

## ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL RESEARCH COUNCIL END OF AWARD REPORT



### For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award 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.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. ESRC reserves the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see Section 5 of the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

<b>Grant Reference</b>	RES-167-25-0191		
<b>Grant Title</b>	Left Behind in Transition? Poverty, social networks and support amongst older people in Central Asia and the Caucasus		
<b>Grant Start Date</b>	1 <sup>st</sup> August 2007	<b>Total Amount Expended:</b>	£249,004.07
<b>Grant End Date</b>	Original end date: 31 <sup>st</sup> Jan 2009 No cost extension to 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2009		
<b>Grant holding Institution</b>	University of Southampton		
<b>Grant Holder</b>	Prof Jane Falkingham		
<b>Grant Holder's Contact Details</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Email</b>	
	School of Social Sciences University of Southampton Southampton SO17 1BJ	j.c.falkingham@soton.ac.uk	
		<b>Telephone</b> 02380 593192	
<b>Co-Investigators (as per project application):</b>		<b>Institution</b>	
Prof Maria Evandrou		University of Southampton	

## 1. NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by ESRC to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project.

*[Max 250 words]*

The break-up of the Soviet Union and the subsequent transition to market-led economies was accompanied by severe economic disruption. Significant research has been conducted into the impact of economic transition on living standards of the population in general and children in particular. However, there has been relatively little focusing on older people, despite the fact that the older population face particular challenges in terms of the falling value of pensions, shrinking government services and increased disruption to family and social networks as a result of the migration of adult children.

This project examines the living conditions and sources of finance and social support (both state and family) amongst older people living in the poorest countries of the former Soviet Union: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. The project uses a mixed method design, combining quantitative analysis of recently available household survey data in each of the countries combined with in depth qualitative research in three case study countries of Moldova, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

The research reveals that many older people are living in poverty and experiencing severe economic hardship. Despite receiving a pension, many older people continue to work in order to make ends meet. The family remains an essential source of support, both financially and emotionally. However the flow is far from one way, with grandparents providing support for grandchildren. For example, in Moldova where out migration has been high, almost 1 in 7 children in villages and 1 in 2 in towns live with their grandparents.

## 2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

### a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to the ESRC.

*[Max 200 words]*

The main aim of the proposed research project has been to shed light on the living conditions and sources of finance and social support (both state and family) amongst older people living in the poorest countries of the former Soviet Union.

By providing new and robust empirical evidence regarding the key issues confronting older people, the project aims to inform the design of appropriate poverty alleviation programmes.

## b) Project Changes

Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with the ESRC. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder's institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. *[Max 200 words]*

The original aims remain unchanged, although it proved impossible to access recent survey data for Uzbekistan. Therefore most of the empirical analysis is restricted to Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Tajikistan.

The project experienced significant changes in staffing. The original application named two research fellows: Dr Gail Grant (qualitative researcher) and Dr Angela Baschieri (quantitative researcher, 0.5FTE). Between the application and start of the grant, Angela Baschieri successfully applied for a Lectureship at LSHTM. She remained involved in the project throughout, although with a reduced input of 0.2 FTE. From January 2008, Gail Grant reduced her hours from 1 FTE to 0.6 FTE.

The project was originally funded for 18 months, 1<sup>st</sup> August 2007 – 31<sup>st</sup> January 2009. Given the reduced research fellow time input, a no cost extension was sought and granted to December 2009.

### c) Methodology

Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. *[Max. 500 words]*

The project adopted a mixed methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative research methods along with a review of the literature.

Secondary analyses of survey data were conducted to provide a quantitative analysis of the living conditions of older people. Access to the most recent household survey data for the six countries was obtained under a collaborative agreement with World Bank.

The data used include:

- Armenia 2008 Integrated Living Conditions Survey of Households (ILCS)
- Azerbaijan 2008 Household Budget Survey
- Georgia 2007 Household Budget Survey
- Kyrgyzstan 2008 Household Budget Survey
- Moldova 2008 Household Budget Survey
- Tajikistan 2007 Living Standards Survey

A set of comparable variables were created to allow cross national analysis of the household composition, living arrangements, levels of sources of income and patterns of expenditure of older people as well as the extent of poverty and its co-variates. Sensitivity analysis was conducted to investigate the sensitivity of the relative risk of poverty to alternative assumptions concerning the degree of economies of scale used in equivalence scales as well as the choice of poverty line.

In addition, qualitative research was conducted in order to illuminate older people's quality of life from the perspective of older people themselves. The aim was to gain insight into how older people in the region have been affected by the massive societal changes of the last 15 years and how they are coping with the impacts of these changes. Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Moldova were chosen as countries for qualitative research as these three countries are the poorest of the former Soviet states. In each country, data collection sites were selected to represent different geographical and social conditions. Data collection commenced in each country with the capital city. Data were also collected in a smaller town and a rural location as it was seen as important to investigate any differences in older people's experiences which might be related to the places in which they live. With consideration for the above criteria, sites were then selected according to safety and accessibility issues and the availability of local contacts.

Data were collected by in-depth interviews and focus groups. Participants were identified by local key informants and then by snowballing from multiple starting points. The data collection was overseen by Dr Gail Grant and conducted by local social researchers in the local language. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and then double translated into English prior to analysis in MAXQDA. All researchers participated in training prior to the fieldwork which included ethical issues such as informed consent and the right of the respondents to withdraw at any stage. The study protocols were reviewed by the University of Southampton School of Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (SS-REC) and received full ethical approval. The research team also sought advice concerning approval for the study from a local REC. At present no system of ethic review exists in any of the study countries. Permission was, however, sought from each of the local authorities where research was conducted.

#### d) Project Findings

Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. Any future research plans should also be identified. [Max 500 words]

Many older people in the CIS-7 face a **heightened risk of poverty**, in contrast to the findings of the World Bank that older people have a lower relative risk than children. The research illustrates that traditional analyses using per capita measures of household welfare may underestimate the risk faced by some of the most vulnerable, that is those older people living alone and as part of a pensioner couple living without any other working age adults.

Although **public pensions** are an important source of income in later life, with most older people in receipt, the low value of the pension means that many older people have to supplement their income by continuing to work or growing produce on private plots. Remittances from adult children working abroad are increasingly important but not all households receive them.

Older people also suffer higher levels of **non-material deprivation**, particularly in health and out of pocket payments for health are a real issue.

See Falkingham et al (2009) *Left behind in transition? The well-being of older people in Tajikistan* Centre for Research on Ageing Discussion Paper 0901. University of Southampton.

The analysis has been extended to other countries using empirical data supplied through the World Bank ECAPOV data archive (restricted access, under licence).

Two papers are currently under development

A. Baschieri, M. Evandrou and J. Falkingham 'Poverty and deprivation among older people in Central Asia and the Caucasus'; A. Baschieri, M. Evandrou and J. Falkingham 'Pensions, poverty and informal safety nets: older people in Central Asia and the Caucasus'. These will be published as World Bank Working papers as well as submitted to journals.

The project has highlighted the impact of **migration** on the well-being of older people. All the countries in the study have experienced significant levels of migration, both internally, from rural areas to the cities, and also internationally. Data from focus group discussions and in depth interviews highlight that older people view recent trends in migration as a mixed blessing. On the one hand many older people recognise migration as inevitable - the result of low pay and high unemployment - and see it as the only way for their children and grandchildren to improve their lives. Moreover they recognise the benefits of remittances, although these are not always reliable, with payments being infrequent and often insufficient to meet basic needs. On the other hand, the migration of adult children is perceived to be accompanied by high costs in terms of emotional loss, isolation and lack of physical care; as well as increased responsibility for grandchildren - practically, emotionally and financially. In many cases, these losses appear to outweigh the gains.

See Grant, G. Falkingham, J. and Evandrou, M. (2009) *The impact of adult children's migration on wellbeing in later life: voices from Moldova*. Centre for Research on Ageing Discussion Paper 0902. University of Southampton.

A revised paper incorporating analysis of the Moldova 2008 Household Budget Survey on the share of remittances in the income of older people is being submitted to *Ageing & Society*

### **e) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)**

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative's objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. *[Max. 200 words]*

This research was funded under the joint ESRC/ DFID scheme. The aim of the scheme is to enhance the quality and impact of social science research addressing the key international development goal of reducing poverty amongst the poorest countries and peoples of the world. The research does that in 3 ways:

1. Focussing on the poorest countries of the CIS-7
2. Focussing on one of poorest groups
3. Working with local researchers to improve local research capacity.

## **3. EARLY AND ANTICIPATED IMPACTS**

### **a) Summary of Impacts to date**

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on *ESRC Society Today*. This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. *[Max. 400 words]*

At an early stage the research team contacted Help Age International (London) and the team were given office space within HAI offices in Bishkek and Chisinau.

Although the academic outputs from the project are still under preparation, there has been impact locally in raising awareness of the welfare of older people in the region. During visits to the region, the research team gave seminars at Help Age International offices in both Moldova and Kyrgyzstan and lectures at the University in both Bishkek and Dushanbe.

Following training provided by the team in Kyrgyzstan, the Social Research Center at the American University of Central Asia, working with Help Age International carried out their own research into the impact of migration on elderly people, focussing on grandparent-headed households.

See [http://src.auca.kg/images/stories/files/migration\\_elderly\\_people\\_eng.pdf](http://src.auca.kg/images/stories/files/migration_elderly_people_eng.pdf)

Additionally the research team have engaged with country offices and poverty and social protection sector teams at the World Bank. The team visited Washington at start of the project in early 2008 and again in September 2009 where they presented the results of the first stages of the fieldwork..

### **b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts**

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. *[Max. 200 words]*

The research team are working closely with the World Bank and several papers using the quantitative data are planned to come out as Discussion papers in the World Bank working paper series (see above) as well as revised versions being submitted to learned journals. This will increase the potential audience for the research beyond the scientific to the policy community.

The team have been invited to contribute a section on older people to the forthcoming Kyrgyz Poverty Assessment Update and will also contribute to dissemination events in the region.

The team are also engaging with policy makers in the region .

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

## 4. DECLARATIONS

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed.

Please note hard copies are NOT required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

### A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick ONE statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section.

#### i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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#### ii) Submissions to *ESRC Society Today*

Output and impact information has been submitted to <i>ESRC Society Today</i> . Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>OR</b>	
This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to <i>ESRC Society Today</i> as soon as they become available.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>OR</b>	
This grant is not listed on <i>ESRC Society Today</i> .	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### iii) Submission of Datasets

Datasets arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the Economic and Social Data Service.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>OR</b>	
Datasets that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the Economic and Social Data Service has been notified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>OR</b>	
No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.	<input type="checkbox"/>