality, access to health services, and other indicators. These aspects contribute to a rather holistic measurement of poverty beyond just global income poverty (Reddy and Pogge 2010).

The scope of positions, while not narrow, depends on how the debate has been led in the context of development politics. Even those thinkers that are philosophically detached from an actual involvement in politics like Nancy Fraser, Martha Nussbaum or Thomas Pogge have not failed to acknowledge the near-monopoly of defining poverty that organisations like the World Bank have come to have (Pogge 2007; Moellendorf 2009). This, in turn, shows how closely interlinked the development discourse of major organisations and the understanding of poverty seem to be. In the context of development and poverty, the concepts introduced by the World Bank have been highly influential, particularly when it comes to equating poverty with income, measurable quantities that allow for cross-country as well as within-country comparisons and assessments. Critical thinkers emphasise the definition and measuring power of the World Bank (Pogge 2007; Moellendorf 2009) and underpin how the Bank's

international poverty line has diffused across the globe. However, even those who criticise the World Bank do not question poverty measurements as such but rather complain about the methods applied and the focus on income. Measuring poverty seems to be the dominant means to assess the problem. We will explore this observation in our analysis of the effects of indicator use.

Moreover, great parts of the global academic archive that allocates knowledge about development and poverty are embedded in the discourse(s) of global organisations, particularly United Nations agencies like the UN Development Program (UNDP) and the World Bank. Their experts are both major voices in the constant (re)definitions of poverty and influential agents in justifying governance practices of development agencies. As agenda-setters they have helped to develop policies to combat poverty; in their function as academics and knowledge-contributors they have shaped the understanding of poverty in the context of development. This observation of the double role that many academics have played is important insofar as the debate about development and poverty has never been a purely academic one, but always been inherently connected to the concrete actions of global development agencies. Most of the literature about development – whether in accordance with or critical of this expertise – has referred to the writings of such academics.

As agenda-setters, institutionalisers of knowledge and operating agencies, intergovernmental organisations have become crucial in defining and fighting extreme poverty. Thus, we will focus on the particular functions of defining and measuring poverty and its subsequent consequences. It is for that reason that we study the textual output of the World Bank as one or even the most influential – and one of the most critically discussed – development agency. Even though the World Bank's poverty reduction strategy has become highly influential in development discourses and been taken up by other global organisations (including international governmental as well as non-governmental organisations), it has also been criticised for its standards and its approach towards measuring poverty in quantitative terms. A whole debate about the one-dollar-a-day-limit, for instance, ensued when World Bank experts published their positions (Kanbur/Vines 2000; Sindzingre 2004; Weaver 2008). Interestingly, however, from our reading of the debates we conclude that even those in global development politics that have chastised the World Bank for how they measure poverty and develop programs to act on their indicators have concentrated on its neoliberal agenda or the threshold for counting the poor but not on measuring as such. The idea that poverty can and needs to be measured, thus, has been prevalent in development discourses; it has been taken

up by both supporters and critics of World Bank politics. Disagreement has mostly evolved over the right measures and not the fact of measuring itself. We see this as one important insight to build on for our study.

Therefore, our starting point is the observation that indicators in the field of poverty reduction have played a vital role. As part of the Millennium Development Goals that will now come to an end in 2015, as points of reference in the debate about human development, and even in the context of fighting global terrorism and global inequalities, poverty has been one of or perhaps even the central issues of concern. Beyond the critical link between the tangible reality of poverty (that we cannot study here) and ways to measure it, we will try to scrutinise the various ways poverty has been measured, mapped, labelled, linked and reproduced.

3. The Effects of Measuring Poverty

In our analysis of the role of poverty measurement in the World Bank, we will follow three main analytical frameworks that we see as both compatible and instructive for the questions we raise. As main frame of reference, we will draw on trans-disciplinary research literature on indicators, audits and the general question of comparing (e.g. Espeland/Sauder 2009; Espeland/Stevens 2008; Hansen/Porter 2012). Foremost, we will refer to the work of Sally Merry with regard to human rights indicators (2011; Davis/Kingsbury/Merry 2012). We will also link up to the growing body of literature on *governmentalities* that aims to show how people are governed by the subtle means available to the liberal state – or, on the global level, the organisations derived from it (Burchell/Gordon/Miller 1991; Dean 2007; Larner/Walters 2005; Neumann/Sending 2010). We are particularly interested in the power aspects of indicators and indicator use, thus referring to Foucaultian ideas of political technologies when studying poverty measurements helps us to re-politicise them. Finally, we will also build on neo-institutionalist theory in order to account for the institutional effects of indicators. As neo-institutionalism gives us a more or less functionalist account of world polity and world culture as products of rationalisation and modernisation processes, indicators can be seen as integral parts of these processes. Since we are concerned with the World Bank as a global organisation, we are also interested in the global context of its operation – therefore, our focus will also be on the way poverty indicators are connected to ideas of the World Bank's role in global governance.

What we call *effects* of indicators here, drawing on Merry and others, can be reformulated as both functions and consequences of indicators and measurements in general. Merry (2011)

identifies two main effects with various different functions, namely a) a knowledge effect and b) a governance effect (S84). In a more detailed enumeration of what indicators do (Davies, Kingsbury, Merry 2011), global governance effects (or functions, as we could see it) are explicated and detailed as including 1) a topology of governance, 2) standard-setting, 3) decision-making (including 3.1 efficiency, 3.2 consistency, 3.3 transparency, 3.4 scientific authority, 3.5 impartiality), 4) contestation and 5) regulation. Both ways of describing the functions and consequences of indicator use tie in with the already mentioned literature on governance techniques (Foucault 2004a, 2004b; Miller/Rose 2008), ‘governmentalities’ and their technologies and rationalities to regulate the life of people beyond the nation-state (Douglas 1999; Walters/Haar 2005) as well as the more general observation how quantifications have structured (international) policies (Hansen/Porter 2012; JIRD special issue 2012). We will concentrate on the broad aspect of knowledge and governance effects here, using them to structure our analysis of poverty measurements of the World Bank. These two functions also embrace several of the other observations, but remain more analytically open and enable us to discern interaction effects between them.

Based on our observations, we will add a third analytical function, which is less directed at showing how poverty indicators affect countries and the development discourse, but points to the effects that indicators have on the operation of international organisations, in our case the World Bank. As *organisation effects*, indicators influence the operational logic of international organisations that serves to reproduce them as actors in global governance by both declaring them competent of framing a problem (by condensing it to the quantitative mode of indicators) and, more importantly, authorising them to solve the problem. This self-generative process of organisations does not rest on indicators alone. Yet, in reducing complexity and thus making problems like world poverty seem more manageable the World Bank confirms its own relevance. We will explore these arguments in more depth below. In combination, all three effects point to the power of indicators, captured in the following three effects.

3.1 Knowledge Effects

First, to get some order into the information we will provide below, let us distinguish between the different (*governmental* – if we follow Foucaultians who have translated Foucault’s observation to the international sphere) techniques and rationalities employed in the context of poverty reduction. In short, observations need to pay attention to the following: ‘The concept brings together the practice of governing and the necessary rationality of government

that makes governing possible. Governmentality is therefore not just about how institutions behave, but is also about the discursive framework that renders their practices meaningful through the construction of particular objects (or subjects) of governance. It raises the issue of how these institutions and practices come to work in the way that they do' (Joseph 2010:203). In the field of poverty measurement, we find a broad array of quantitative indicators, ranging from clearly poverty-focused ones to poverty-relevant in a more implicit sense; we find other graphical depictions, based on indicators, including world maps and other visualising tools.¹² We find indicators that are composites of other indicators, such as the World Development Indicator as well as the (relatively new) human opportunity index,¹³ with only weak links to poverty reduction, but sometimes used in the context of the poverty debate. We are even offered a tool to (re)calculate and analyse poverty in countries ourselves, using World Bank data.¹⁴ All of these indicators have knowledge effects. The form of this knowledge, critics of indicators argue, depends on the specific characteristics of its presentation, i.e. as objectified, quantified, neutral, or in short, as numbers (Espeland/Stevens 2008). Numbers exert some influence on how they should be received; they seem easily translatable, re-countable, and apt to travel (Hansen/Porter 2012). More even, they seem exempt from any of the ambiguities that other narrative forms produce. That, however, is true only insofar as numbers suggest a certain isolation from these other forms. Indicators, as we will show, are not detached from these other narrations; they are embedded in webs of other indicators and various instruments that also contribute to exerting influence.

Standard-setting and Self-regulation

As central documents in our main context, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs, 2000-2011) are a telling example of a standard-setting instrument with regard to self-regulation and knowledge normalisation (Joseph 2012:168). As a tool that takes a narrative form of standardisation, PRSPs contribute to mainstreaming the World Bank's poverty definitions and serve to promote self-governance and self-regulation in recipient countries as well as to spread generalised knowledge about poverty and anti-poverty measures.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, poverty became a central concern of the World Bank – and this is also reflected in the publication of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, a tool

¹² See <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/home/>.

¹³ See <http://data.worldbank.org/data-catalog/world-development-indicators> and http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTLACREGTOPPOVANA/Resources/840442-1285865149017/chapter1_HOI_2010_report.pdf

¹⁴ See <http://iresearch.worldbank.org/PovcalNet/index.htm>.

introduced at the verge of the new millennium. In terms of the process, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank make the preparation of these documents a necessary condition before a country can be considered for debt relief within the programs for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC). Contrary to Country Assistance Strategy (CAS) documents, PRSPs are not issued by the international organisations but by the countries concerned. PRSPs are thus mandatory before low-income countries can receive aid from major donors and lenders. PRSPs are intended to help aid recipient countries to prepare to meet the MDGs. They detail a country's plan to promote growth and reduce poverty through the implementation of specific economic, social and structural policies.

Strictly speaking, PRSPs are not based merely on indicators but use a different narrative form, namely standard-setting through guidelines – not only with regard to how to prepare a PRSP, but more generally what measures to take against (domestic) poverty. The World Bank offers a manual (*A Sourcebook for Poverty Reduction Strategies*)¹⁵ to help developing countries formulate their own poverty reduction strategies. Here, we find multi-dimensional indicators for poverty: poverty and inequality; security; health; education; empowerment – all in line with the MDG. Furthermore, the manual defines core areas, goals, achievements etc. etc. that touch on various issues and goals and establishes a frame of issues attached to poverty, whereas it simultaneously excludes issues which might be relevant for poverty but are not explicitly mentioned. As standard-setting instruments, the PRSP have been a powerful tool to regulate both the process of managing poverty reduction strategies between the World Bank and its client countries and the distribution of knowledge that is seen as a necessary precondition for the World Bank to work successfully and combat poverty on behalf of the affected country. Similar to indicators, the manuals seem to indicate accessibility and clarity, since each PRSP can be compared with each other PRSP because they are written on the same basis and with the same knowledge about poverty and poverty reduction. They thus also imply fair and transparent proceedings, since each individual country has to go through the same process.

Furthermore, what Merry sees as an important effect of indicators, namely the neglect of 'local particularities and idiosyncracies' for the benefit of 'universal categories' (2011: S84) also holds true in the case of the PRSP (manual). In fact, one of the main criticisms against poverty measurements can be (and has been) directed at the PRSP – they define poverty and measures against it in a universalised pattern that is not particularly suitable to grasp local

¹⁵ See: http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPRS1/Resources/383606-1205334112622/5301_overview.pdf.

circumstances and the subjectivity of people's needs. While the format of a country report suggests a context-specific analysis, which a PRSP can certainly offer to some extent, the comparability and generalisability of the report is such an important criterion of the suggested measures that the reverse effect may arise. Thus, as another consequence may be how the PRSPs, in conjunction with poverty indicators, create or at least reproduces the phenomenon of poverty itself, and in a very specific way (similarly Merry 2011: S84). As for global poverty, definitions are standardised almost by necessity because they are aimed at grasping a phenomenon that only makes sense in the context of a generalisable observation. Accordingly, the idea of comparability itself – and this is a core characteristic of indicators and related instruments – is both part of the practice and the diagnosis of a potential problem (Rosga/Satterthwaite 2009: 267). Both in terms of technologies, i.e. the concrete instruments, and rationalities, the contextual discourse of poverty reduction in our case, PRSPs are a case in point to illustrate the effects of indicators. Particularly as means of self-governance, PRSPs reflect the core of (neo-)liberal practices described by the governmentality literature, namely the normalisation discourse of poverty reduction (i.e. rationalities) and tools to govern the practices (i.e. technologies), yet backed up by the material power held by the organisations.

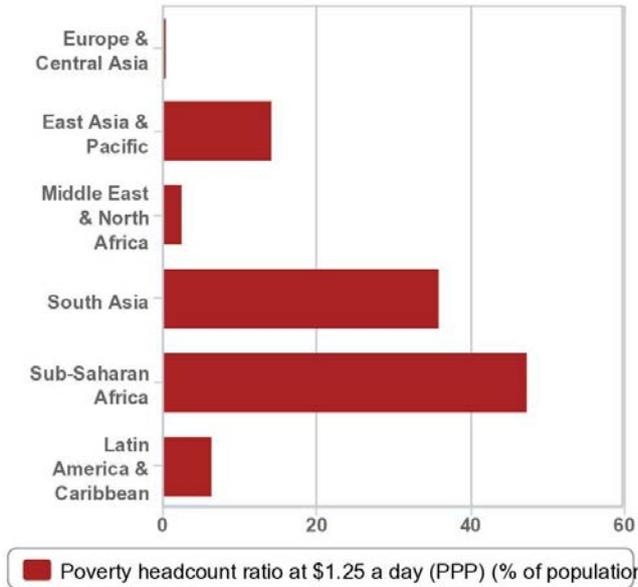
To underline this, it is both by standard-setting and the induction of self-regulation that the PRSPs contribute to a de-politicisation of poverty reduction, also affecting how poverty itself is conceived of. In making the adherence to World Bank (and IMF) knowledge a precondition for help, a discussion about the root causes, particular forms and perceptions of poverty is called to a halt. The politically sensitive issue of poor people – wherever we find them – is substituted by a clearly outlined and technocratically processed problem that needs to be and can be managed. Using the manual to convey certain definitions of poverty, inducing the recipient countries to internalise them while producing the papers and then using the papers as measures of success in reducing poverty can be considered a governmental technology in both standardising knowledge and regulating recipient countries to (almost) regulate themselves. This 'shift of responsibility' (Merry 2011: S88) is a subtle one, however, since it does not change power relations as such, but gives the impression of 'promoting self-governance among the governed' (S89), creating further dependence by empowering its subjects to regulate themselves.

Irrefutable Truths

The World Bank, it needs to be stressed, is not only a knowledge bank in the sense that it provides knowledge for the global public. It also gathers data and information that no one else

has and that often remains restricted to World Bank internal use. Thus, it is not only the use of indicators that is interesting here, but also the quasi-monopoly of knowledge inherently connected to the role of indicators. What is meant here are the theories and pre-assumptions that are lost in the presentation of indicators not as a product of previous thinking but a starting point for further use (Davis/Kingsbury/Merry 2010:4, but also Ravallion 2010b). The World Bank has developed several instruments to demonstrate what poverty means and why or how it needs to be governed. Among these instruments are indexes, world maps, tables, graphs etc. Every data item can be translated to a representation, compared to other data, etc. etc. The knowledge effect that is generated is to some extent dependent on the complementarity of these representations. As depicted below, simple, easily understandable graphics give us a non-negotiable picture of the world today:

Figure 1: poverty headcount ratio, regions of the world (2008)



Source: World Bank, data from 2008 (<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty>).

This graph as well as many similar others is only another example of the general way of presenting and representing data. World Bank experts point to the usefulness of these graphs, for instance in making use of poverty maps in order to improve measures against poverty.¹⁶ Right in the beginning of a document explaining how and why to do poverty maps it says: ‘The presentation of these detailed estimates in the form of maps is a powerful communication tool because the maps summarize poverty estimates for hundreds or even

¹⁶ See http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPGI/Resources/342674-1092157888460/493860-1192739384563/10412-01_p001-022.pdf.

thousands of towns, villages, or urban neighbourhoods on a single page and in a visual format that is readily understandable by a wide audience. The presentation as a map not only summarises a large volume of data concisely, but it also enhances the interpretation of that data by preserving the spatial relationships among different areas, something that simply is not possible in a tabular data format' (3). The pervasiveness of the tool rests on the combination of different technologies. The document offers guidance for developing local poverty maps and gives instructions that mirror the general rationalities behind indicator use. Indicators – and related instruments – are meant to be spread and applied to particular contexts, mostly in order to normalise definitions and strategies supported by the organisations that issue them: 'The poverty map alone does not necessarily resolve such disagreements, but the map does foster debate and analysis about what it means to be poor, how one might measure poverty, and what additional perspective each of the various measures may lend to understanding poverty. While the various measures may reflect the multidimensional nature of poverty, the process of constructing a poverty map has sometimes produced closer agreement on official measures of well-being and poverty thresholds' (6).

Thus, maps, statistics, indexes and so on can be seen as policy-making tools themselves and not as mere depictions of prior research. They do not simply illustrate the problem but are already part of policies against it. The understanding of poverty, accordingly, is not necessarily prior to the collection of data in surveys; it may also result from the availability of this data and the suitability to present it in a certain way. For instance, in an interview with WB economist Branko Milanovic, we learned that technical progress has facilitated or perhaps even co-determined one way in which the World Bank perceives poverty and inequality – namely as unequally distributed household income – and how it contextualises it (similarly: Kanbur/Lustig 1999).¹⁷

Furthermore, the validity and indeed availability of data used for indexes and measurements is also a constant challenge that may eventually call into question the whole approach towards poverty reduction. In spite of all criticism from very different political camps and groups there seems to be a lack of alternative to measuring poverty. If there is agreement that poverty can be seen as a global challenge, then there is little alternative to evaluating it on a global scale – this does not say anything about the politics that follow from measuring poverty, evidently, but concerns the idea of measuring it and evaluating it according to certain indicators. That this is either necessary or at least difficult to evade seems to be a consensus in the official

¹⁷ Interview with K.F. on October 9th, 2012, Washington D.C.

development discourse. It would be easy to accuse analysts of the WB as naïve, apolitical or caught up in their (mainly liberal) ideology. Yet, these problems are known not only to critics but representatives of the Bank themselves. The effort of justifying each new index, each new way of measuring poverty is very visible in the publications of the World Bank. Pages and pages have been filled with explanations of how and why to measure what, defending each index against public scrutiny.

Interestingly, several attempts have been made to reach out to a (possibly not clearly identified) public. Among these outreach measures we find *povcalnet*, a tool to re-calculate poverty incidents in different ways. Quite unremarkably, however, the tool of ‘*povcalnet*’ – possibly responding to criticism – seems to be catered to relativise this knowledge effect. The online tool is accessible on the WB homepage and (apparently) allows everyone to validate the indicators of the World Bank by doing their own calculations on different aspects of poverty.

As a true counter-measure to the power of indicators, *povcalnet* unsurprisingly does not work, and obviously was never intended to. First, since the data it draws on is provided by the World Bank, the tool is of course only a minor concession towards those critical of the World Bank’s indicators. Second, the overall problem of not including a greater group of stakeholders – at times raised in the general criticism against the World Bank – cannot be overcome. However, as an indication of the immense power of indicators, the case of *povcalnet* is indeed interesting. As a more open, less authoritatively communicated source of knowledge it does give a sense of participation and, perhaps, even of agency to those who may otherwise be forced into accepting what World Bank indicators offer them. Using *povcalnet* is itself a performative act that means becoming part of the same discourse of measuring poverty as the one that is potentially criticised. Again, this evidences the powerful nature of indicators. While it is possible to challenge them on the basis of the information they use or the added context information, it is difficult to think outside them.

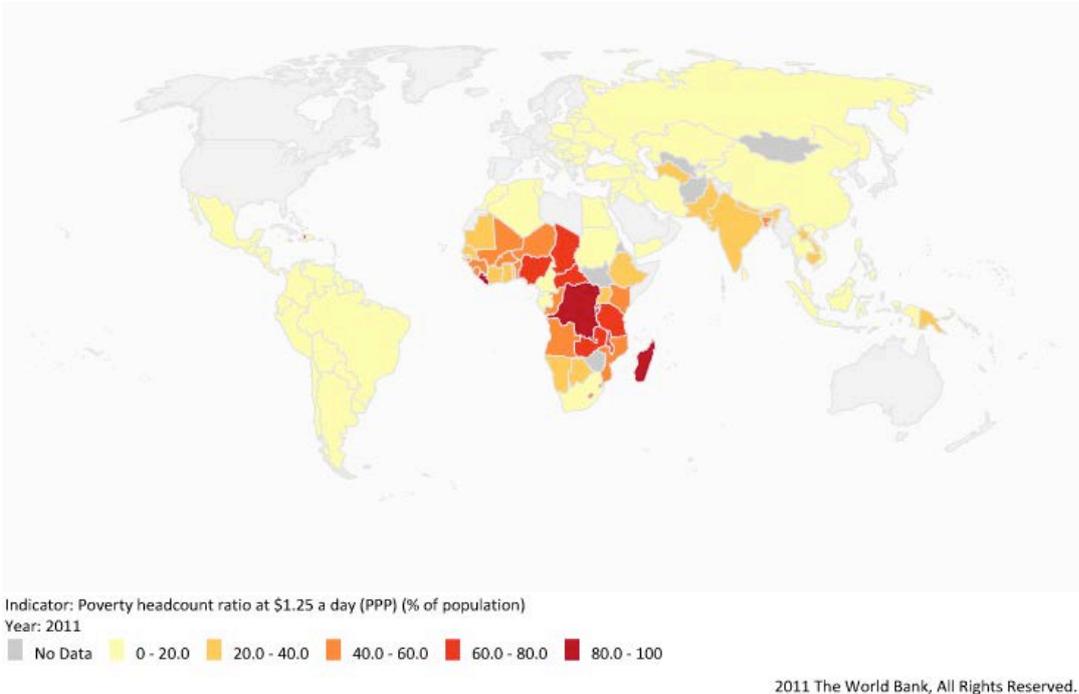
Thus, despite the evidence of conflict over definitions within the World Bank and between the Bank and others we would argue that there is some inherent quality to the indicators and instruments described that depoliticises the issue of poverty. In bridging the very political gap between the individual and collective realities of poverty and the poverty headcount ratio or household income, indicators reduce the idea of poverty to a quantifiable or at least measurable issue. Its multi-dimensionality is difficult to grasp with the indicators we mentioned and furthermore the historical reasons such as imperialism and colonialism and

current power relations that have brought about many of the instances of poverty that are being measured are lost in numbers, comparisons, maps etc. The reductionism itself is what makes a re-politicisation so difficult, since the discourse of poverty with any relevance to the World Bank most commonly links up to the measurements and indicators, but does not challenge them fundamentally. We will now try to generate similar observations with regard to other effects of indicators, including governance effects.

3.2 Governance Effects

More than just for their ability to compare countries according to numbers developed by international organisations indicators can be seen as a central driving force of globalisation (Speich 2011), since they make it possible to link (or even equal) all of the world’s countries according to a certain understanding of poverty. Poverty might vary in different countries or have various facets but measuring poverty with numbers and statistics according to a certain poverty threshold (be it US-\$ 1, US-\$ 1.25 or even US-\$ 2) makes unequal countries comparable. Furthermore, it clusters countries and permits linkages between countries and regions that do not necessarily have anything in common, e.g. the group of countries described as ‘heavily indebted poor countries’ or countries that share the same headcount poverty ratio, such as Namibia, Ghana and India (see figure 2 below).

Figure 2: Poverty headcount ratio US-\$ 1.25 per day



Source: World Bank, data from 2011 (<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty>).

In this vein, Ngaire Woods highlighted how the World Bank and the IMF as ‘globalizers’ have shaped a perception of poverty and development across countries through their lending policies (Woods 2006). Also, maps of the world that depict inequalities, realisation of MDG, income etc. etc. are an important tool (and merchandise article) of international organisations to depict their spheres of influence that is almost by definition global. Similar to indicators, the power of maps, in short, rests in stating and establishing facts as given and portraying them as indisputable truths (Wood 2010:46).

Furthermore, ignoring all characteristics of countries (such as culture, social structures etc.) or individual bar those that are seen as relevant in the context of poverty renders the issue seemingly less political. Indicators do not put blame on countries’ governments, but indicate a neutrality of observation from the point of a global organisation. Thus enabled, however, a map like the above also hints to a certain hierarchy in the world where some countries and regions (the European Union, the US, Australia and Japan) are not even part of the representation because they do not face the problem concerned (in this case absolute poverty) – which accordingly shows them as blanks on the map. Some countries seem to be on a way of progress, whereas others find themselves in a zone of deep concern (befittingly marked red). Since (political) maps are by themselves tools to simplify information, it is expectable to find such generalisations that level differences. However, the point we would like to stress is the effect such a map has (in combination with other instruments), namely the establishment of a sphere of influence, a signal that global poverty reduction is in the hands of the World Bank (in that case).

Thus, the pertinence of measures, indexes, numbers and figures has become an indispensable feature of the business of governing the world.¹⁸ Similarly, the development of the idea of the 1\$-a-day poverty line exerts a governance influence on the field of poverty itself. What is more, these ideas need to be publicly legitimised. In the following paragraph we see how this can be done. There, the origin of this poverty line is mythically transformed into an individual idea, which is recounted in a BBC article:

“In the late 1980s, a group of economists at the World Bank in Washington DC noticed that a number of developing countries drew their poverty lines at an income of about \$370 a year. This reflected the basic amount that a person needed to live. Each country had a different sense of what the essentials were, but the figure of roughly \$370 was common to all, so the World Bank team proposed it as a global poverty line. Some time later one of these economists, Martin Ravallion, was having dinner with his wife and, as they chatted, he had what he described as a kind of "epiphany". If you divide that \$370

¹⁸ An observation also proposed systematically in governmentality approaches, e.g. Rose/Miller 1992; Joseph 2012.

by 365 days, you get just over \$1. And so the catchy "\$1-a-day" concept was born. Simple, powerful and shocking. "We intended to have some impact with it," Martin Ravallion recalls. "Make well-heeled people realise how poor many people in the world are." (BBC News Magazine, March 9th, 2012).

The little episode we read about here is not only a human interest version of a global poverty programme; it is also indicative of the contingency of indicators. Not because the \$-1-a-day idea was brought about by an "epiphany", but because it has never been an isolated number. On the contrary, the poverty headcount ratio, as all indicators, has always been part of a much denser web of other indicators, narrations, assumptions and even theories that support it. The very powerful notions that bring about and give substance to such an indicator are hidden both in the above story and in their application in politics. Moreover, on another note the anecdote also tells us about other reasons for creating indicators; since reality is too complex to experience or comprehend, a tangible and relatable measure had to be found in order to have political impact. Here, simplification means accessibility and discursive power.

As related above, the \$-1-a-day idea itself gained power. Accordingly, even those that have criticised the World Bank for its one-dollar-per-day policy – now reframed as a US-\$ 1.25- or a two-dollars-per-day (Sala-i-Martin/Mohapatra 2002) – for being reductionist (see particularly the debate "how (not) to count the poor" (Ravallion 2010a; Reddy and Pogge 2010)) still refer to and at least implicitly affirm the idea of counting the poor and measuring poverty. It is a combination of these sets of ideas that has structured World Bank discourse over the last decade(s). The (seeming) simplicity of this measurement has advantageously made visualisations and thus comparisons easier. Furthermore, poverty indicators (and other technologies) have also streamlined possible responses to various poverty-related problems, another case in point for the argument of a de-politicisation. In terms of identifying governance effects, we mainly see a (re)production of the global (as referent category for poverty) as important here. Global responsibility enables global power, to phrase it rather polemically – if the World Bank knows about poverty everywhere on the globe it can be seen as responsible for combatting it. And in turn, it thus ascertains its spheres of influence

3.3 Organisation Effects

Adding to the two effects derived from the literature, we discern a third effect or function of indicators that may be formulated as a cumulated effect of the two previous or a distinct effect. Systematically, we change perspective in that we transfer our observations from the level of a global discourse to the production context of international organisations. Generalising from the above observations, we can identify effects indicators have on the

recipients of aid (as the subjects of poverty measurement) as well as the general discourse of poverty. We have also pointed to the importance of these knowledge and governance effects for the politics of the World Bank towards their subjects. Particularly the inter-connectedness between governance effects exerted by the World Bank and the pre-conditions enabling the organisation to do so is what we refer to. More than that, however, the creation of indicators itself has become a pre-condition not only for outward effects but also for the operativeness of the World Bank (as an international organisation).

Let us illustrate our point with the following observations. When we look at the field of poverty reduction, several indicators and instruments have become relevant; we already mentioned some of them. Over the past decades or even last few years, new instruments have been added, indicators have been changed, adapted, re-contextualised, and the overall field of poverty measurement has expanded to include many other issues. That observation does not, we would argue, reflect changes in the empirical phenomenon of poverty itself. Whilst the reasons for individual or collective poverty may have changed (e.g. through climate change, the nature of internal conflict or political constellations), indicators are not mere depictions of a (social or material) reality. Accordingly, the function of indicators from the perspective of their producers is not (only) a better, more adequate, detailed description of a phenomenon. But it fulfils a role that goes beyond analysing problems and identifying strategies.

Furthermore, another important observation in this vein is how the contextualisation of poverty has changed over the years; poverty has become embedded in very different other debates over the years. Today, we see a close inter-linkage between poverty and inequality – or more precisely its positive counterpart, equity (Jones 2009). As mentioned above, presenting the subjective perceptions of poverty by very different people and talking about multi-dimensional measures have been steps already taken by the World Bank. This also means measuring absolute poverty is seen as insufficient now; the World Bank's current president Jim Yong Kim has therefore proposed a new set of indicators and measures to capture poverty not in absolute but relative terms.¹⁹ Moreover, poverty reduction is now also linked up to other indicators, for instance the human opportunity index, which, in turn, is also related to equity issues.²⁰ While initially an empirically difficult but analytically narrow concept, poverty has now become an issue that is measured in similar ways as in the

¹⁹ See <http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/speech/2013/04/17/transcript-bending-arc-history-conversation-world-bank-group-president-jim-yong-kim-chief-economist-kaushik-basu>.

²⁰ See a short comment by World Bank expert Francisco Ferreira, <http://blogs.worldbank.org//developmenttalk/human-development-and-inequality-of-opportunity-a-reply-to-wagstaff>.

beginning but reconceptualised in various new contexts. That raises the question of the rationale for changing indicators.

Observing the various re-contextualisations of poverty, we assume that there must be good reasons for why we see constant updates and adaptations of existing indicators or even the creation of new ones. As practices of self-assurance and, in a way, self-generation, the creation of indicators ensures both the competence of the organisation for a specific policy field and their mandate to offer solutions. From a theoretical point of view, policy learning or adaption are terms that could be used to describe these processes. With regard to the particular nature of indicators, adaptation can be seen as a sign of ‘learning’ and updating of information to ensure the continued relevance of the World Bank in the fields it is engaged in, including the central field of poverty reduction, where it has become one of the major players and, to some extent, competes with others for resources and influence (Gilbert/Vines 2000).

Organisation effects thus refer to the connection between external expectations of an (international) organisation on the one hand and its self-determination as the legitimate actor responsible for a certain problem on the other. Framed within the neo-institutional approach of the so-called Stanford School, international organisations can be analysed in their societal embeddedness, namely as “constructions of a common wider culture“ (Meyer and Boli and Thomas et al. 1997: 152) within world society (Meyer 1997). World society only exists because world polity is enacted by agents – be it states, international organisations, NGOs, scientific experts etc. –, which are in turn shaped by it (Boli and Thomas 1999; Meyer and Drori and Hwang 2006; Meyer and Jepperson 2000). International organisations are seen as “rationalized agents who function vis-à-vis organizing others” by “managing, but also constructing, the agreements among and long-run interests of true actors such as human beings, national states and organisations” (Meyer 1994: 47). Thus the World Bank, from this perspective, is regarded less as an international organisation driven by a neoliberal agenda than as a rationalised agent that assesses and evaluates the problem of extreme poverty and develops measurements and indicators – such as US-\$ 1.25 per day - to display the problem vis-à-vis its external environment consisting of a variety of state or non-state actors. In this respect measuring poverty can be interpreted as a necessary step to assess to what extent operations that are already in place have succeeded or failed (DiMaggio and Powell 1991: 65). Chen and Ravallion, for instance, concede that even though the number of poor people is higher than expected there has been some progress in diminishing poverty, in particular in Asia, whereas poverty rates have not changed and stayed at a rather constant level of 50%

(Chen and Ravallion 2008: 27-30). These assessments have become routine operations as practices of legitimising organisations' politics.

Thus, international organisations are creators of world cultural models such as the eradication of extreme poverty, but they are also embedded in world society and respond to external causes, be it external critique of development experts or an economic or financial crisis that exacerbates the situation in poor countries. International organisations that do not respond to environmental changes and external expectations jeopardise their very existence. The critique expressed by Pogge, Reddy, Subramanian and others could be seen as insightful example of how the World Bank reacts to external critique. The World Bank did not ignore the critique but underpinned the correctness of its approach as an essential step to evaluate the MDG goal 1 (Ravallion 2010a). Furthermore, the authors explained why they used an adjusted poverty measure of US-\$ 1.25 but paid less attention to alternative poverty measures that would change the picture dramatically. Even shifting the poverty line to US-\$ 2 per day, they argued, would increase the overall number of poor people from 600 million in 1980 to 1.2 billion in 2005 (Chen/Ravallion 2008: 24).

Thus, the World Bank does not solely measure poverty and thus construct a particular understanding of extreme poverty as the media poverty line of all except the poorest 15 of countries in its data set (Chen/Ravallion 2008: 11). It also evaluates the progress that has been made and the effectiveness of its measures. It emphasises its competence in fighting poverty vis-à-vis external observation and authorises itself for its further work. Poverty indicators and measure can therefore be understood as a tool for the World Bank to prove its relevance and predominance in the eradication of extreme poverty. Poverty indicators can be adapted – for example the lift of the poverty line from US-\$ 1 to US-\$ 1.25 – in order to signal its learning aptitude or to underline its competence.

To recap, we see two main functions of (poverty) indicators for World Bank, namely first a concession to its operational logics that need clear criteria to arrive at decisions. These decisions have to be taken in order to constantly re-ascertain the organisation's competence and global responsibility. Second, we can see the task of measuring and comparing, of using numbers and indicators as a practice of legitimising and self-generation. In order for the World Bank to maintain operativeness indicators have to be produced, adapted, changed. Only in that way the organisation remains attuned to its environment.

4. Conclusion

To conclude, we see the importance of measuring (and comparing data on) poverty in the outward-bound, but also self-generative politics of the World Bank. The general effect of measuring a social and political problem such as poverty in mainly economic terms serves to depoliticise the field of poverty by turning it into a largely technical issue. Much of its multi-dimensional character and, most of all, the human drama is lost; income can be measured but the consequences of growing up and living in extreme poverty cannot. Measuring, thus, is essentialist a reductionist move. Indicators simplify and equalise in order to ensure comparability for the sake of finding a common solution – in that, they also limit the scope of thinking about poverty and turn it into an issue that can and needs to be managed by the World Bank. This concerns both knowledge and governance effects of measuring poverty. While this is something that has justly been criticised, it is also something inherently consistent with the logic of governance in and of international organisations as such.

Criticism, voiced frequently and by very different groups, mostly concerns the adequacy of the World Bank's poverty lines and the neglect of certain poverty-related problems such as basic needs. However, the limits of understanding poverty have not only been recognised by critics of the Bretton Woods institutions' politics, but by economists of the World Bank itself. We can see this in the constant re-contextualisation, in the attempt to get better and more reliable and comparable data²¹ that the attempt at grasping what poverty entails and what can be done against it is never fixed. The World Bank thus not only uses these indicators for their own purposes but also reaches out to the interested public – as well as donors and developing countries – to assess success and failure of its (and their) policies. It creates a comprehensive web of representations in one policy field that structures how a global public discusses the issue and what measures can be part of poverty reduction and what is excluded.

Furthermore, and this is what we would see as an important third effect of creating indicators and measuring poverty, the World Bank itself relies on these techniques in order to constantly reaffirm its own relevance both in terms of external justifications and internal self-confirmations. One important thing to keep in mind, however, is that neither poverty reduction nor any of the indices and measurements following from it can be seen as detached from each other and the overall policies and politics of the World Bank. Indices and even their

²¹ Survey data for most African countries, for example, is scarce and unreliable, making the assessment of almost a whole – and in this regard most crucial – continent difficult (Interview with the Director of the World Bank's Poverty Reduction and Equity department, Jaime Saavedra, October 3rd, 2012, Washington D.C.).

graphical representation are all part of the overall idea of poverty reduction. Only what can be measured can also be governed globally. In order to become a governance issue and part of World Bank's global policies an issue must be fitted to the operative logics of the organisation. According to this logic success and failure of certain political measures must be measurable to determine further decision-making within the Bank. Poverty reduction has become more complex, but remains based in measuring and comparing data. The power of indicators, to recapitulate, lies not only in the effects that organisations can exert on their clientele. Organisations themselves have become bound by the power of indicators and need them to remain operative. The dependence on the availability of data and its representation in indicators has thus created a horizon of global politics for the World Bank.

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