1. Assessing the World Bank’s Poverty Focus

Reducing poverty has been a strategic objective of the World Bank Group since the 1970s, when President Robert S. McNamara first made it a priority. At the turn of the millennium, President James D. Wolfensohn again stressed the importance of this mandate. In 2013 President Jim Yong Kim extended this objective, setting two goals (the “twin goals”) to reduce extreme poverty to 3 percent of the world population by 2030 and, for the first time, including a distributional goal, to “share prosperity” by promoting the income growth of the poorest 40 percent.

Over the past quarter century, and particularly since the advent of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2001, the world’s rapid economic growth significantly reduced rates of extreme poverty and improved social indicators in many developing countries. A major milestone was accomplishing the first MDG— to halve the 1990 level of extreme poverty by 2015—five years early, lifting some 700 million people out of poverty. Globally, the proportion of people living in extreme poverty fell from 43 percent in 1990 to 19 percent in 2010, and further to 17 percent in 2011 (figure 1.1).

Despite this progress, about 1 billion people still live in extreme poverty, and progress has been extremely uneven across Regions, countries, and localities (figure 1.1). The number of extreme poor fell during 1990–2011 in all Regions except Sub-Saharan Africa, where the number grew by more than 125 million, even as poverty incidence fell from 57 percent to 47 percent. All Regions except Sub-Saharan Africa are now expected to halve extreme poverty by 2015. Largely because of rapid population growth, the Sub-Saharan share of the world’s poor swelled from 15 percent in 1990 to 42 percent in 2011.

Continuing success in reducing extreme poverty will become more difficult. Poverty is becoming more concentrated geographically: as of 2011, 1 billion people still lived in extreme poverty, with 415 million in Sub-Saharan Africa, 399 million in South Asia, 158 million in East Asia and the Pacific, and the remaining 2 percent scattered across the other Regions. About 17 percent of the world’s poor live in 36 fragile and conflict-affected states (FCSs) (World Bank 2014a). An additional 1.7 billion people (or about 30 percent of the population in developing countries) are considered vulnerable to falling into extreme poverty because they live on $1.25 to $2.50 a day.
Global poverty projections are highly sensitive to the underlying assumptions about growth and changes in income distribution. According to Bank research, if developing countries grow at the same annual average rate as they have during the past 20 years, global poverty will remain at around 6.8 percent of the world population in 2030 (World Bank 2014a). This implies that 202 million people (or 19 percent) in Africa, and a disproportionately high share of people in FCSs, will continue to be trapped in poverty. And there is strong evidence that poverty reduction becomes more difficult when the poverty rate is lower, because remote or intractable populations are more costly to reach.

 Achieving the Bank’s twin goals will require concerted action by developing countries, the Bank, and other members of the development community. Under plausible assumptions, growth alone will be insufficient to reach the targets, so new solutions will be needed that go beyond stimulating growth. Distributional changes will almost certainly be necessary to achieve the shared prosperity goal,2 and sustainable elimination of extreme poverty will need to address the distribution of assets and asset returns. Meanwhile, the financial influence of the Bank Group and other development partners has steadily decreased, dwarfed by much larger international capital flows, mainly from the private sector. Official development assistance (ODA) as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP) is small and has
declined over time, particularly in International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) countries. Bank lending as a share of government spending is also small, particularly in IBRD countries, and is further diminishing in most developing countries.

Given their reduced financial influence and in the absence of major new recapitalization of the multilateral development banks (MDBs), the World Bank and other development finance institutions can scale up their efforts to reduce poverty only by better leveraging their resources with government clients, global private funds, and other capital flows to developing countries. The comparative advantages of the Bank include its reputation for strong analytics, and its role as a “knowledge bank” to provide intellectual leadership and use its analytical work to influence policymaking.

But the Bank works with governments that vary in their political commitment to poverty reduction and their base of domestic support. For this evaluation, political economy concerns consist mainly of the government’s commitment to poverty reduction, and its political will to measure and understand the nature of poverty and to identify and address key obstacles. Consideration of the specific country context and its political economy issues is critical to increasing the traction for poverty-reduction reforms: where there is strong commitment and capacity, the process of supporting poverty reduction is much more straightforward. But without strong government commitment, even the best-designed poverty-reduction strategies are bound to fail to achieve the desired results.

This evaluation draws on the lessons from the poverty focus of recent country programs to show how Systematic Country Diagnostics (SCDs) can inform Country Partnership Frameworks (CPF) to achieve the twin goals. Each CPF, which will define the Bank Group’s country engagements, will draw upon an SCD, which is designed to be a rigorous and independent exercise that Bank country teams conduct in consultation with national authorities and other stakeholders. The SCD will then become a reference point for client consultations on the priorities for Bank Group country engagements. The design and implementation of the SCD will identify the challenges and opportunities in each country.

Evaluation Objective and Scope

Since 2000 the Bank has monitored its contributions to development and poverty reduction, and in 2011 it published the first Corporate Scorecard and World Bank for Results report, assessing country results and organizational performance (World
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Assessing the World Bank’s Poverty Focus

Bank 2011a, 2011b). The Global Monitoring Report, published annually since 2004 by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, has provided additional information on progress in the MDGs (World Bank and IMF 2004). Despite this work, there has not been a comprehensive, independent evaluation of how the Bank has operationalized its poverty mission (World Bank 2005a).³

This evaluation seeks to fill this gap. It assesses how the Bank’s programs have been designed and positioned to support partner country efforts to reduce poverty. The emphasis is on poverty, but also recognizing the importance of distribution, particularly in the context of the twin goals.⁴ The evaluation for all International Development Association (IDA) and IBRD countries, as well as “blend” countries that get assistance from both, covers FY2004–2012.⁵

The evaluation also identifies obstacles the Bank encounters when moving from data, to diagnostics, to strategy development and implementation. The findings aim to sharpen the effectiveness of country programs as the Bank starts to implement the post-2015 agenda, which will likely call for more ambitious action on poverty reduction. The emphasis of the evaluation is on the process by which the Bank has engaged with country governments to support poverty reduction. It assesses the Bank’s engagement with countries to generate and share data, prepare poverty diagnostics, use those diagnostics to formulate and implement strategy, and to monitor and evaluate feedback loops to inform future strategies. It does not assess the impact of the Bank’s intervention on poverty or how much poverty outcomes can be attributed to the Bank. Instead, it assesses how Bank programs have been designed and positioned to support country client efforts to reduce poverty.

The evaluation examines both income and non-income dimensions of poverty (Box 1.1). This is important to the extent that the degree of poverty and its improvement over time may differ using different indicators, as the progress of some dimensions may lag others. This evaluation uses the income (or consumption) poverty lines to define the poor and examines the non-income dimensions of the challenges that the poor face. For ease of comparison across countries, the evaluation uses the extreme poverty line of $1.25 a day (at purchasing power parity 2005) for the income dimension and information from the World Development Indicators (WDI) database for the non-income dimensions, such as health, education, and access to basic services. For country studies, the evaluation uses the national poverty line as the primary threshold for income-based poverty.⁶ To keep the analysis tractable and focused, this evaluation will exclude several important aspects of poverty, such as intrahousehold dynamics or distributional consequences within the household, and intertemporal tradeoffs related to climate change and environmental poverty.
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Box 1-1. Measures of Poverty

The evaluation examines both income and non-income dimensions of poverty. There is widespread consensus that poverty is a multidimensional phenomenon—besides low levels of income and consumption, poor people often suffer from fear, humiliation, and ill health. They may experience multiple forms of hardship simultaneously. However, there is much less consensus on whether it is useful to aggregate across different dimensions to construct a multidimensional measure of welfare and, if so, how to do so in a way that is conceptually sound and readily interpretable. Using income (or consumption) poverty lines and the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) could result in divergent results in several countries. The hot debates about the MPI—including the opportunity of zooming in to see the different dimensions in which a person is deprived and then “adding up” that person’s deprivations; and the challenges of justification of the choice of sub indicators and weights—illustrate the pros and cons of using this composite indicator to measure poverty.

Sources: World Bank (2014b); Green, Duncan (July 27, 2010); Alkire, Sabina (July 29, 2010); Ravallion, Martin (July 28, 2010).

All development assistance eventually has some relevance to poverty reduction, so the evaluation excludes some aspects of development to keep the analysis tractable and focused. It does not consider intrahousehold dynamics (such as distributional consequences within the household) or intertemporal trade-offs (such as climate change and environmental poverty). It also avoids the traditional portfolio review, because the entire portfolio of Bank interventions is aimed to either directly or indirectly be relevant to poverty. Further, it is concerned more with the poverty focus of Bank-supported interventions at the country level than with the achievement of specific project objectives. To support poverty reduction, the Bank needs a range of interventions supporting growth and equitable distribution, from improving basic services delivery to the poor to broad-based growth and competitiveness. The appropriate mix depends on the country context (box 1.2).

Since the Bank Group had no comprehensive strategy for reducing poverty at the outset of the period reviewed, the evaluation does not examine the effectiveness of the Bank’s corporate strategy. The Bank’s technical support to regional and global agencies or to international forums on poverty is also excluded.

Box 1-2. Defining the Poverty Focus of Bank Interventions

Poverty is the result of economic, political, and social processes that interact and frequently reinforce each other in ways that exacerbate the deprivation in which poor people live (World Bank 2010a). It is well recognized that poverty eradication depends on
both stimulating growth and providing basic social services to the poor (World Bank 1990). Many of the Bank’s interventions can be considered relevant to poverty in some way. However, defining the poverty focus and the degree to which development support contributes to poverty outcomes is not straightforward. Some interventions, such as for safety nets, may contribute directly and immediately to reducing income poverty; others, such as support for education, may do so with a long lag; and still others, such as improvements to the investment climate, may contribute indirectly or only in the presence of other policies or dynamics in the economy.

It is beyond the scope of the evaluation to examine the impact of Bank-supported interventions on poverty reduction in the short term and long term. Instead, the evaluation groups the Bank’s interventions into two broad categories—directly or indirectly focused on poverty reduction. Direct poverty focus is broadly defined as the activities that are designed and implemented to provide a disproportionate first-round benefit to the poorer segment of the population.

The evaluation recognizes that the links between Bank interventions and poverty reduction are complex and country-specific, and the Bank faces trade-offs in selecting projects with direct linkages (such as social safety nets) or indirect linkages (such as financial reforms) with poverty reduction. It does not judge whether the interventions with direct poverty focus have a stronger impact on poverty reduction than those with indirect poverty focus. The report does not judge whether there should be a larger or smaller share of interventions directly or indirectly focusing on poverty reduction as the binding constraints vary across countries. Instead, it assesses the extent to which lending operations, technical assistance, capacity building, convening power, analytical work, and dialogue were focused on poverty reduction and its key country-specific dimensions as identified in the poverty diagnostics. The proper mix of interventions with direct and indirect poverty focus depends on the specific country situation.

The development community increasingly recognizes the private sector’s crucial role in reducing poverty by creating jobs and providing services and opportunities for the poor. The International Finance Corporation (IFC), the Bank Group’s private sector arm, is the largest development institution focused on the private sector. It provides direct financing and technical assistance to private enterprises and shares the Bank’s poverty-reduction mission. The poverty focus of IFC’s interventions are not assessed in this report since the Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) evaluation Assessing IFC’s Poverty Focus and Results (IEG 2011a) examines this in depth. The 2011 evaluation concludes that there is not enough clarity about what poverty means within the IFC strategic context. Although IFC’s interventions are designed to contribute to growth, distributional aspects are often not integrated into project designs. Most IFC investment projects generate satisfactory economic returns but do not provide evidence of how its interventions reach and affect the poor. The evaluation points toward a need for closer collaboration and greater synergies with
the World Bank to better address poverty and distributional issues, beyond company-level impacts. Box 1.3 summarizes the key findings of the evaluation.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Box 1-3. IFC’s Poverty Focus and Results</th>
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<td>A 2011 IEG evaluation assessed the relevance and effectiveness of the poverty focus in IFC over fiscal years 2000 to 2010. In the context of IFC’s business model, the evaluation assessed poverty focus in terms of how IFC’s strategies, projects, and results measurement framework contribute to growth and to distributional patterns of growth that create opportunities for the poor. The evaluation found that IFC’s strategic priorities on frontier areas (areas with large concentrations of poverty) and sectors such as infrastructure, agribusiness, health, education, and financial markets are consistent with support to an inclusive growth pattern, but improvements are needed in three areas:</td>
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<td><strong>Strategic Level.</strong> IFC aims to end poverty through private sector development. Three of IFC’s corporate strategic priorities—frontier markets, including International Development Association (IDA) and frontier regions in middle-income countries (MICs); targeted sectors with potential engagement of the poor; and certain types of financial services, focusing on micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)—have guided its poverty focus since 2004. The evaluation found that IFC investments in IDA countries have increased over the years; however, these investments were allocated in a few IDA countries, such as India, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Vietnam. The investments need to be allocated in more IDA countries. In MICs, IFC focuses on frontier regions with large concentrations of poverty. However, IEG analysis showed that the largest density of poor people was not in locations with the highest poverty rates. While the strategic sectors are broadly defined in terms consistent with a pro-poor orientation, they need to be designed and implemented in ways that actually enhance opportunities and the impact on poor people. IFC’s strategic directions related to poverty have a special focus on support to MSMEs, through financial intermediaries, which grew eightfold in the 2000s. The efficacy and welfare impacts of these types of interventions are not known.</td>
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<td><strong>Operational Level.</strong> The majority of IFC projects are designed to contribute to growth, but IFC found it challenging to incorporate distributional issues in its interventions. Fewer than half of projects reviewed included evidence of poverty reduction and distributional aspects in project objectives, targeting of interventions, characteristics of intended beneficiaries, or tracking of impacts. Projects that paid attention to distribution issues performed at least as well as other projects on development and investment outcomes; this suggests that poverty focus need not come at the expense of financial success. The relatively high proportion of projects that do not generate identifiable opportunities for the poor suggests that they rely primarily on the pace of growth for poverty reduction, at a time when IFC’s strategies point to more attention to the pattern of growth.</td>
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<td><strong>Impact through a Poverty Lens.</strong> IFC’s monitoring and evaluation (M&amp;E) framework did not quantify benefits to the poor and there were no indicators for measuring a project’s effect on poverty. Given the limited attention to distributional issues in the M&amp;E framework, IEG used a poverty index to characterize project benefits based on their contribution to growth and inclusion of the poor. The analysis indicated that the majority</td>
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of investment projects generated economic returns but did not provide evidence of identifiable benefits to the poor. This further suggests that IFC primarily relies on the pace of growth for poverty reduction.

Source: IEG 2011a

Results Chain, Evaluative Questions, and Instruments

The results chain through which the Bank supports economic development to reduce poverty can be long and differs significantly from country to country depending on initial endowments, social structures, quality of governance, economic systems, and global circumstances. It is also widely recognized that development outcomes are the result of the capacity and ownership of client countries. The support of multiple partners and interventions across sectors and time often complicates the attribution of results to a single partner or initiative. Still, in practice the Bank uses its levers of support—analytical work, lending, convening power, technical assistance, capacity building, and policy dialogue—to influence national policies and programs, and to help translate growth, greater access to opportunities, and poverty alleviation mechanisms (such as social safety nets) into poverty reduction. Bank programs and projects are required to specify results that are expected from the actions and policies they support, and most have a results framework.

The overarching question for this evaluation is: “How, and how well, has the Bank focused its programs on reducing poverty in partner countries?” Using country programs as the primary unit of analysis, the evaluation reviews the Bank Group’s Country Assistance Strategies (CASs) and Country Partnership Strategies (CPSs) to determine the extent of their focus on poverty and the poor and assesses them based on their consistency with analytical work on poverty for that country. The evaluation is structured around five questions underlying this main line of inquiry:

- Did the Bank have the appropriate data to understand the nature of poverty and provide an information base for robust analytical work on poverty?
- With the given data, did the Bank’s analytic work adequately address poverty issues and identify policy priorities for poverty reduction?
- Did Bank country strategies adopt the findings of analytical work on poverty to help set priorities for and guide policy dialogue and lending?
- Did interventions—operations, technical assistance, and capacity building—reflect the strategic priorities for poverty reduction?
• Did the Bank collect and draw lessons from poverty-reduction interventions to strengthen feedback loops and improve the effectiveness of its country strategies and programs? If so, how did it do so?

The report is structured along the evaluative chain from data, to diagnostics, to strategy formulation and implementation, and to the feedback loops (figure 1.2). The evaluation fully assesses each of the components in the process of country program work related to poverty reduction, tracing through data, diagnostics, country strategy formulation and implementation, and feedback loops in the respective chapters.

The analysis relies on 10 country case studies, an internal survey with Bank staff, an external survey with client government officials and nongovernment stakeholders in 20 countries, a series of focus group meetings with Bank staff who work on poverty, an assessment of the quality of Poverty Assessments (PAs) in 20 countries, a review of the Country Partnership Strategy Completion Report Reviews (CPSCRRs) and Country Assistance Evaluations (CAEs), and stocktaking exercises of PovcalNet data, development policy operations, Investment Lending (IL), Public Expenditure Reviews (PERs), and Poverty and Social Impact Analyses (PSIAs).

Country case studies. The 10 country case studies drew in-depth lessons from the Bank’s support of government efforts to reduce poverty (appendix A). The countries were selected from a population of 144 countries comprising all IDA, IBRD, and blend countries. The selection is purposive and does not aim to fully represent the various categories of countries. It tries to cover a range of countries at

Figure 1.2. Evaluation Chain of the Poverty Focus of Country Programs
different income levels to reflect the differing approaches and challenges to poverty reduction in countries at different levels of development. The case study countries were selected to roughly reflect regional balance. During the selection process, countries were first grouped according to (i) regions; (ii) income level; and (iii) whether or not they are classified as FCS. An emphasis was placed on countries with significant Bank engagement (lending and nonlending activities). To provide lessons that reflect a wide range of operational experience, the final selection of countries also took into consideration variations in the number of poor and in poverty rates, and potential lessons for learning in consultation with external experts and senior Bank staff. The 10 countries selected for study are Bangladesh, Egypt, Guatemala, Lao People’s Democratic Republic (PDR), Malawi, Nigeria, Peru, the Philippines, Romania, and Senegal. Focusing on FY2004–2012, each case study consisted of desk reviews, structured interviews with Bank staff, and in-country consultations with stakeholders.

**External stakeholder survey.** This survey collected views and feedback from government officials, civil society, academia, the donor/international community, and the private sector. The list of respondents was randomly generated for each country from the list of respondents of the Bank’s stakeholders shared by the respective Country Office teams (which in some cases were drawn from the list of recent Bank’s country client surveys), IEG evaluation interview lists, and complemented by research conducted by the independent survey firm. Heavier weight in the respondent list was given to the government officials, since they are the World Bank’s primary counterparts. The 20 countries surveyed covered all six Regions and reflect a balance between types of countries by lending group (that is, IBRD, IDA, and blend), accessibility of data, and FCS and non-FCS. A 27 percent response rate is on a par with similar stakeholder surveys administered by international organizations. (Appendix B).

**Internal staff survey.** This survey sought insight into staff perspectives of the constraints on data and the drivers of the difference in quality of poverty data and diagnostic work. The survey focused on three areas: constraints to obtaining poverty data; best practices and challenges to creating poverty diagnostic work; and challenges of translating poverty diagnostic work into country strategies. The survey was sent to all staff at grades GF and above who were working on poverty issues in the Bank’s operations and research departments. An analysis of the distribution of survey respondents shows that it largely mirrors the distribution of the population in terms staff technical mapping, grade levels, and location (headquarters vs. country office). A response rate of 21 percent is on a par with similar surveys administered within the Bank (appendix C).
Focus group meetings. The six focus group meetings gathered in-depth information about how the availability of poverty data affects the Bank’s poverty diagnostics, and whether and how they translate into country strategies (appendix D). The representatives at the meetings included three distinct groups: task team leaders or co-leaders of Poverty Assessments/Poverty Updates, country economists of countries that have not had a poverty assessment since 2009, and task team leaders or co-leaders of CPSs. The 18 countries represented in the discussions were purposively selected to cover all six Regions considering the balance between the types of countries by lending group, accessibility of data, and FCS and non-FCS countries. The selected countries were Afghanistan, Botswana, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Jordan, India, Indonesia, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Pakistan, the Republic of Yemen, Russia, South Sudan, Sri Lanka, and Papua New Guinea, along with West Bank, Gaza, and the member countries of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States.19

Assessment of the quality of Poverty Assessments/Poverty Updates. This assessment sought to identify gaps in the quality of Bank poverty diagnostics across Regions, across those countries with the greatest poverty-reduction challenges (in absolute or relative terms), and countries with weak data20 (appendix E). Twenty countries were purposively selected for this assessment to provide equal coverage of each of the Bank’s six Regions (four countries each for Sub-Saharan Africa and East Asia and Pacific, and three countries each for the remaining four Regions); countries with greater rates of poverty either as a proportion of the developing world’s poor, or as a share of country population; and at least one country with weak data in each Region.21

Review of CASCRRs/CPSCRRs and CAEs/CPEs. This review assessed the poverty focus of country strategies and their M&E systems as reflected in the completion report. The analysis was a systematic review of all of IEG’s CPSCRRs since FY2004. The review draws on the comparison of the CPSCRRs from 66 countries, with two CPSCRRs each in the past decade to examine the trends in the poverty focus of country strategies and the 14 CAEs/CPEs relevant to the period of evaluation (appendix F).

NOTES

1 Given the extremely poor data on poverty and growth in many of the 36 countries on the World Bank’s FCS list in 2014, this number is a crude estimate.
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ASSESSING THE WORLD BANK’S POVERTY FOCUS


3 The 2004 Operations Evaluation Department (now IEG) Annual Review of Performance looked into the Bank’s contribution to poverty reduction, but in a narrow way (see paragraph 14).

4 This evaluation focuses on poverty and IEG plans to conduct an evaluation on shared prosperity separately in FY2017.

5 The population includes 144 countries, listed as Bank borrowers as of October 2013.

6 This was done, first, because the evaluation focuses on improving the Bank’s support at the level of the country program. The basis of this dialogue is the national poverty lines of the countries involved. The second reason is practical: much of the country-specific analytical work and dialogue is based on the national poverty line, without reference to international poverty lines. For countries that have adopted two poverty lines a nationally defined standard poverty line and a nationally defined extreme poverty line, the evaluation emphasizes the extreme poverty line, as defined by each country.

7 A separate forthcoming evaluation on poverty and gender is examining intrahousehold aspects of social safety nets.

8 In practice, the Bank has favored a broad, multisector and multistakeholder approach to achieving development results and poverty reduction. There are multiple development or poverty strategies at the regional and sector levels across the Bank. In addition, the Bank has not precisely committed to any particular component of the MDGs.

9 “[P]rivate investment has become the dominant mode of capital transfer worldwide” (World Bank 2014b).


 “[P]rivate sector is already central to the lives of the poor and has the power to make those lives better” (UNDP 2004).

10 Given the scope of work and resource constraints, the evaluation focused on 10 country case studies to draw in-depth lessons. The countries are purposively selected and not statistically representative. Every effort is made to ensure no bias is introduced in the selection process.

11 The IBRD, IDA, and blend country classification is up to date as of October 2013.

12 Fragile and conflict-affected states have either: (a) a harmonized average CPIA country rating of 3.2 or less, or (b) the presence of a UN and/or regional peace-keeping or peace-building mission during the past three years. This list is up to date as of FY14 and includes only IDA-eligible countries and nonmember or inactive territories and countries without CPIA data. It excludes IBRD-only countries for which the CPIA scores are not currently disclosed.

13 Significant levels of Bank engagement are indicated by a minimum of 25 approved projects between FY2004 and 2012, since 25 projects is the median number of projects for the population of the 144 countries during this period.

14 To ensure confidentiality and anonymity of the responses as well as respondent bias, IEG commissioned ICF International, an independent survey firm, to conduct a web-based survey to gather opinions and perceptions of the World Bank’s poverty through a survey in 20 client countries. See appendix B for details.

15 The countries selected are China, Democratic Republic of Congo, the Dominican Republic, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Honduras, India, Jordan, Kosovo, the Kyrgyz Republic, Mexico, Morocco,
Nepal, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, Sierra Leone, Rwanda, the Russian Federation, and the Republic of Yemen.

16 For example, the World Bank’s 2013 Access to Information Stakeholder Survey had a 27 percent response rate and the Client Feedback Survey of FY13 Analytical & Advisory Activities had a 31 percent response rate.

17 The survey was conducted from April 15 to May 13, 2014, and was sent to 4,150 Bank staff, of which 866 responded (a rate of 21 percent). To focus on staff with close experience in operations and country strategies, staff mapped to procurement, human resources, information and technology, business solutions, World Bank Institute, and IEG were exluded. The survey was confidential and anonymous. See appendix C for details.

18 For example, DEC’s research paper on the influence of World Bank Research fielded a survey among all senior operations staff at grades GG and above and received a 19 percent response rate (555 respondents out of 2,900) (see Research at Work: Assessing the Influence of World Bank Research. Development Economics Unit. World Bank. 2012.) In addition, the WHO Stakeholder Perception Surveys set the response rate for the internal staff survey at 20 percent as a good threshold (see http://www.who.int/about/who_perception_survey_2012.pdf)

19 Although all of the participants from relevant focus group categories in each country were invited to participate, the final list depended on the staff availability in June-August 2014. The total number of focus group participants was 22 staff members.

20 For reasons of comparison, this evaluation refers to data availability as the survey data availability in the World Bank’s PovCalNet. Countries with weak data broadly refers to countries that have, at most, one round of household surveys available in PovCalNet during the period of 2000-2012.

21 The evaluation also examines in country case studies the quality of other analytical work on poverty, including from the quality of public expenditure reviews, poverty and social impact analyses, and the poverty chapters of the Country Economic Memorandum.