

Report To ESCOR
Grant Number R7298
February 2002

SOCIAL POLICY RESEARCH PROGRAMME

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY IN THE PRIVATE SECTOR

&

WELL-BEING, CAPABILITIES & RIGHTS

**School of Development Studies/
Overseas Development Group
University of East Anglia**

Highlights Summary

The Social Policy Research programme undertaken by members of the Overseas Development Group and School of Development Studies at the University of East Anglia fell into two major projects, '*Social Responsibility in the Private Sector*' and '*Wellbeing, Capabilities and Rights*'.

The latter consisted of three sub-projects, focused on 1) '**Work to Wellbeing**', 2) '**Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction**' and 3) '**Disability**' respectively, each with its own research team. Each of the sub-projects adopted its own methodology and pursued its own objectives, but efforts were made within the context of the *Wellbeing, Capability and Rights* project to ensure a degree of communication between the research teams and to identify potential inter-relationships and linkages, both theoretical and practical. These became more evident towards the end of the programme, particularly in the final workshop in November 2001, when a number of shared and partly-shared issues and themes emerged.

Social Responsibility in the Private Sector

The project analysed the growth and significance of voluntary codes of conduct on social issues which have been increasingly adopted by international companies over the past decade. It analysed the limitations of these codes in terms of their content, coverage and implementation (monitoring and verification). It contrasted codes emanating from different sources (companies, business associations, multi-stakeholder alliances, trade unions). It also compared the typical content of codes with the demands articulated by workers (often female workers) who are the declared beneficiaries of codes.

The research involved engagement with various stakeholders including companies, trade unions, development NGOs, labour rights organisations, women's groups and independent monitors. A major output of the research will be a book, edited by Jenkins, Pearson and Seyfang, *Corporate Responsibility and Labour Rights: Codes of Conduct in a Global Economy*, to be published shortly by Earthscan. In addition to chapters written by the editors, drawing on their own research for the project, the book will also include chapters by various stakeholders relating their own experiences with codes of conduct.

Wellbeing, Capabilities and Rights

1. Work to Wellbeing

This research aimed to explore linkages between work and well-being with a view to ascertaining which forms of policy intervention might best enhance well-being, and which interventions, under what circumstances, might threaten the well-being of poor women, men and children. After establishing a clear conceptual framework we applied the analysis to three paradigmatic areas of development policy and intervention to 'test drive' the conceptual framework and to evaluate, from this new standpoint, the possible well-being consequences of such policies.

On the basis of this research we are able to suggest that single or limited interest interventions implemented with the objective of improving wellbeing through work may be misguided or mistakenly optimistic about the broader implications of their approaches, and thus either fail in their objectives or create problems in other arenas through their own ‘successes’, and these may not be conducive to enhanced wellbeing.

2. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction

The assessment of reproductive rights has fallen between legal/human rights traditions and medical/public health traditions. Connections between rights and wellbeing have been most effectively explored through nuanced accounts that balance ‘lived’ experience (agency and consequences of choices) with analysis of (dis)enabling environment, and assessments of bodily wellbeing.

Improving the social analytical content of rights-based approaches to reproduction is central to ensuring that the interpretation, implementation and monitoring of reproductive rights at the international level is better able to raise questions of social justice in an effort to enhance wellbeing.

Our case study of Vietnam attempts to go beyond cataloguing abuses and comparing aggregate morbidity statistics to offer a contextualised analysis of select reproductive rights challenges to wellbeing. It brings together an assessment of formal and informal entitlements through legal and social institutions with analysis of population policy and reproductive health services to look at the interests, perspectives and needs of single mothers, abortion and adolescents.

Influencing the meaning and scope of reproductive rights has considerable scope to inform a more radical interpretation of reproductive rights within international social policy. This is a political as well as a social analytical project and is not without risk.

3. Disability

The research undertaken with reference to disability and development revealed considerable potential for a conceptual and policy framework in which disability issues may be integrated or ‘mainstreamed’ into development studies, particularly into discussions of social exclusion, capabilities and rights. On the other hand, the constructive critique of the ‘social model’ of disability now widely adopted by the disability movement – but not wholly embraced by those involved in ‘community based rehabilitation’ (CBR) - holds out opportunities for those in development studies concerned with issues of poverty, social disadvantage and social discrimination to analyse the ways in which these may all be seen as forms of disability and the consequence of ‘disabling’ processes in society.

It also showed that, within disability studies there is considerable potential for theoretical and conceptual development in key areas and a need for a more sophisticated awareness both of interactions between impairment and social context

and of the relevance of cultural and social specificities for an appreciation of the social construction of disability.

Background

During 1997-98, the Overseas Development Group/School of Development Studies (ODG/DEV) bid for funds from ESCOR (DfID) under the Social Policy Research Programme (SPRP). In November 1998, a revised proposal involving two distinct projects was approved by ESCOR, with an overall budget of just under £200,000.

The two projects were concerned with '*Social Responsibility in the Private Sector*' and with '*Wellbeing, Capability and Rights*' respectively. The overall programme managers were Professor David Seddon and Dr Cecile Jackson, but each of the two projects – and the three sub-projects associated with the *Wellbeing, Capability and Rights project* – were undertaken as discrete activities. Each of the four components of the overall programme was allocated approximately £50,000. Each of the four components had its own small research team consisting of one or two research 'directors' and a research assistant or assistants.

It was anticipated that regular workshops and discussions between the members of the various smaller teams would maintain an overall coherence and provoke valuable interaction, and each of the sub-project budgets was 'top-sliced' to enable these to take place. It was envisaged that a final workshop would bring all of the researchers in the SPRP – including those at the Institute of Development Studies and the University of Bath as well as in ODG/DEV - and colleagues from ESCOR together to discuss the findings and the wider policy implications.

The ODG/DEV Social Policy Research Programme was intended to start in January 1999 and be completed by October 2000. In the event, for various reasons, extensions were requested and approved, with a final completion date for the programme as a whole of December 31st 2001. A final workshop was held in November 2001.

Social Responsibility in the Private Sector

This project was directed by Dr Ruth Pearson and Dr Rhys Jenkins, and research assistance was provided by Ms Gill Seyfang. The project proposed to investigate current developments in UK and international codes of conduct and examine a) the extent to which these initiatives effectively and accurately reflected the concerns of production workers themselves and b) the extent to which procedures for establishing international standards were sufficiently flexible to meet the diverse interests and conditions that exist internationally. It was to begin in April 1999 and be completed by October 2000.

Wellbeing, Capability and Rights

Health and working lives appeared to be accorded priority in virtually all of the current approaches to development and to social policy which emphasise wellbeing as

an objective. This research project proposed to examine critically basic assumptions and concepts (and policy approaches) relating to a) the relationship between wellbeing and work, b) wellbeing and health, specifically issues of sexual and reproductive rights, and c) disability.

The project as a whole was intended to contribute to practical social and development policy, both in the specific areas to be considered, and more generally. The work would rely largely on a careful review of the literature, but would involve some fieldwork in selected countries. This project comprised three distinct components, each with its own research team.

The first was concerned to investigate the routes between '*Work and Wellbeing*' and was directed by Dr Cecile Jackson and Dr Richard Palmer Jones, with Ms Louise Waite as research assistant. This sub-project was planned to start in January 1999 and be completed by December 1999. The second was concerned with issues around '*Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction*' and was directed by Dr Catherine Locke, with Ms Heather Zhang as research assistant. This sub-project was planned to start in March 1999 and be completed by December 1999. The third was concerned with issues around '*Disability*' and was directed by Professor David Seddon, with Mr (subsequently Dr) Ray Lang as the primary research assistant. This sub-project was planned to start in January 1999 and to be completed by October 2000.

All three projects experienced some delays and were extended into 2001. Delays in the availability of Mr Lang led to the involvement of additional research assistants – Ms Victoria Daines, Mr Kenji Kuno and Mr Peter Handley – and to the postponement of much of the work, including the field visits, into 2001.

A final workshop was held at the University of East Anglia in November 2001, at which ESCOR, as well as other interested parties were represented. It was felt, after this workshop, that a further opportunity to discuss the ESCOR Social Policy Programme as a whole, including IDS and Bath as well as DEV/ODG and ESCOR itself, might be productive. This was to be explored during the early part of 2002.

Objectives and justification

Each of the two main projects and of the three sub-projects set out its primary concerns and objectives in the revised proposal sent to ESCOR. We present here a summary statement for each.

Social responsibility project.

Early attempts to establish a framework of responsibility for international business activities were in the 1970s. There was less concern during the 1980s when liberalisation of trade and investment increased and the main thrust of international and bilateral arrangements shifted to the protection of investment. From the mid 1980s, however, leading companies have created corporate codes which address

norms of conduct for business in the social area. In the 1990s, the extent to which these can be generalised to establish international standards of corporate responsibility has converged with the recognition that in a globalising economy, increasing international flows of goods, services and capital cannot be dealt with outside a multilateral regulatory framework.

Recently, there have been significant initiatives concerning the international regulation of working and production conditions, particularly for international traded goods, including food, garments and electronics. As well as discussions of the MAI, there have been proposals for an EU voluntary Code of Conduct and parallel initiatives from the OECD and ILO. In the UK, DfID has sponsored the establishment of the ETI (Ethical Trading Initiative) which seeks to develop and agree ethical practice and monitoring structures and procedures relating to workplace conditions – including environmental hazard and workers' vulnerability to pollutants, wage and non-wage benefits and working terms and conditions. These new initiatives seek to find mechanisms to extend labour and environmental standards to suppliers as well as to direct foreign investors for the international market. The most radical of these new initiatives seek to include representation from workers' organisations as well as national and international organisations of employers and the state, in addition to the producers/workers themselves.

The research had two primary objectives:

- a) to discover the extent to which these initiatives effectively and accurately reflect the concerns of the production workers themselves.
- b) to evaluate whether the introduction of international standards, including the application of quality standards, quality audits and benchmarking, is sufficiently flexible to meet the diverse interests and production conditions pertaining internationally.

Wellbeing, Capability and Rights

1. Work and wellbeing

The Washington Consensus on poverty combined the World Bank's emphasis on labour intensive growth and targeted welfare and social security with policies for human development promoted in the Human Development Reports of the UNDP (World Bank, 1990; UNDP, 1990). By shifting from emphasis on income poverty to achievement of functionings within the entitlements and capabilities frameworks of Amartya Sen (Sen, 1985), attention has moved to the connections between endowments, natural and social environments, through gendered intra-household processes of allocation, to well-being outcomes. Work has been seen not just as the principle route to well-being but also a key factor in avoiding social exclusion. This thinking emphasises greater participation by women in employment, for wages and in targeted safety net schemes. However, much women's work is undervalued and invisible, and is already characterised by long working hours, represented as 'time

famine'. Adding to these burdens by additional labour intensive activities may not lead to well-being.

This potential contradiction draws attention to the need to explore carefully the multiple links between work and well-being. It is necessary to explore the *content and character* of work for people with different endowments, the *rewards from this work* as income or in kind, and their *intra-household distribution*, and the *social valuation* of work. These features of work can have both positive and sometimes negative implications for well-being achievements.

Agricultural labour, informal sector labour, and the work that is promoted in labour intensive employment and 'self-targeted' safety nets programmes is often arduous, and this may have implications for well-being. Employment that is characterised by heavy labour may exclude important groups among the poor. It may also affect the distribution of own farm, subsistence, domestic and reproductive tasks and of the entitlements produced, or to which access is gained, among participants and their families, through adjustments in access to food and health expenditure, or distribution of tasks and leisure, and rest among household members. The effects on well-being of heavy manual labour among nutritionally challenged groups has been explored in the literature, but is not as yet well understood. Participation in low status activities may stigmatise individuals or their households, only partly offset by possibilities to express agency or gain identity through, for example, status as provisioners. Such employments have complex and dynamic effects on social valuation and entitlement

This research aimed to explore linkages between work and well-being with a view to ascertaining which forms of policy intervention might best enhance well-being, and which interventions, under what circumstances, might threaten, through any of these pathways, the well-being of poor women, men and children. After establishing a clear conceptual framework we applied the analysis to three paradigmatic areas of development policy and intervention to 'test drive' the conceptual framework and to evaluate, from this new standpoint, the possible well-being consequences of such policies.

2. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction

This research aimed to show the problems and possibilities, for policy actors, inherent in rights based approaches to reproductive well-being. The Beijing Conference on Women interpreted sexual and reproductive rights as an integral part of women's human rights. The call for reproductive rights is a new discourse of need that has been widely utilised, interpreted and co-opted in different ways by different makers of social policy. The universalistic assumptions of this rights-based discourse has raised unresolved dilemmas, for example over the meaning of reproductive rights, in different social settings, where identity is firmly relational. Difficulties in the interpretation of reproductive rights are magnified by problems of operationalising these rights in social policy. Their elaboration as administrable needs by reproductive programmes and policies impacts directly on the capacity of different social groups to achieve healthful sexual and reproductive relations.

The research was been concerned with the implications of increasingly sophisticated and interdisciplinary understandings about reproductive behaviour for the official

interpretation of reproductive rights and how they may best be addressed. These interdisciplinary understandings stress that the capacity of men and women to negotiate reproductive health and sexual matters, of which access to health services is only one component, can have significant influence over individual and family outcomes in terms of wellbeing and functionings. Sex and reproduction are key strategies for forging social relations, and sexual or reproductive ‘failure’ and reproductive morbidity can be explicitly connected to processes of social exclusion. Family and non-family networks are sources of knowledge, skills and support that confer, enable and contest the bounds of accepted sexual and reproductive behaviour. This literature offers rich insights into the complex and sometimes ambiguous ways in which reproductive strategies relate to wellbeing

3. Disability

There is remarkably little discussion in the ‘disability’ literature of the approaches, concepts and issues that are central to current development studies - livelihoods, social and personal capital, social exclusion and inclusion, capabilities, etc., although the emergence of the ‘social’ model of disability clearly provides the basis for such a discussion. There is also remarkably little discussion within development studies of the issues surrounding ‘disability’ – where it takes place at all ‘disability’ remains largely identified as a health issue. Disability is virtually invisible as an issue linked to poverty and social exclusion in development studies, just as disabled people themselves tend to be invisible or ‘missing’ in both rural and urban studies.

The ‘area’ in which issues of disability and development meet currently, is that of Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) which is, effectively, an approach based on a medical-healthcare model extended into ‘the community’, and usually has limited ‘development’ concerns.

The aim of the research was to make a contribution towards the integration of disability and development studies at both a theoretical and a practical level – recognising ‘disability’ as the consequence of the interaction, in a specific social context, between impairment and various forms of social exclusion and social discrimination.

Methods

Social Responsibility Project

This project undertook a thorough review of published and unpublished materials on production conditions and hazards for production workers and their communities in the garments and electronic sectors in order to produce a bibliography on ‘labour and environmental issues in international production’ in focused on key country and sector areas. The research also tracked developments, in part through policy statements and position papers as the negotiations for the proposed standards and codes of conduct/contract proceeded over the period of the research. Much of this was undertaken by a research assistant over a 12 month period to collect and annotate

materials. The principal researchers supervised this essentially 'library' research. The research also involved engagement with various stakeholders including companies, trade unions, development NGOs, labour rights organisations, women's groups and independent monitors. The research was written up by all three members of the research team during the final period of the project.

Wellbeing, Capabilities and Rights

1. From Work to Wellbeing

There were two phases to the research, the first conceptual development and the second involved collection of published and grey literature from development agencies and institutions, interviews with a few development researchers and practitioners and some secondary data analysis, to explore the scope and plausibility of applying and implementing the conceptual framework in analysis of three specific cases, namely, informal labour market interventions, food for work initiatives/employment guarantee schemes, and feminisation of agricultural labour.

The study involved was largely desk based, reviewing, analysing secondary data, and writing and disseminating. Louise Waite made study tours in India and to USA (Washington and New York) to visit prominent development institutions which had been involved especially in the analysis (and in some cases promotion) of Food for Works and Employment Guarantee projects, to collect views and published and grey literature.

The secondary data work involved collection and some analysis of the Indian Censuses (1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, and 2001 (to the extent published) and National Sample Survey Expenditure and Employment Surveys (NSS), with whom we signed a Memorandum of Understanding, giving access to their large scale expenditure and employment surveys.

2. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction

The sub-project 'Rights and Reproduction' was also based largely on a 'library' review and study. A research associate, Heather Zhang, was employed for 14 months to work with the principal investigator, Dr Catherine Locke.

The research involved a dual focus on the conceptual aspects and policy practice and was largely desk-based, with secondary data on both the "rights-based approach" and the relevant social policy practices being systematically collected and analysed. In addition to the published literature, the researchers examined relevant grey literatures and Heather Zhang interviewed key personnel in three contrasting organisations concerned with reproductive rights and conducted 13 interviews with donor, INGOs, NGOs, academic and professional personnel in Vietnam in November 1999.

3. Disability

The sub-project on 'Disability' was based very largely on library research and meetings with stakeholders in the UK undertaken and carried out by the main research associate, Dr Ray Lang. The research involved the review and analysis of two discrete

sets of literature – the disability studies literature (focused overwhelmingly on a discussion of disability issues in North America and Europe) and the development studies literature, particularly in those areas concerned with social exclusion (disadvantage and deprivation) and with entitlements (capabilities, functionings etc.).

It also involved field visits to Nepal, the Philippines, Bangladesh and South Africa, and drew heavily on previous fieldwork in India undertaken by one of the research team (Ray Lang) for his PhD and on networks of contacts developed there. Only the South Africa field visit – which was the longest – drew directly on the project budget. A considerable grey literature was collected, which provided the basis for a working paper on disability in South Africa. During this field visit interviews were undertaken with a wide range of government and non-government organisations; good links and an effective network of collaborators was established. The field visit to Nepal also established a useful data base as well as a good network of collaborators, co-researchers and policy-makers, and provided the basis for a forthcoming working paper on disability in Nepal.

Findings

The Social Responsibility Project

The project analysed the growth and significance of voluntary codes of conduct on social issues which have been increasingly adopted by international companies over the past decade. It analysed the limitations of these codes in terms of their content, coverage and implementation (monitoring and verification). It contrasted codes emanating from different sources (companies, business associations, multi-stakeholder alliances, trade unions). It also compared the typical content of codes with the demands articulated by workers (often female workers) who are the declared beneficiaries of codes.

Key findings are summarised in the forthcoming book edited by Jenkins, Pearson & Seyfang, entitled *Corporate Responsibility and Labour Rights: Codes of Conduct in a Global Economy*.

Wellbeing Rights and Capabilities Project

1. From Work to Well-being

The Washington Consensus on poverty combined the World Bank's emphasis on labour intensive growth and targeted welfare and social security with policies for human development promoted in the Human Development Reports of the UNDP (World Bank, 1990; UNDP, 1990). By shifting from emphasis on income poverty to achievement of functionings within the entitlements and capabilities frameworks of Amartya Sen (Sen, 1985), attention has moved to the connections between endowments, natural and social environments, through gendered intra-household

processes of allocation, to well-being outcomes. Work has been seen not just as the principle route to well-being but also a key factor in avoiding social exclusion. This thinking emphasises greater participation by women in employment, for wages and in targeted safety net schemes. However, much women's work is undervalued and invisible, and is already characterised by long working hours, represented as 'time famine'. Adding to these burdens by additional labour intensive activities may not lead to well-being.

This potential contradiction draws attention to the need to explore carefully the multiple links between work and well-being. It is necessary to explore the *content and character* of work for people with different endowments, the *rewards from this work* as income or in kind, and their *intra-household distribution*, and the *social valuation* of work. These features of work can have both positive and sometimes negative implications for well-being achievements.

Agricultural labour, informal sector labour, and the work that is promoted in labour intensive employment and 'self-targeted' safety nets programmes is often arduous, and this may have implications for well-being. Employment that is characterised by heavy labour may exclude important groups among the poor. It may also affect the distribution of own farm, subsistence, domestic and reproductive tasks and of the entitlements produced, or to which access is gained, among participants and their families, through adjustments in access to food and health expenditure, or distribution of tasks and leisure, and rest among household members. The effects on well-being of heavy manual labour among nutritionally challenged groups has been explored in the literature, but is not as yet well understood. Participation in low status activities may stigmatise individuals or their households, only partly offset by possibilities to express agency or gain identity through, for example, status as provisioners. Such employments have complex and dynamic effects on social valuation and entitlement.

Summaries of the three areas of research are given below.

Kerala's Informal Labour Market Interventions: from Work to Well-Being?

Labour-intensive growth is often advocated as a means for both poverty reduction (through employment provision) and economic growth (through labour-intensive enterprises). However, the implicit notion that well-being of individuals and households will be enhanced through the gaining of employment is too often assumed rather than established. Through looking at the case of headloaders in Kerala the non-sequential nature of the pathway from work to well-being is illustrated. Rather than assuming that employment provision will necessarily enhance workers' well-being; a closer exploration is required of bodily, economic, symbolic and social capital transformations alongside the adoption of a life-course perspective.

Energy intensive work by headloaders in Kerala can take a significant toll on bodily well-being and the differential body capital of workers produces varying economic returns due to the predominant piece-rate methods of payment. Further, caste stratifications amongst the workers mean certain groups secure the more profitable pools of the headload work and thus receive greater economic returns. However, the interventions in the headloaders sector do seem to ameliorate some of the more negative consequences of effort-intensive work for those who do this work. Symbolic capital has arguably been enhanced for the Kerala headloaders as unionisation and

organisation has conferred a certain social recognition to being a headloader. The interventions have also provided the opportunity for organisational capacity to be developed amongst workers therefore enhancing social capital, although it must be acknowledged that internal stratifications amongst the headloaders make such transformations uneven.

Food for Work and Employment Guarantee Schemes

Food (or cash) for works (FFW) have been, and are, widely employed for both crisis and chronic poverty alleviation (Dreze, 1990; von Braun et al, 1992). They employ the labour test to target the poor. A number of studies have raised questions about the net benefits of FFW after the food and opportunity costs of participation have been accounted (Ravallion, Dutt, and Chaudhuri, 1993), and about the intra-household distribution of FFW commodities or incomes (see Brown et al., 1994). There is also evidence of self and social selection of participation in FFW which can result in the exclusion of some, and their dependence on others for access to commodities made available via these schemes. Labour intensive public works are inspired by the labour intensive growth strategy (Gaude and Watzlawick, 1992); however, it is also clear that they involve time and energy opportunity costs for participants, and redistributive processes in the allocation of benefits. Where these types of labour intensive employment programmes are used for the relief of chronic poverty, the long term dependence on effort intensive work makes such programmes particularly appropriate for study both because of the large numbers of poor people involved and their paradigmatic character. The long term effects of these programmes and their broader implications for well-being, broken down by gender, age and class, have not been studied in a holistic way.

This study of labour intensive public works programmes illustrates the embodied character of poverty, and gendered disadvantage, that have not been adequately recognised in development policy debates. A fuller consideration of embodiment is a good way to think about how the kind of work offered in employment schemes may enhance or impair well-being. The promise of public works for poverty reduction is examined reviewing the evidence on identities of participants, considering differential returns to work on public works, and the factors mediating how effort intensive work on these schemes is transformed into personal well-being or transferred to others. The costs imposed on others are also considered. Questions emerge around targeting, male gender identities, and the universal appropriateness of social policy approaches based on employment. Poor relief has historically aimed to chasten and train the poor through work, and contemporary domestic social policy in the UK and the US increasingly emphasises access to social support through work. It is argued that these may be especially inappropriate in contexts of rural poverty in the south where heavy manual work may impair wellbeing of participants, and that research which foregrounds embodiment is necessary to reveal the extent and location of such dangers.

Feminisation of Agricultural Labour in India

The Washington Consensus of the early 1990s suggested that agricultural growth was perhaps the main means of poverty reducing labour intensive growth in the poorest countries and for the poorest. Nevertheless, policy discourse often views introduction of High Yielding Varieties askance, since it is thought that the processes involved in

the Green Revolution may increase the number of agricultural labourers displaced through growing differentiation and proletarianisation of the peasantry, to their detriment and of the well-being of agricultural labourers. This pessimistic view has sometimes been contrasted with a more optimistic one that sees growing employment opportunities in rapidly growing agriculture and linked activities. Thus it was not clear whether (or under what circumstances) the apparently increasing involvement of women in agriculture in India in the 1970s was a sign of impoverishment related to the process of agricultural growth, with increased market labour time adding to women's domestic and reproductive burdens, or of increasing labour market opportunities and loosening traditional constraints on women's labour market participation, which enabled women to earn income and gain more recognition for their work and contributions.

The capabilities and functionings framework for assessing achieved well-being has used the female to male ratio (sex ratio) in India as a key indicator of women's well-being since relative mortality is an outcome indicator of well-being which integrates the relative life experiences of females and males in a rather profound way.

Agricultural labour is almost always effort intensive, and those who participate in it are among the poorest; consequently one might expect there could be adverse implications for well-being of increases in agricultural labouring at low wages without social support. Both the pessimistic and the optimistic visions of feminisation of agricultural labour drew attention to the association between a favourable female sex ratio, their well-being, and participation in agricultural labour.

Pessimists such as Agarwal, 1984, associated growing poverty in India with the Green Revolution (GR), and associated female agricultural labouring and adverse female sex ratio with the heartland areas of the GR in North-West India. However, Bennett's analysis (1992) of the empirical evidence at aggregate levels, which had a more optimistic tone, associated an improvement in women's status, as revealed in a more favourable female sex ratios (and rising real wages), with greater female participation in the labour force (see Visaria, 1999, for a recent restatement of this relationship). Bennett also identified growing female agricultural labour in areas of more rapid agricultural growth, suggesting that a more favourable prognosis for the life chances of females as their labour force participation increased.

In recent analyses, agricultural growth from the early 1970s appears to have had much potential for poverty reduction (Datt and Ravallion, 1998; Palmer-Jones and Sen, 2001), but some local studies suggest that poor women have not always benefited from the patterns of agricultural growth and associated developments in which again feminisation of agricultural labour was implicated (Mukherjee, 1999, da Costa 1999, Kapadia, 1999).

Analysis of secondary data, however, shows that rural poverty in India has been falling since the early 1970s, even during the period of adverse incorporation of women into agricultural labour commented on by Agarwal. At the same time, feminisation of the agricultural labour force has occurred to only a limited extent, but the sex ratio has fallen to some extent. Thus, none of the main premises on which this work was undertaken turned out to be the case. Instead, what we find is that the relationship between the sex ratio and female labour force participation is probably

spurious, either non-existent as in South India, or where it is present, as in Northern India, it is largely attributable to other variables of a cultural nature, as is the difference between North and South India. Furthermore, agricultural growth has been associated with poverty reduction not impoverishment, and not with either much feminisation of the labour force, or deterioration in the sex ratio, apart from general trends in Indian demography.

Deterioration in the sex ratio can be partly attributed to (a) falling male relative to female infant and child mortality rather than any significant change in the female infant and child mortality, but (b) especially in the 1990s, some rise in sex selective abortion (of females) especially in urban areas. Thus, it is not clear that there is any straightforward connection between female agricultural labour and female status as reflected in the sex ratio. Generally, across all cultural groups in India, women in households with higher per capita expenditures have lower market labour participation except among the highest expenditure groups. This is a common phenomenon in economic development (Goldin, 1995), although there are cultural variations.

Revisionist views of the experience of western developed countries during earlier stages of industrialisation suggests that women whose lives had involved heavy manual labour as an essential component of survival may have welcomed the male family wage earner-female household goods producer structure (Roberts, 1984). Domestic labour was still arduous because of lack of public utilities, incomes were still low so discretionary expenditure on non-essential items was minimal, health, especially of children was fragile, and much social welfare and security was provided within households or communities. Women's status as household managers seems not to have been associated with perceptions of patriarchal domination. In the post Second World War period rising real incomes, the advent of the welfare state, the reduced physical burdens of employment and growth of tertiary sector employment resulted in a completely different situation, but it is the earlier state that appears to be more characteristic of the poor in developing countries (Roberts, 1995; Esping-Andersen, 1999). The pre-war situation was much closer to today's third world than the age of relative affluence and social security that followed it.

References:

Agarwal, Bina, 1984, Women, Poverty and Agricultural Growth in India, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 13(4):165-220.

Bennett, L., 1992, *Women, Poverty and Productivity in India*, Washington D.C., World Bank, EDI Seminar Paper No 43

da Corta, L. and Venkateshwarlu, D., 1999, Unfree Labour Relations and the Feminisation of Agricultural Labour in Andhra Pradesh, 1970-95, *Journal of Peasant Studies*, 26(4):71-139.

Datt, G. and Ravallion, M., 1998, Why Have Some Indian States Done Better Than Others At Reducing Rural Poverty?, *Economica*, 65(257):17-38.

Esping-Andersen, G., 1999, *Social Foundations of Post-Industrial Economies*, Oxford, Oxford University Press

Goldin, C. The U-Shaped Female Labour Force Participation in Economic Development. in: Schultz, T. P., ed. *Investment In Women's Human Capital*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; 1995.

Kapadia, K. Every Blade of Grass: Landless Women Labourers, Production and Reproduction in South India. in : Kabeer, N. and Subrahmanian, R., eds. *Institutions, Relations and Outcomes*. New Delhi: Kaila for Women; 1999.

Mukherjee, A. Labour. in: Lanjouw, P. and Stern, N., eds. *Economic Development over Five Decades*. Oxford: Clarendon Press; 1999; pp. 431-456.

Palmer-Jones, R. W. Sen K. K., 2001, What Luck has to do with it? A Regional Analysis of Poverty and Agricultural Growth in India, **Mimeo**.

Roberts, Elizabeth, 1984, *A Woman's Place*, Oxford, Blackwell

Roberts, Elizabeth, 1995, *Women and Families: an Oral History, 1940-1970*, Oxford, Blackwell

Visaria, L. Deficit of Women in India: Magnitude, Trends, Regional Variations and Determinants. in: Ray, B. and Basu, A., eds. *From Independence towards Freedom*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press; 1999.

2. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction

The central concerns of this sub-project were:

- How have reproductive rights been constructed as a new discourse of need within international social policy?
- How can reproductive rights challenges be contextualised given the universalistic aspirations of international human rights?
- How has international social policy interpreted reproductive rights and their relationship to wellbeing?
- How have international organisations concerned with improving reproductive health responded to the reproductive rights agenda?

The research developed conceptual linkages between notions of wellbeing, rights and reproduction. It explored ethical and developmental issues relating to the conceptualisation and interpretation of reproductive rights at the international level in different institutional settings. It drew on existing conceptual frameworks relating to rights, wellbeing and capabilities, on cross-cultural work about women's (and men's) reproductive and sexual strategies and aspirations, and on analysis of the politics of reproductive policy making. Its underlying concern was with the potential for reproductive rights approaches to add value to international social policy in terms of its capacity to contribute to improving wellbeing. The conceptual emphasis was elaborated with respect to policy practice through case studies. These included an exploration of reproductive rights in Vietnam and an examination of the response of

three different organisations concerned with reproductive health at the level of international social policy.

For further discussion of the findings of this sub-project see **Appendix 1, 2 and 3 of this report.**

3. Disability sub-project

The research explored the potential for closer theoretical and practical integration by examining key ideas, concepts and approaches in disability studies and development studies. Key concepts and approaches identified included: the livelihoods framework, social and personal capital, social exclusion and inclusion, capabilities and functionings, the social model of disability, hierarchies and forms of impairment and disability, discourse analysis, life history/life course/life expectancy approaches to impairment and disability, and rights based approaches. The findings are summarised below under a number of discrete headings, each of which identifies new areas for further research and exploration, which have implications for policy with respect to disability and development.

Concepts for Disability and Development

The research examined some of the main concepts in current use in the two fields of disability and development studies. It found that, in disability studies the critique of the 'medical model' of disability, which was based on the identification of impairment, disability and handicap (as in the WHO official classification) in individual cases, and focused on diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of the individual 'case', had led to the widespread invocation of the 'social model' of disability, in which disability resulted from various forms and processes of social exclusion and marginalisation. There were, as a consequence no 'disabled persons' but only persons who were disabled by the way the social and physical environment impacted on them.

The social model of disability had been taken up particularly by the disability movement (prevalent in the developed countries and only now becoming significant in some developing countries), which used it to argue for changes in social awareness, behaviour and practices.

The research suggested, however, that the social model was crude and reductionist, and one-way. It suggested the need for an interactive model of disability, in which individuals with impairments were marginalized and socially excluded through the dynamic process of social intercourse (involving social relationship, habitus and praxis), creating disability and handicap on an on-going basis, and reducing both an individual's ability to function fully, to develop their capabilities and to contribute fully to the household, the local and the national economy and society.

The research examined some of the major current concepts in use in development studies and identified 'social exclusion' as a most appropriate concept. Social exclusion has been used increasingly widely in recent years in development studies often virtually equated with poverty – even in cases where poverty affects a

substantial proportion of the population and arguably results from 'exclusion' only in the loosest possible sense. (Terms like exploitation and oppression, social discrimination were arguably more revealing of the processes creating and reproducing poverty). By contrast, the processes whereby disability is created seem precisely to be well covered by the concept of social exclusion (which originally in France included the notion of disability).

The shifting of the WHO classification to one in which impairment, functioning and participation, together with the widespread adoption (despite various difficulties) in development studies of the broad approach of Amartya Sen - which uses the concepts of functioning, capabilities and entitlements - indicates that a more intensive consideration of disability issues using Sen's concepts would prove fruitful.

Finally, the current use of concepts such as social capital and personal capital (or in some variants, body capital) in development studies offers fruitful ground for the analysis of the conditions under which not only investment, but also expenditure and degradation of social and personal capital may take place under specific circumstances. Application of such concepts to the particular circumstances of 'disability' is particularly revealing in the analysis of forms of social exclusion (including exclusion from work for the 'non-able bodied' or from education for those with 'educational special needs') in developing country situations.

In general, the research indicated that continuing interaction at the level of theoretical framework and conceptual apparatus between disability and development studies, with a view to adopting some of the current key concepts in development studies in the field of disability studies, and vice versa, would be valuable.

Sociology of impairment

One of the findings of the research was that there is no real appreciation within the disability studies literature of the ways in which 'impairment' is socially constructed. The social model of disability in effect defines away impairment as irrelevant while the medical model regards impairment as a medical condition which gives rise directly to disability in the individual. Our research suggests that there is room for a sociology of impairment which examines carefully the interplay between a physical or medical condition which may or may not be 'recognised' as an impairment, depending on a combination of factors, including the extent to which it affects the functioning and capabilities of the person concerned within his or her particular social context.

The case studies made it clear that what is regarded by the person concerned and by society in general as an impairment varies considerably. The extent to which a given, identified impairment gives rise to disability depends on specific cultural as well as social and economic circumstances.

Impairment, disability and 'the life course'

The research identified a distinctive approach just emerging in the disability studies literature, congruent with some recent developments in development studies and offering an original and powerful tool for description and analysis of impairment and disability which maintains both the concern with the individual person as actor or

agent and with the circumstances within which they develop as an individual – notably the life history or life course approach.

The differences between congenital and accidental impairment, between early-onset and late-onset conditions, and the ‘risks’ of impairment and disability associated with different stages in the life course (birth, infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, old age), are revealed fully only through an approach which privileges the idea of impairment and/or disability as conditioned by ‘the process of living’.

The hierarchy of impairment

The research reveals the existence of a phenomenon, which the disability rights movement finds it difficult to accept, but which is undoubtedly relevant both within the disability movement and in wider society. This we refer to as ‘a hierarchy of impairment’. In every society there is a hierarchy of impairment in which certain forms of impairment are more generally ‘acceptable’ and the people affected better integrated and more socially ‘recognised’ than others. In terms of entitlements, those higher up in the hierarchy find themselves better resourced and having higher levels of social capital than those lower down. The detail of the hierarchy will vary from context to context. Thus, for example, while in Britain, the ‘dominance’ of ‘white males in wheelchairs is reflected in the conventional signs for and images of ‘disability’, in India, it is blind people (or people who are visually impaired) who tend to dominate.

In so far as this phenomenon affects not only the relationships of disabled people with others in their local economy and society but relations within the disability movements in different countries, it needs further investigation.

The discourse of impairment and disability

The language or discourse (the terms in which) disability is identified, defined and deployed in everyday life as well as in specific quasi-medical circumstances (as in Community Based Rehabilitation programmes) is of enormous significance. In general, in most cultures, the identification of ‘disability’ is closely linked to the language and terms used. The case studies reveals a wide range of usages and terms – in some cases derogatory and abusive, in some cases sympathetic but patronising, and in some cases assertive and aggressive. There is a real need to examine in more detail the discourse around ‘disability’ – not only in supposedly ‘scientific’ (medical or social) circles but also in common-place, everyday circumstances – in order to understand better the ‘social and linguistic construction of disability’.

For the disability movement in particular the use of certain terms is rejected in favour of others, which are more ‘politically correct’. International gatherings even of disability rights activists can be fraught with difficulties and misunderstandings as a result. When confronting ‘the establishment’, these encounters and the shifting terms involved are of significance in establishing the framework within which discussion and debate regarding appropriate government policy and practice to improve conditions for disabled persons may take place.

For example, while at one point in Britain the term 'the disabled' was abandoned as insulting (defining people solely by their disability), and gave way to 'people with disabilities'. This is rejected, however, as implying that it is the individuals who 'have' the disability, rather than society which creates the conditions for disability to exist; the preferred term is 'disabled people'.

Disability and human rights

The growth of 'rights based' approaches to development issues is paralleled by the increasing adoption of the language of rights in the disability movement. Legislation against discrimination on the grounds of 'disability' has been becoming of increasing significance in developing countries as the rights based approach to disability also gains ground. Two strategies are beginning to emerge, one which centres on individual rights and involves defending formal legal rights through individual cases and the other which emphasises collective rights and prefers to invoke a broader notion of rights as social entitlements.

The debates within development studies regarding the differences (in political and practical as well as in policy terms) between a 'needs based' and a 'rights based' approach to poverty, social exclusion etc. have not yet crystallised within the disability field, but there is a growing awareness of these issues. Special attention to the 'rights' of disabled people as a specific category may conflict with broader specifications of and concerns with human rights in development. Short-term and practical concerns may also clash with longer term and strategic concerns. Many of the debates around WID, WAD and GAD have relevance here.

Dissemination

Social Responsibility Project

During the project the researchers made a number of presentations of work in progress at:

The DfID Social Policy Workshop, London, 13-14 May 1999, by Ruth Pearson

The DfID funded Homenet International Mapping Exercise, May 2000, by Ruth Pearson

The Overseas Development Group Annual General Meeting, January 2000, by Gill Seyfang

The International Workshop on Gender Equity and Public Sector and Corporate Accountability to Women, IDS, 18-21 September 2000, by Ruth Pearson

The UNRISD Workshop on Promoting Corporate Responsibility in Developing Countries: The Potential and Limits of Voluntary Initiatives, Geneva, 23-24 October 2000, Rhys Jenkins

The Development Studies Association Annual Conference, London, November 2000,
Rhys Jenkins

A major output of the research will be a book, edited by Jenkins, Pearson and Seyfang, entitled *Corporate Responsibility and Labour Rights: Codes of Conduct in a Global Economy*. In addition to chapters written by the editors, drawing on their own research for the project, the book will also include chapters by various stakeholders relating their own experiences with codes of conduct. A contract has been signed with Earthscan and the manuscript has already been delivered to the publisher.

The book will be the outcome of the *Cracking Codes* internet conference, organised by the project to bring together academics and stakeholders to critically discuss experiences and analysis of Codes, which was moderated by Gill Seyfang. Earlier discussion of the project and its findings also took place in the conference on 'Globalisation: the MAI and After, organised by the School of Development Studies (UEA) and Norfolk Environment and Development (NEAD) in February 1999.

A number of publications have already resulted from this project (others are planned):

Seyfang, G. (1999), *Private Sector Self-Regulation for Social Responsibility: Mapping Codes of Conduct*, ODG Social Policy Working Paper No. 1

Pearson, R. and G. Seyfang (2001), "New Hope or False Dawn? Voluntary Codes of Conduct and Social Policy in a Globalising World", *Global Social Policy*, Vol.1, No.1.

Jenkins, R. (2001), *Corporate Codes of Conduct: Self-Regulation in a Global Economy, Geneva*, UNRISD, Technology, Business and Society Paper No.2.

Jenkins, R. and R. Pearson (2001), "Consensus or conflict: What's in a code?" *Insights* 36, March.

Jenkins, R. (2001), "Conduite à risque", *Courrier de la Planète*, Vol.IV, 64

Jenkins, R., R. Pearson and G. Seyfang, 2002 (forthcoming), *Corporate Responsibility and Labour Rights: Codes of Conduct in a Global Economy*, Earthscan.

Social wellbeing project

1. Work and wellbeing

The users of this research may be social policy analysts and policy makers in aid agencies, such as the World Bank, and DFID, in national Governments, in NGOs, and in other interest groups or stakeholders in development processes. Clearer conceptual understanding leads to more informed analysis, in particular the ability to identify

situations in which conflicts among development objectives that may arise by the pursuit of interested sectoral approaches to development intervention.

A number of unpublished working papers, or papers on 'work in progress' have been produced as a result of this sub-project, and several have either been published or are currently under consideration for publication.

Jackson, C. J. and Palmer-Jones, R. W., 1999, Rethinking Gendered Poverty and Work, *Development and Change*, 30:557-83.

Waite, L., 2001, Kerala's Informal Labour Market Interventions: from Work to Well-being?, *Economic and Political Weekly* (30/6/01), 36(26): 2393-8.

Jackson, C., 2001. 'Embodiment, Gender and Well-being: the Example of Public Works for Development', mimeo, School of Development Studies, UEA

Palmer-Jones, R.W., Feminisation of Agricultural Labour: more Myth than Reality? Mimeo, School of Development Studies, 2001

2. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction

Early draft papers included 'Exploring the Implications of Globalisation Trends in Social Policy for Development Interventions to Support Reproductive Wellbeing', by Catherine Locke and Heather Zhang, November 2000.

The project has produced four research papers dealing with its key themes:

Locke, C. (2001) The Right Language? Reproduction, Wellbeing and Global Social Policy Discourse. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction Research Paper I.

Zhang, H.X. and Locke, C. (2001) Rights, Social Policy and Reproductive Wellbeing: The Vietnam Situation. Wellbeing Rights and Reproduction Research Paper II.

Locke, C. (2001) Wellbeing and Reproductive Freedoms: Assessing Progress, Setting Agendas. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction Research Paper III.

Zhang, H.X. and Locke, C. (2001) Implementing Reproductive Rights: Population Debates and Institutional Responses to the New Agenda. Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction Research Paper IV.

The key findings have been summarised in two very short briefing papers (**Appendix 1 and 2 in this Report**): Locke, C. and Zhang, H.X. (2001) Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction: Conceptual Linkages; and Locke, C. and Zhang, H.X. (2001) Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction: Social Development Strategies.

Three papers have been accepted for publication:

Locke, C (forthcoming) 'Discursive Challenges: Reproductive Rights and Women's Wellbeing in Developing Countries' in Poland, F and Boswell, G (expected

March 2000) *Women's Minds, Women's Bodies: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, Palgrave: Basingstoke.

Locke, C. and Zhang, H.X. (forthcoming) Social Analysis and Selective Inclusions in Rights-Based Approaches to Reproductive Health. Paper commissioned for *JASO* special edition on Fertility and Reproduction.

Zhang, H.X. and Locke, C. (forthcoming) Contextualising Reproductive Rights Challenges: The Vietnam Situation. Paper accepted by *Women's Studies International Forum* pending minor revisions.

In addition to participation in the final workshop (November 2001) for the UEA component of the Social Policy Research Programme, findings have also been presented by Heather Zhang to the Fertility and Reproduction Studies Group at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford in spring 2000, and to the Workshop on Health and Wellbeing held at Blickling and organised by UEA in summer 2000; and by Catherine Locke to the Gender Study Group at the School of Development Studies in January 2000 and November 2001.

3. Disability

An initial paper on 'Disability and Development Studies: towards an integrated approach', was presented at the Development Studies Association Annual Conference at the University of Bath, in September 1999, by David Seddon and Ray Lang

A One-Day workshop on 'Disability and Development' was held as a collaboration between the School of Development Studies and the School of Occupational and Physio Therapy at UEA in 2000. Contributions made by Ray Lang, Victoria Daines, Kenji Kuno, Peter Handley and David Seddon.

Two papers - on 'Mainstreaming disability issues into development studies: in theory and practice', by David Seddon and Ray Lang, with Victoria Daines, and on 'Disability in India', by Ray Lang, were given in June 2001 to the 14th Annual Meeting of the Disability Studies Association, Winnipeg, Canada. Both of these papers were presented by Ray Lang.

A final workshop for all three sub-projects of the Wellbeing and Rights project was held in November 2001 at the University of East Anglia, at which ESCOR was represented. A presentation, summarising the findings and conclusions of the Disability sub-project, was made by David Seddon with Ray Lang.

Several papers are currently under preparation by David Seddon, Ray Lang, Kenji Kuno and Victoria Daines. A book on *Disability and Development* is also planned.

Appendix 1

Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction: Conceptual Linkages

This briefing paper is one of two summarising the main findings of the Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction component of the Social Policy Research Programme. This sub-project investigated the problems and possibilities for policy actors of rights-based approaches to reproduction. This briefing paper summarises findings about the conceptual linkages between notions of wellbeing, rights and reproduction in the context of global social policy discourses.

Although reproductive rights have a longer history, the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) represented a landmark in international population and development policy debates. For the first time, reproductive rights were fully elaborated as human rights and were broadly contextualised within an understanding of social change and gender relations. Today reproductive rights are practically an orthodoxy and reproductive health has received unprecedented attention as illustrated by its inclusion within the International Development Targets (IDTs) for 2015. However, lack of conceptual clarity around reproductive rights limits the capacity for this policy discourse to make a radical contribution to policy making.

Understanding Reproductive Behaviour

Recent prominence for inter-disciplinary contributions to understanding reproductive behaviour have enriched debates about its relation to wider processes of social change. These have drawn heavily of sociology, anthropology, and politics and have been strongly gendered. They offer highly differentiated and contextualised perspectives that are concerned with subjective experiences of reproduction. Their historically informed and institutionally situated approaches make linkages between local, national and global dynamics. Although these understandings are in some senses supportive of a shift towards reproductive rights, in practice they raise areas of unresolved tension in relation to mainstream interpretations.

Constructing Women's Reproductive Rights

The elaboration of reproductive rights emerged from a longstanding struggle led by women's health activists. The conceptual legacy of this struggle lies in the 'bodied' nature of reproductive rights that uniquely apply to women. Mainstream approaches to reproductive rights are largely woman-centred and are embedded within notions of motherhood, heterosexuality and marriage. Men are constructed as uninformed, irresponsible, blocking women's contraceptive use, promiscuous and as underinvesting in their children. 'Bodied' interpretations of reproductive rights neglect the social and material content of livelihoods and back-ground concerns about social reproduction. Ideas of reproductive autonomy are dislocated from analysis of wider power relations, poverty and are overly rational.

These constructions of reproductive rights fall short of articulating sexual rights and rights for adolescents and fail to address the tension between men's rights and interests in reproduction and the rights and interests of women, leaving space for ill-informed thinking. Narrow approaches to empowerment deny the gendered link between material livelihoods and reproductive and sexual strategies, even though there is ample evidence that women, men and adolescents use their sexual and reproductive capabilities as resources in their everyday struggles. New understandings of reproductive agency point to the ambiguity of reproductive 'choices', their emotive nature, complex relational content and the way that social and cultural institutions may shape the meaning of particular 'choices' over time.

Reproductive Rights and Well-being

The official reproductive rights discourse takes for granted the central relationships between reproductive rights, reproductive health and wellbeing. It is assumed that these three concepts are mutually reinforcing and that women's wellbeing can in part be 'read off' from their reproductive health. Inter-disciplinary understanding of reproductive and sexual behaviours suggest that this is problematic and that these relationships need to be unpacked.

Reproductive and sexual strategies are strongly embedded in wider social processes in ways that can create unexpected or ambiguous meanings for specific outcomes. Individuals do not hold distinct reproductive goals and sex and reproduction are key strategies for forging social relationships. Reproductive and sexual autonomy may be traded-off for greater room for manoeuvre in other areas. Family and non-kin networks are sources of knowledge, skills and support that confer, enable and contest the bounds of accepted sexual and reproductive behaviour. Reproductive health outcomes are iteratively shaped, experienced and given meaning by social norms and practices, social policy and cultures of service provision.

Sen's notion of wellbeing as located within the three spheres of capabilities, functionings and entitlements usefully draws attention to the extent to which people are able to choose and achieve a range of reproductive and sexual

aspirations in relations to their biological endowments. His framework extends understandings of wellbeing beyond formal welfare entitlements to accommodate gender relations within and beyond the household thus highlighting the problems that women in particular may experience in identifying and pursuing their own wellbeing. Feminists have further developed his analysis to include a 'sense of entitlement' referring to the way women make claims on partners, kin and caregivers to secure what they perceive to be their own and their children's needs. These approaches stress the importance of balancing objective assessments of wellbeing with subjective experiences of specific outcomes and choices and of examining the processes of (dis)entitlement.

The difficulties enabling better translation between the normative language of rights with the analytical language of accounts of reproductive behaviours are not insurmountable. However, in attempting to improve the conceptual clarity of rights-based approaches, we must resist resolving the ambiguity of these relationships.

Interpreting Rights in Diverse Circumstances

Reproductive rights are implicated in the tension between universal standards and economic, political and cultural diversity that has characterised debates about International Human Rights (IHRs). Formally, the IHRs framework allows space for the local interpretation of how fundamental rights may be best addressed. This approach complements the thinking of human needs theorists and has a basis in advocacy around reproductive rights and in research findings about the everyday aspirations and strategies of women worldwide. However, relatively little attention has been given to processes of interpreting rights by international social policy makers, donors, national governments and service providers.

A growing literature on women's visions and strategies for change supports an ethical core of reproductive and sexual rights and demonstrates how women's groups from different places, with different agendas, have used the language of rights to claim social justice. Although discursive views of rights create space for diverse interpretations of rights, such negotiability can be used to undermine their radicalism. Historically reproductive rights have proved more vulnerable to reversals than other human rights and the various compromises within the ICPD document create space for interpretations inimical to the spirit of the declaration.

Social Justice

Despite the traditional association of rights with claims for social justice, understandings of reproductive rights remain preoccupied with population level statistics and differentiation in relation to biomedical outcomes to the neglect of processes of social and economic differentiation. Reproductive rights have been constructed within international social policy in ways that divert attention from social structural inequalities, power, entitlements and freedom.

Although ostensibly universal in outlook, reproductive rights remain largely addressed to fertility management in the south. This is evident in its selective extension of target clients, its limited reconceptualisation of clients as right-bearers, its policy priorities and its exclusion of issues of international and developed country significance, including most importantly northern immigration policies.

More radical interpretations of rights, including reproductive rights, prioritise questions of social justice, place issues of power centre stage and link local and national reproductive issues with wider social, economic and political including their global dimensions.

Globalised Social Policy Agendas

Consensus around reproductive rights has emerged in the context of an agenda for neoliberal economic reform. Reform strategies, that include health sector reform, have reduced the scope of entitlements to social rights and have tended to see rights largely in terms of needs. Reproductive rights have so far been seen largely in terms of reproductive health needs and health sector reform principles were embedded within the ICPD programme of action.

The insertion of reproductive rights into global social policy discourses has been weak and they have been largely 'enclaved' within reproductive health forums. The broader reform agenda threatens progress on reproductive rights both directly, as health sector reforms undermine universal access to services and shift care burdens back to the household, and indirectly, as adjustment processes undermine livelihoods for some, increasing inequality, and threaten the authority and accountability of national government.

Conclusions

Influencing the meaning and scope of reproductive rights has considerable scope to inform a more radical interpretation of reproductive rights within international social policy. This is a political as well as a social analytical project and is not without risk.

Catherine Locke (c.locke@uea.ac.uk) is a lecturer in Development Studies at UEA and Heather Xiaoquan Zhang (h.zhang@chester.ac.uk) is now a lecturer in Development Studies at Chester University. Please email Catherine for further information including fully referenced project research papers. This project was funded by the UK's Department for International Development but the views expressed and any errors therein remain the authors' responsibility.

Appendix 2

Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction: Social Development Strategies

This briefing paper is one of two summarising the main findings of the Wellbeing, Rights and Reproduction component of the Social Policy Research Programme. This sub-project investigated the problems and possibilities for policy actors of rights-based approaches to reproduction. This briefing paper summarises the implications of our findings for social development strategies, particularly for the potential contributions of social development analysis to inform advocacy and policy action.

Although the consensus on reproductive rights established at the Cairo International Conference for Population and Development (ICPD) has been hailed a landmark, this vision has so far had only limited impact on international social policy approaches to reproductive issues. The anticipated transformation of population and development policy has not been generally forthcoming despite pervasive use of the rights language, some significant reordering and expansion of service priorities, and the greater prominence of reproductive health concerns in wider international forums. There are many reasons for this situation and this paper outlines major outstanding challenges for social development analysis in trying to ensure that the reproductive rights agenda contributes more to improving wellbeing in the future.

Social Analytical Content

The social analytical content of so called rights-based approaches to reproductive health is still remarkably weak. Although some non-traditional client groups are now addressed by reproductive health services, most often 'adolescents' and less often 'men', these groupings remain broadly and often stereotypically defined. Other non-traditional client groups, such as older women, and sub-groups, such as single or widowed women, homeless children, migrants, disabled people, and so on, receive scant attention.

Despite the existence of highly differentiated approaches to understanding reproductive and sexual behaviour, reproductive health policy remains overwhelmingly concerned with categories of biomedical interest. The framing of gender empowerment within reproductive health policy is often reductionist, focusing on education, employment and income-generation without sufficient concern for the nature of these inclusions and what they mean for gender relations. Enabling conditions, particularly those relating to institutional environments that promote rights, are neglected and 'traditional' culture is predominantly seen in terms of obstructing 'modern' reproductive behaviour.

Although there is a widespread commitment to transform client-provider relations these stop short of envisaging rights-bearers influencing the content of policy. The social analytical content of mainstream reproductive rights approaches does not adequately engage with the differentiated nature of reproductive interest, nor does it address the complex and ambiguous power relations around reproductive and sexual relations. Social analysis can do more to inform and support the challenging and political process of using the consensus over rights to ensure that disadvantaged groups claims for wellbeing are effectively articulated.

Insertion into Global Social Policy Debates

The ICPD programme of action is embedded within a neoliberal agenda for health sector reform that threatens progress on reproductive rights directly and indirectly. The World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) subscribed to a contrasting vision for global social policy that emphasised universal social services, social rights and social integration and there have been significant moves towards devising global social principles based on WSSD that could influence multilateral agreements over loans and disbursements.

Although reproductive health gained recognition in the international development targets established at the WSSD, to date, official reproductive rights discourses have remained disconnected from emerging 'social integrationist' perspectives. These perspectives offer considerable scope to highlight processes of social exclusion around reproductive and sexual experiences and to link reproductive rights more effectively to wider agendas for social justice.

In addition, theories of global social policy can be used to infer important arenas for action on reproductive rights outside of the conventional boundaries of population policy. These include the social regulation of capital, the

international redistribution of resources and strengthening of national accountability for social rights within a global framework.

Health services are increasingly privatised and poorly regulated. Multinational companies are centrally involved in the design, production, and supply of essential reproductive technologies and services. International capital's labour practices of international capital often breach reproductive and sexual rights. The trend towards corporate welfarism ties social rights to employment. There has been a growth in sex trafficking and other kinds of exploitative commercial sex work associated with globalisation. Concern for increased donor disbursements for reproductive health neglect to situate reproductive rights within the context of international debt, fail to question donor motivations with respect to reproductive health and overlook the erosion of local governance which increased disbursements may exacerbate.

Despite their apparent universalism, reproductive rights remain addressed to fertility management in the south, denying linkages to unequal international processes and concealing the social context of reproduction in the north. Analysis of exclusion within population policy can link concerns about international inequalities, developed country population policies, both domestic and overseas, with population issues in the south. The issues raised would include concerns around international debt, contributions to development, the balance of power in international policy making, developed country immigration policies and developed country interests in population policy in the south.

Defining Needs?

Rights are a particular form of needs talk and insufficient attention has been paid to the way reproductive rights are interpreted and operationalised by international policy-makers, donors, national governments and non-governmental organisations as a series of administrable wants. The relatively prescriptive uniformity of international policy betrays a lack of concern over local interpretation over the specifics of reproductive rights and needs in different social contexts.

Greater attention needs to be paid to who is in charge of rights talk and to consider the implications of dominant constructions of reproductive needs. Approaches that recognise the cultural specificity of needs whilst strengthening a universal ethical core of rights must develop democratic processes of consultation, negotiation and accountability around social policy. Suggestions to develop monitoring of human rights accountability would strengthen attention to these processes.

We attempted to explore how three contrasting organisations had responded to reproductive rights. The organisations included an international feminist network, an international federation of non-governmental organisations and a bilateral agency. Their various strategies reflected their histories, structures and current politics and were illustrative of a broad range of strategies for engaging with shaping reproductive rights in practice.

International Monitoring

International monitoring of human rights accountability has the potential to build in processes of interpreting rights in specific situations and for specific groups. Monitoring of reproductive rights under the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) offers space for alternative voices to be heard alongside government reports and can accommodate well the connection between reproduction and wellbeing for women.

Although the ICPD forum offers a useful arena for getting agreement around a new vision, the Cairo review process offers a weak form of accountability with no basis in international law. Monitoring of reproductive rights needs to focus centrally on engaging with CEDAW and the challenge will be to strengthen these procedures, their reporting, and to upgrade the profile of specific country reviews in the public domain.

Assessing Reproductive Health

Although there has been some attempt to adapt international health monitoring (coordinated by the World Health Organisation (WHO)) to reflect the new consensus around reproductive rights, global reproductive health monitoring prioritises biomedical health, neglects women and men's subjective wellbeing, their individual freedoms and their collective engagement in shaping social policy.

Despite real methodological difficulties, biomedical data on reproductive health is improving although there is little sign that it is taking on board women and men's 'lived' experiences. Disaggregation of reproductive health data is rarely informed by social analysis of inequalities in health and rights. WHO dismisses policy indicators and indicators of enabling environment as unworkable and sidelines social and economic indicators. Despite review and improvement, WHO indicators for global reproductive health monitoring exclude adolescent reproductive health, any consideration of violence against women or of reproductive tract cancers.

The few attempts to measure reproductive freedoms are piecemeal, often narrowly legalistic and disconnected from women and men's experiences and biomedical outcomes. There is a need for deep review reproductive health

monitoring, to develop indicators that better reflect reproductive health's connections to wellbeing and to improve the ethical basis of reproductive health monitoring.

Assessing Rights and Wellbeing

Assessments of progress with human development have generally neglected rights whilst assessments of human rights frequently neglect positive freedoms. Human rights organisations generally document individual abuses whilst the Freedom House Surveys attempt to evaluate the full range of civil and political freedoms. There has been little methodological progress in making international comparisons of rights using indices or on integrating examination of rights into analyses of wellbeing.

The assessment of reproductive rights has fallen between legal/human rights traditions and medical/public health traditions. Connections between rights and wellbeing have been most effectively explored through nuanced accounts that balance 'lived' experience (agency and consequences of choices) with analysis of (dis)enabling environment, and assessments of bodily wellbeing.

Our case study of Vietnam attempts to go beyond cataloguing abuses and comparing aggregate morbidity statistics to offer a contextualised analysis of select reproductive rights challenges to wellbeing. It brings together an assessment of formal and informal entitlements through legal and social institutions with analysis of population policy and reproductive health services to look at the interests, perspectives and needs of single mothers, abortion and adolescents.

Conclusions

Improving the social analytical content of rights-based approaches to reproduction is central to ensuring that the interpretation, implementation and monitoring of reproductive rights at the international level is better able to raise questions of social justice in an effort to enhance wellbeing.

Catherine Locke (c.locke@uea.ac.uk) is a lecturer at the School of Development Studies, UEA, and Heather Xiaoquan Zhang (h.zhang@chester.ac.uk) is now a lecturer in Development Studies at Chester University. Please email Catherine for further information including fully referenced project research papers. This project was funded by the UK's Department for International Development but the views expressed and any errors therein remain the authors'.