

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL IMPACT REPORT



For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This Impact Report should be completed and submitted using the **grant reference** as the email subject to **reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk** on or before the due date.

Completion of this Impact Report is mandatory. It will not be possible to edit this Impact Report at a later date, as it is designed to provide a statement of the impacts of your project to date 12 months after your grant ends.

Please note that the Impact Report will only be accepted if all sections have been completed in full. If a section does not apply to you, please enter 'n/a'. Grant holders will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. (Please see Section 5 of the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this Impact Report. In particular, the notes explain what the ESRC means by 'impact'.

Grant Reference	RES-167-25-0302		
Grant Title	Development discourses: higher education and poverty reduction in South Africa		
Grant Start Date	1 July 2008	Total Amount	£215, 369
Grant End Date	31 December 2009	Expended:	
Grant holding Institution	University of Nottingham		
Grant Holder	Professor Melanie Walker		
Grant Holder's Contact Details	Address	Email	
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		Telephone 0115 951 4446	
Co-Investigators (as per project application):		Institution	
Dr Monica McLean		University of Nottingham	

1. SCIENTIFIC IMPACT

A Please **summarise** below the scientific impact(s) your project has had. [Max 250 words]

The project makes a demonstrable scientific contribution by conceptualising public-good professional education grounded in an interdisciplinary approach drawing from Sen (welfare economics) and Nussbaum's (philosophy) capability approach. It further advances understandings of higher education policy and equalities globally by applying and developing these ideas.

The Public-Good Professional Education Index generated from research, theory and data is original and significant. It constitutes an innovative evaluative framework to embed professional education in multidimensional poverty reduction strategies which recognise the full dignity of every human being, and which promote action to reduce injustices. The Index is an imaginative conceptualism of professionalism and justice.

The research impacts on attempts empirically to operationalize and develop ways of measuring capabilities through diverse metrics, in this case a qualitatively derived metric of capabilities, educational arrangements and social constraints. The impact is primarily on Education Studies, but also Development Studies and Professional Education across diverse professions.

New scientific networks have been created such as EDUWEL (see below), but also a nascent network in South Africa itself in the field of higher education and the public good led by the University of Stellenbosch, a partner in the project.

[189 words]

B Please outline the **findings and outputs** from your project which have had the scientific impact(s) outlined in 1A. [Max 250 words]

The key finding has been the innovative application of the capabilities approach to generate an original conceptualization of public-good professional education and of professionals as agents with multidimensional professional capabilities to expand the capabilities of disadvantaged people. The research produced a multi-dimensional, multi-layered, evidence-based *public-good professional education Index* for evaluating public-good professional education, which is applicable beyond South Africa. The philosophical grounding will hold across diverse national settings, though the list of professional capabilities might differ for different contexts, which is a matter for public reasoning.

Key outputs which have generated the impacts are:

- i) Articles in *IJED* (2009), and *Journal of Education Policy* (2010)
- ii) Article in key South African journal, *South African Journal of Higher Education* (2010)
- iii) Book chapter (2010) Capabilities and Social Justice in Education. In: H-U OTTO AND H. ZIEGLER, ed. *Education, Welfare and the Capabilities Approach. A European Perspective*.
- iv) Article in Spanish journal: Lozano, F. Boni, A. and Walker, M. (2010) La

educación superior desde el enfoque de capacidades. Una propuesta para el debate [Higher Education from Capability Approach Perspective. A proposal for discussion]; in *Revista Interuniversitaria de Formación de Profesorado*, 13 (3):123-131

- v) Forthcoming outputs. Journal article in key international higher education journal, *Studies in Higher Education* (2012) and book under contract for autumn 2011 - Walker, M. and McLean, M. *Professional Education, Capabilities and Contributions to the Public Good: the role of universities in promoting human development*, in key Routledge series 'Education, Poverty and International Development'.

[245 words]

C Please outline **how** these impacts were achieved. [Max 250 words]

Presentations were given by members of the project team at key academic conferences:

2008

Australian Association for Research in Education annual conference (December, Brisbane)

2009

Human Development and Capability Association annual international conference (September, Peru);

United Kingdom Forum International Education and Training ((September, Oxford);

Kenton annual conference South Africa Stellenbosch, November 2009

Society for Research in Higher Education annual conference (December, Newport);

2010

World council of Comparative Education Societies tri-annual conference (June, Istanbul);

British Educational Research Association annual conference (September, Coventry),

Human Development and Capability Association annual international conference (September, Jordan)

Presentations at the University of Nottingham in July 2008 and July 2009.

Presentation to the Education Thematic group of the HDCA (Cambridge, June 2009)

Invited keynote by M Walker at launch of Bielefeld-Dortmund Research Centre on Capabilities and Education, Dortmund, March 2009

Project website of overview papers, working papers and key selected articles (for example, between October and December 2010 the 'Resources and Papers' section of the website was visited 42 times).

[162 words]

D Please outline **who** the findings and outputs outlined above had an impact upon. This can include specific academics/researchers through to broader academic groups. [Max 250 words]

- Sandra Boni (Technological University of Valencia) - invitation to Walker to co-edit book on higher education and capabilities. Proposal now with publisher.
- Vivienne Bozalek and Delia Marshall (University of the Western Cape), Brenda Leibowitz (University of Stellenbosch), Jenni Case (University of Cape Town), Jonathan Jansen (University of the Free State); Saleem Badat (Rhodes University), Martin Hall (University of Salford), academics who attended seminars in Cape Town.
- Education Thematic Group of the HDCA, and HDCA community more broadly
- Invitation to Walker to edit thematic issue on Capabilities and Education for the *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities* in 2011.
- Invitation to Walker to participate in 9 European countries Marie Curie ITN project – *EDUWEL* - focusing on Education and Welfare from a capability perspective and specifically Working Group 3 on post-compulsory education. Project bid successful and runs from January 2010 to December 2013. Invited to join EDUWEL Project Executive.
- Doctoral researchers i) at University of Nottingham – formation of ‘Capabilities, equalities and social change’ doctoral research group in autumn 2010; ii) Irish students on professional doctorate, Dublin, May 9th, 2009

[184 words]

2. ECONOMIC AND SOCIETAL IMPACT

A Please **summarise** below the economic and societal impact(s) your project has had. [Max 250 words]

Separating scientific and social impact is problematic when seeking to influence university colleagues. However, the social impact can be distinguished because the project sought to influence professional educators’ practices and philosophies, rather than research. Moreover, dissemination and engagement in change were integrated by involving research working groups in each university site, constituting significant ‘pre-impact’ phases.

Social (educational) impact:

- Stellenbosch University has taken up the notion of public-good professionalism: a seminar for key university leaders and lecturer-practitioners in August 2009 was followed up 19 November 2010 when other teaching staff also attended. A blog accompanied the second conference and an edited book for practitioners is being planned to focus on public good and pro-poor education. ‘Your project has been a valuable spur to discussion on these matters;’ (Brenda Liebowitz, Director of the Centre for Teaching and Learning, email 25-Oct-2010)
- University of the Western Cape has implemented a capability-based approach to graduate outcomes in their 2009 Teaching and learning Policy; Melanie Walker is

invited to work at the University in 2011 to consider how these graduate attributes are being mobilized in selected education programmes.

- A positive response from the Ministry of Higher Education to the ideas generated by the project, via the higher education policy advisor (John Pampallis) and Thandi Lewin from the Department of Higher Education and Training, the latter also drawing on project ideas in her own policy presentations to South African universities.
- Interest expressed at the EDULINK stakeholders' conference in Lisbon, October 2009.

[249 words]

B Please outline the **findings and outputs** from your project which have had the economic and societal impact(s) outlined in 2A. *[Max 250 words]*

The findings that influence transformative change have turned on:

- i) Dissemination and dialogue about human development as an approach to higher education policy and to university educational arrangements.
- ii) Dialogue and public reasoning about the public good as a philosophy for university teaching and learning oriented to educational and social transformation.
- iii) The public good professional Index as a practical tool for evaluating human development and capability formation in professional education in universities, but also potentially in sites of professional practice.
- iv) The introduction of pro-poor debates in relation to professional education.
- v) A set of five rich cases studies available on the project website to show how the Index was derived and how it might be applied in practical professional education settings - Walker, M., McLean, M., Dison, A. and Vaughan, R. (2010) *Higher Education and Poverty Reduction: the formation of public good professionals in universities*. Five further working papers posted on the Website beginning in July 2008.

[160 words]

C Please outline **how** these impacts were achieved. *[Max 250 words]*

A research working group was established at each of the three University sites. They began operating in August 2008 as a key vehicle for discussion and comment on the emerging metrics for the Index.

Papers were presented by the research team at practitioner conferences:

- Keynote, Development Studies practitioners, 4th International conference of the Congreso Universidad y Cooperación Al Desarrollo, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, 12-14 November 2008
- UKFIET conference September 2009 (forum for universities, non-governmental)

organisations, consultancy groups and professional associations, working for education and development internationally).

- Keynote to EDULINK Stakeholders' conference, Lisbon, October 2009, with participation from African, Caribbean and Pacific developing countries and regions.
- Keynote to a workshop organised by the European project 'Increasing the capacities of local administrators and officials in defining policies consistent with human development approach', to an audience of academics, NGOS and Italian local authorities, University of Pavia, 29 May 2010.

Six seminars were presented to university practitioners in the three participating universities, between August 2008 and October 2009.

Presentation to lecturer -practitioners from Ireland using the vehicle of an EdD programme in May 2009.

Individual letters and a working paper were sent to: the vice-chancellors and other key leaders at the three participating universities; selected vice-chancellors in South Africa; the head of Council on Higher Education; the chair of Higher Education South Africa; policy makers; all NGO informants in the project.

[232 words]

D Please outline **who** the findings and outputs outlined above had an impact upon. This can be at a broad societal level through to specific individuals or groups. *[Max 250 words]*

Practitioners in professional education.

Administrative university departments (such as Community Engagement at Stellenbosch University)

Directorate of Teaching and Learning at UWC.

University policy makers

Higher education government officials (individuals) in South Africa

Vice-Chancellor, University of Salford: 'Since seeing how Sen's ideas can work in your South African project I've thought this is a powerful conceptual idea for combining the emic and the etic. and finding a way of getting UK poverty issues into the same global studies of 'distant strangers' (personal email Dec-2010)

3. UNEXPECTED AND POTENTIAL FUTURE IMPACTS

A Unexpected Impacts

Please note which, if any, of the impacts that your research has had were *unexpected* at the outset of the research, explaining where possible why you think this was the case. [Max 250 words]

Given how ‘muddied’ transformation now is in both South African society and in the universities, we had not expected that the ideas of the public good would be taken up enthusiastically by two of the participating universities, or that there would be such widespread interest in the project at local seminars.

The interest shown by the Vice-Chancellor, University of Salford, was unexpected.

B Potential Future Impacts

If you have a clear idea of the impact your research is likely to have in the future please detail these below. [Max 250 words]

Funding is now being sought inside South Africa to advance the impact of the project, the Index and capabilities as the basis for policy development and evaluation. It is hoped that this will enable activities which will promote impact at the level of policy makers, individual universities outside the original group, and also among selected NGOs in the field of health and welfare.

Book publication in 2012

Article to appear in 2012 in key higher education journal (*Studies in Higher Education*)

Possible work with the University of Salford.

4. IMPACT LIMITATIONS

A Limited scientific impact

Please state below any major scientific difficulties that have limited the scientific impact of your research. The statement should refer to an effect on *impact* rather than simply detail research difficulties. [Max 250 words]

Important South African journals require personal subscriptions and page proof payment amounting on average to £500 per article. Papers published after the end of the project therefore had to be self funded at a cost of a round £475.00, limiting the reach of journal publication in South Africa.

Scientific impact is also not linear but evolves over time. Defining a new field – capabilities and public good professionalism m – means that ideas will take time to circulate and be taken up and have few if any already-existing networks or an existing audience outside the HDCA community of scholars into which the project can ‘tap’.

B Limited economic and societal impact

ESRC recognises that some of the research it funds will not have an economic or societal impact in the short term. Please explain briefly below if this is the case for your project, and refer to your grant application where relevant. *[Max 250 words]*

Social impact and change is not predictable or linear.

Nonetheless, limitations have turned on i) lack of funded research time after the end of the award; ii) no administrative support to assist in organising events after end of the award; iii) no funding to arrange impact type events either in the UK or South Africa; iv) policy impacts are unpredictable and often highly charged in South Africa.

However we have credible evidence and are working to build and sustain links with policy makers in South Africa and to look for participatory research opportunities with practitioners.

Although there was an underspend on the project budget of £7262.00, rules did not allow this to be used for impact activities beyond the life of the project. For example, interest in the project has been expressed by the Minister of Higher Education in South Africa but no funding was available for an event to which policy makers might come.

A Follow-on project bid was well-reviewed but not successful in attracting ESRC funding.

NGOs in South Africa were not reached beyond being interviewed and then receiving an email copy of the case studies with an invitation to comment (only one person from a Children’s home expressed interest as a result).

The Project report noted the limitations of skills of the senior South African researcher, together with the problem of trying to drive impact from another country (the UK), so that a planned event for NGOS did not take place before the end of the project.

[250 words]

C No impact to date

n/a



Please note that ESRC projects are evaluated on the basis of their scientific and/or economic and societal impact. Grant holders are expected to report any future impacts as they occur using the Impact Record, downloadable from the ESRC Society Today website.

If you have no impacts at this stage, please give reasons below. *[Max 250 words]*

n/a

5. DECLARATIONS

Please read the statements below. Submitting this Impact Report to **reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk** confirms your agreement.

- i) This Impact Report is an accurate statement of the impacts of the research project to date. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.
- ii) Details of any subsequent impacts will be submitted via an Impact Record as they occur.

Thank you for completing this Impact Report. Your Impact Report will be considered along with your End of Award Report in the evaluation of your research.

You are now invited to complete the confidential Nominations form, which will assist with the evaluation of your project.

NOMINATED OUTPUTS

Please nominate a maximum of two outputs from your research which you would like to be considered as part of the evaluation.

Output type (eg journal article, book, newspaper article, conference proceedings)	Publication details (eg author name, date, publisher details)	Uploaded to <i>ESRC Society Today?</i> (Yes/No)
Journal article	Walker, M. (2010) A human development and capabilities 'prospective analysis' of global higher education policy, <i>Journal of Education Policy</i> , 25 (4):485	Yes (DRAFT PDF VERSION only)
Journal article	McLean, M and Walker, M. (in press, 2012) The possibilities for university-based public-good professional education: a case-study from South Africa based on the 'capability approach', <i>Studies in Higher Education</i> , 37, 6	Yes (VERSION as accepted)

Please email your completed Impact Report, including the Nominations section, to reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk, using your **grant reference number** as the email subject.