

Measuring Consumption in 12 Minutes: Lessons from a field study in Rural Kenya

Geetika Nagpal, Kate Orkin and Natalie Nairi Quinn

Abstract

Detailed measurement of consumption expenditure is the gold standard for welfare analysis in a low-income mixed-livelihoods setting, but is demanding of respondent time and survey resources. We developed a short consumption module in the context of a field study in rural Western Kenya that required under 12 minutes survey time on average in the sample. We document development of the module and construction of the consumption aggregate, exploring alternative imputation methods. Simulation-based analysis allows us to assess the potential of our approach for application to impact evaluation and distributional analysis, for example poverty monitoring. There is a trade-off between sample density and potential time savings.