

TRADE AND POVERTY

Trade and Labor Market Vulnerability

The Asian financial crisis and more recent global slowdown have fueled the debate on the links between trade and household vulnerability. This seminar will examine how globalization may have affected worker or job vulnerability in terms of variance in earnings, volatility in employment growth, and the likelihood of earning below a survival threshold. The seminar will explore vulnerability in the context of different sectors of employment as well as among different subgroups of workers in the labor markets during trade liberalization.

Effects of Trade on Poverty Reduction

This seminar will assess the contribution of trade to poverty reduction in developing countries for the period 1960 to 2000. The main objective for this analysis is to examine the extent to which the poor have been, and are, connected to the growth process both within and outside their own countries. The seminar will discuss the independent impact of pro-poor trade on poverty reduction, and indirect effects of trade to growth and poverty reduction.

Assuring Benefits for the Poor in Liberalizing Developing Economies

The trade liberalizing process in developing countries entails social and economic adjustment costs that may adversely affect the poor in the short run. Governments can ensure that the poor benefit from trade by adopting pro-poor social spending programs in response to the structural adjustments that invariably follow trade liberalization. These include retraining, promoting labor-intensive infrastructure construction, and social protection for the less privileged and vulnerable. Based on international experiences, this seminar aims to identify the determinants of successful structural adjustment programs that effectively mitigate the short-run adverse effects of trade liberalization on the poor.

Agricultural Trade and Rural Poverty Reduction: Market Access

This seminar will discuss the impact of OECD agricultural trade liberalization on East Asian developing economies, in particular, on rural development and poverty reduction. It will outline the major remaining barriers to market access in agriculture for East Asian economies, including domestic support and export subsidies, and the main issues surrounding their further reduction in the context of the next WTO round. The seminar also will discuss sanitary and phytosanitary standards which are of particular relevance to East Asian exports of agricultural products, and approaches for addressing the hurdles they may represent.

Agricultural Trade and Rural Poverty Reduction: Domestic Geography

This seminar will discuss the impact of agricultural trade liberalization by East Asian economies on their rural households. In particular, the seminar will focus on cases where the losers are geographically concentrated. The seminar will draw on work on the impact of WTO accession on poverty and inequality in PRC, and the distribution of winners and losers across different income classes and regions, based on information on initial income levels and income sources of individual households as well as levels of transfers, and government-provided services. The seminar will explore ways of managing the geographic dimension of vulnerability.