



Activity Sheet 22

Advantages and Problems with poverty-based screening

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to examine the experiences of *screening* methods used in China, and to identify the key lessons that may be learnt and applied to other regions. Participants may draw on the experiences from the countries in which they are working.

Attached is a paper describing experiences of screening methods in China.

Group Work

1. Read the attached paper and discuss the following:

Based on the experiences from China - what are the advantages and potential problems with poverty-based pre-screening?

2. Prepare your findings on a flipchart.
3. Elect a person from your group to present your findings to the plenary.



Selecting Road Improvement Components for Poverty Alleviation: China

Two recent Bank-financed highway projects in China (Second Henan Provincial Highway Project, 1996, and Second Shaanxi Provincial Highway Project, 1996) included a poverty-focused component. The component was proposed in line with the provincial government programmes of Road Improvement for Poverty Alleviation (RIPA), which aimed to provide all-weather access through rehabilitation, upgrading, and construction of rural roads to a main provincial road axis for every poor county township and the majority of villages.

A three-stage screening procedure was developed to select rural roads to be included in the project's RIPA component.

The first stage of screening identified the “priority counties” that were most in need of improved road transport as an element in alleviating their poverty. The criteria used to prioritise included average income per capita, number of the “very poor” per 10,000 population, value of agriculture production, value of mineral production, and other social development indicators (including literacy rate, health workers per thousand population, and access to clean drinking water).

The second stage of screening used a cost-effectiveness criterion to select rural road systems from these priority counties. In this stage, rural roads for improvement in these counties were grouped into the RIPA systems based on three criteria: (1) continuity of the system; (2) maximisation of the population served; and (3) connectivity to as many settlements as possible. Then a cost-effectiveness criterion—the proposed investment cost divided by population served in the influence area of the system—was used to screen the RIPA road systems. The very high unit cost systems were dropped. Finally, available financial resources were taken into consideration in deciding the number of systems and size of the RIPA packages that passed this stage of the screening.

The third stage of screening consisted of an analysis of the economic and social benefits of each of the road systems included for consideration at the end of the second stage. The analysis also included a review of motorization trends to guide the selection of proper road class and road engineering design that would meet the future needs of both motorized and non-motorized traffic in these rural areas.

Source: Hajj and Pendakur.