Research impact meeting

Enhancing impacts under ESRC/DFID research projects

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Outline

• Brief introduction to two DFID/ESRC projects
• Major findings of these projects
• Impacts originated from research
• The pathway to enhance research impacts
• Future development
ESRC/DFID projects

• Urban poverty and property rights changes in China
• The development of migrant villages under China’s rapid urbanization: implications for poverty and slum policies
Urban Poverty in China

Spatial concentration of urban poor

A survey of 25 neighbourhoods in six cities

Originality: needs to understand poverty conditions by social groups and localities

They are linked with the particular situation of ‘property rights’ – leading to marginalisation
The development of migrant villages

A survey of 20 x 3 villages in three cities

In-depth case studies

Migrant villages are not ‘slums’

‘Residential satisfaction’ – affordable housing

Current policies try to demolish them

These villages should not be demolished
Impacts from the originality of research

• Social science evidence-based research
• Surprise but acceptable
• Contradict existing policies
  – The need to target at specific neighbourhoods
  – The need to develop alternative redevelopment policies
Achieving impact through formal and informal engagement with users

• Informal is perhaps very important – beyond formal ‘dissemination’, dialogue with planners and officials

• Follow the users’ needs rather than the need to disseminate findings – training workshop for the directors of planning bureau
Enabling local research capacities – partners

- They are not just helpers for the project
- They are mediators for research impacts – interfacing with the government and local activists
- Helping them to develop their capacities rather than asking them to help the project
Enhancing the impact through ‘debates’

- Four featured articles published and one more to write in newspaper *China Daily*
Limits of current research

- More originated from our ‘curiosity’
- Less prescriptive – ‘what is’, rather ‘what should’
- The pathway: ‘findings’ \( \rightarrow \) impacts
- Research as a process of creating impacts – it is an activity within which impacts are embedded
- The limits originate from the separation of ‘users’ and ‘researchers’
Future development

Demonstration projects – e.g. a project together with ‘users’ to demonstrate the possibility of urban redevelopment