Children in Development

Briefing paper
Pursued by the law: the victimisation of children who offend

Features
Children's rights and international action; child-focused development; child health; street children; eliminating child labour; child prostitution; children in war; the role of aid and child sponsorship programmes

Updates
Women and rural development in India; overview of current developments in Southeast and South Asia

Viewpoint
Playing with population density; Farakka Barrage; NGOs, scientists and the poor
The Network

The Australian Development Studies Network seeks to provide a forum for discussion and debate of development issues, and to keep people in the field up-to-date with developments, events, publications, and so on. The Network does this through its publications programme and by conducting or co-sponsoring seminars, symposia and conferences. The Network produces two regular publications.

Development Bulletin is the Network's quarterly journal. It includes short articles (normally 1,500 to 2,000 words); conference reports; announcements of forthcoming events; details of courses, research and work related to development or development studies; project reports; and information about development education materials, recent publications and other news.

Briefing Papers, published with the Development Bulletin, address a wide variety of development-related issues. They are concise (normally 2,000 to 5,000 words), accessible to the non-technical reader, and may include implications for Australia's overseas development assistance policy.

The Network also publishes books relating to development issues, and a register of expertise in gender and development, the Gender and Development Directory Australia (1995). For a complete list of publications and purchase details, please contact us.

Correspondence

If you have information you wish to share with others in the development field, such as conference announcements or reports, notices of new publications, interesting items from the press, information about the work of your centre or courses you offer, or you wish to respond to articles or Briefing Papers, please write to the Editor.

If you wish to obtain Network publications or enquire about membership, subscriptions, seminar sponsorship, etc., please write to the Network Director. The address is:

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Deadlines

Closing dates for submissions to Development Bulletin are mid-November, mid-February, mid-May and mid-August for the January, April, July and October issues respectively.
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**Briefing paper**

Pursued by the law: The victimisation of children who offend  
*Helen Bayes*
Editors’ notes

This issue of Development Bulletin considers the situation of children in the international development agenda and the possible implications of the Convention on the Rights of the Child for development policy and practice. Fourteen specialists from different disciplines and countries have drawn on their wide-ranging experience to contribute to this discussion. Kathy Sullivan, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Foreign Affairs discusses Australia’s aid programme and children’s rights. We have searched the Internet and recent literature, tapped our Development Studies Network, and reviewed recent conferences to provide you with a variety of facts, figures and opinions on children in development. If you would like to contribute to this debate please contact us.

Briefing paper

In the briefing paper ‘Pursued by the law: the victimisation of children who offend’, Helen Bayes, executive director of the Australian section of Defence for Children International, discusses the need for a humane juvenile justice system which is closely linked to programmes which deal with poverty, family support, education, exploitative child labour, child sexual exploitation and child soldiers.

Viewpoint

Cherry Gertzel comments on the way the Simons Review deals with poverty reduction goals and strategies in the aid programme. Playing with population density figures, Terry Hull comes up with some surprising revelations. Joseph De Vries considers the contribution which NGOs and scientists can make to relieving poverty, and Binayak Ray responds to a field report on Farakka Barrage.

Review of Development Bulletin

We have included in this issue the results of the readership survey of the Development Bulletin. Our thanks to everyone who completed and returned the questionnaire. We are pleased with the results and are now working to incorporate the suggestions made.

Network website

For those of you who have access to the Internet, you can now visit the Network’s new home page. This provides detailed information about our projects, such as this year’s conference, ‘Education for Sustainable Development: Getting it Right’. Our website also includes a Contacts page, which provides hotlinks to other development-related websites. If you are interested in having your contact details included on this list, let us know.

Assistance from AusAID

Without the continuing assistance of AusAID, we would be unable to provide you with the range or depth of information in Development Bulletin or the number of issues each year. Nor would we be able to maintain our membership subscription at the same low rate. Thanks, AusAID.

Network staff

With the New Year we have some staff changes. As mentioned in the previous issue, Rafat Hussain will soon be leaving after four years’ invaluable service. We feel privileged to have had her help for so long and wish for her a very successful and rewarding career. Our team has recently been joined by Mary-Louise Hickey. We are delighted to have her with us.

Pamela Thomas, Sally Rynveld, Lucy Tylman, Mary-Louise Hickey
Discussion series

In all societies the situation of children is a consistent indicator of overall social and economic conditions. Quantitative data including infant and child mortality, the percentage of children completing primary and secondary school, and the numbers of children in the workforce are important components of comparative assessments of global development. For development agencies and international organisations, they have a useful function as the basis for planning development strategies and programmes. However, these data usually mask massive inequalities within societies, particularly the situation of children from the poorest and most powerless communities. The most vulnerable members of society are those most frequently overlooked in the development agenda.

The increasing availability of quantitative and qualitative information on the situation of children and better understanding of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are leading to greater recognition of the need to place children higher on the development agenda. Despite these changes, however, children remain at the margins of development thinking and practice. There is a growing danger that child-focused development will, like women in development, be isolated from mainstream development issues, and that the international conventions, agreements and legislation associated with children’s rights will be used for political advantage rather than to benefit children.

This issue of Development Bulletin illustrates some of the major issues relating to incorporating children in a meaningful way into the social and economic development agenda. It also looks at the ways both national governments and international agencies can collaborate to redress the lack of opportunities children from poor communities have to participate in social and economic development.

A major milestone in achieving more child-focused development has been the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child by 191 governments. The Convention provides a blueprint for future legislative, administrative and development agenda, but as Giersing points out, not all governments have the resources necessary to bring about all the economic, social or cultural rights outlined in the Convention. Furthermore, real change can only come about with changes in social attitudes and ethics, and when child-focused policies and legislation are not only enacted but enforced. Current legislation in many countries continues to disadvantage children. In the briefing paper, Bayes shows how children in conflict with the law may not be defended in court, have no opportunity to appeal, are seldom believed by police or magistrates and frequently receive punitive prison sentences rather than rehabilitation or support services. In other situations, where appropriate legislation has been enacted to protect children, the relevant laws may remain unknown by the justice system or may be deliberately misinterpreted. However, as Thomas indicates, to protect children effectively and provide them with appropriate care and rehabilitation, good legislation must be supported by adequate administrative services and by staff in the justice and welfare services who have been trained in dealing with child victims or child offenders. In the situation of children legally removed from exploitative and hazardous work or from sexual exploitation, the children themselves are often treated by the justice system as though they are the offenders, or are kept in ‘care’ until their cases can be heard in court – often a wait of up to three years.

The recruitment of children as soldiers is perhaps the worst breach of children’s rights. Over a quarter of a million children are known to be currently engaged in armed conflict. Children in Cambodia, Uganda, Liberia, Iran, Iraq, Guatemala and Burma are either forcibly recruited or join the military as volunteers. Both the reasons
for recruiting child soldiers and the long-term impact on society create a vicious
cycle of poverty, inequality and exploitation which no development agenda is
equipped to address. These countries are all signatories of the Convention on the
Rights of the Child.

A clear manifestation of growing inequality and the failure of both social and
economic development policies has been the appearance or rapid increase in the
numbers of street children, including in countries where, ten years ago, their
existence would have been considered unthinkable. Beazley discusses the range
of factors which lead to children living on the streets, and the ways in which they
have developed their own mechanisms for dealing with a hostile social
environment.

McMurray provides background information on the validity of children's health
and survival as measures of economic and social well-being. Booth reviews child
and youth suicide as an indicator of society's ability to successfully manage
development for the benefit of all members of society.

Clearly, putting child-focused development into practice requires greater attention
to the links between economic and social development, and a greater focus on the
less powerful members of society. It also requires that children and young people
are regarded as rightful members of society whose well-being and interests warrant
incorporation into all aspects of the development process. The Convention on the
Rights of the Child is a useful beginning.
Australian Development Studies Network Conference
23 - 25 April 1998  Australian National University  Canberra

Can education reduce poverty?

Who should pay for education?

Education policy - Whose responsibility?

What is the role of overseas aid?

What part can Australia play?

Tertiary versus basic education

Education for Sustainable Development: Getting it Right

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Introduction

This financial year the Australian aid programme will total $1.4 billion. The Howard Government has unambiguously focused this substantial sum on poverty reduction and sustainable development. In tabling the Government's response to the Simons Review on 18 November, the Minister for Foreign Affairs, the Honourable Alexander Downer MP, announced a new objective for the aid programme: 'To advance Australia's national interest by assisting developing countries to reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development'.

This paper outlines the ways in which the Australian Government is implementing its support for human rights, including those of children, through our aid programme.

Children's rights in the aid programme

Australia's aid programme addresses the rights and welfare of children in four main ways:

• development assistance for long-term poverty reduction;
• humanitarian assistance;
• assistance specific to children; and
• international and regional cooperation to address child exploitation.

Development assistance for long-term poverty reduction

Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of poverty. They are therefore accorded high priority in the planning and delivery of Australia's aid. The Coalition Government has specified five priority sectors in the aid programme's approach to poverty reduction, all of which have an impact on children: education, health, infrastructure, rural development and governance. Of these, education and health contribute most directly to the overall protection of children's rights and to future sustainable development.

Education

Every child has a right to education. It is fundamental to a child's capacity to achieve his or her full potential. Australia's aid programme makes a real contribution to the education of children in developing countries, thus helping to remove a major obstacle to economic growth and poverty reduction. Education comprises the largest single category of expenditure in our aid programme. More than $200 million is being spent on education in 1997–98, or 15 per cent of Australia's total official development assistance. Of this amount, approximately $41 million is directed to early childhood, primary and secondary education, including vocational secondary education.

This is a reflection of the Government's new education policy, introduced in 1996, which increased the emphasis on basic education. However, our programme also significantly supports institutional strengthening, distance education and higher education.

Health

Our aid's health programmes emphasise simple, cost-effective methods of prevention and treatment directed at those most in need, especially women and children, with a strong focus on primary health care and disease prevention. AusAID will develop a new health policy in 1998 to ensure that assistance to the health sector remains relevant and effective.

From the 1997–98 allocation of $92 million, priority is being given to reducing child and maternal mortality and morbidity, reproductive health and voluntary family planning, and HIV/AIDS prevention and care.

A good example of AusAID's work is a three year, $12 million project to support maternal and child health which aims to reduce maternal deaths, child morbidity and child mortality in 15 disadvantaged provinces of the Philippines. This project focuses on safe motherhood services, immunisation, control of diarrhoeal diseases, nutrition and health information.

Another important activity, due to start shortly, is the five year Healthy Mothers, Healthy Babies project, which aims to strengthen and support Indonesia's primary health care services for women and children in selected regions. As well as training health care workers in the identification and referral of high risk pregnancies, safe injection practices, and diagnosis and management of childhood illnesses, the project will involve outreach visits at home to newborn babies and their mothers for critical vaccinations and other forms of health support.

Some infrastructure projects and broader health sector spending also benefit children indirectly. It is estimated, for example, that 75 per cent of expenditure on water supply and sanitation activities directly benefits children. Through support for the development of health policy and health management systems, as well as education and training for medical, nursing and other health professionals, Australia's aid increases capacity to deliver effective services. Funding...
Humanitarian assistance

Australia has a long-standing commitment to providing rapid relief for victims of natural disasters and emergencies. When these tragedies occur, children are most vulnerable. Children also comprise a significant proportion of refugees and displaced persons.

Many children therefore benefit from our humanitarian assistance, which takes the form of food, shelter and health services for both refugees and displaced people, as well as for victims of natural disasters. In 1996-97, expenditure on humanitarian assistance exceeded $50 million.

AusAID activities also include clearance of mines and unexploded ordnance, victim rehabilitation, and special protection measures for refugees and victims of war. For example, Australia supported projects in the Great Lakes region aimed at tracing unaccompanied child victims of war and reuniting them with their families where possible. We have also supported projects aimed at providing counselling services to victims of conflict, including child soldiers.

Assistance specific to children

Australia is an active supporter of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) which is primarily concerned with the survival, protection and development of children in developing countries. Australia's core contribution to UNICEF in 1997-98 is $4.4 million.

Tackling child exploitation

The exploitation of children is a complex issue. It has its roots in poverty and lack of education, as well as in cultural factors. The aid programme supports three approaches to exploitation of children: prevention, direct intervention, and advocacy in support of children's rights.

Prevention

Prevention is addressed through activities promoting poverty reduction and sustainable development.

Direct intervention

Direct intervention addresses the needs of vulnerable children and is targeted at three main areas of concern: exploitative child labour, commercial sexual exploitation of children, and trafficking of children. Our direct assistance to exploited children focuses on practical measures which include the rehabilitation of children and the provision of alternative sources of income for their families. For example, the Australian Government is funding a $10.4 million, four year UNICEF project in India which will provide primary education to 900,000 vulnerable children, particularly working children, girls and the urban poor. In the Philippines, AusAID is providing $2.4 million over four years for a project aimed at strengthening institutions engaged in rescuing and protecting exploited child labourers and victims of sexual exploitation and trafficking.

Advocacy

Advocacy work aims to create and increase general awareness of the exploitation of children. For example, since 1994 AusAID has been funding End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking (ECPAT), an NGO which raises community awareness of the sexual exploitation of children.

International and regional cooperation to address the exploitation of children

Australia is committed to international cooperation in addressing the exploitation of children, and has demonstrated its commitment through a wide range of activities.

- In October 1997, Mr Downer signed a Memorandum of Understanding with his counterpart in the Philippines, Mr Domingo Siazon, on joint action to combat child sexual abuse and other serious crimes. This Memorandum sets out areas of cooperation between police and other relevant agencies of both governments, and is a landmark in international action against child sexual exploitation and abuse.

- Australia is one of the few countries in the world to have enacted legislation which allows our legal system to take action against Australians responsible for extraterritorial crimes such as trafficking in children, child sex tourism and child pornography.

- Australia was an active participant in the first World Congress against the Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, which took place in Stockholm in August 1996 and resulted in the Agenda for Action. We are already taking some of the action suggested by it, including the enforcement of extraterritorial laws. The Government is currently coordinating the implementation of other aspects of the Agenda and will report on its progress in the year 2000.

- Australia participated at the Oslo Conference on Child Labour which took place on 27-30 October 1997. Governments of the 40 participating countries adopted the Agenda for Action, which highlights the importance of education, social mobilisation and legislation in tackling child labour.

- Coordination of efforts among Asia-Pacific countries is important in combating exploitation of children in our region. The Australian aid programme therefore supports the Asia-Pacific Forum of National Human Rights
Institutions, which held its second workshop in New Delhi last September. One agenda item was concerned with the prevention of sexual exploitation of children, and participants agreed to exchange information on their relevant laws and practices.

- Australia will be involved in the negotiation of the new International Labour Organisation convention on the most intolerable forms of child labour, which will be discussed in 1998 and is expected to be signed in 1999.

**Conclusion**

The protection and promotion of human rights, including those of children, is a vital component of Australia’s aid programme. To this end, we fund activities through a wide range of bilateral, multilateral and non-government mechanisms. The new aid programme’s stronger focus on poverty reduction and human rights ensures that a range of practical and effective measures are being taken to help protect and promote children’s rights in partner countries.
Children’s rights and the impact of global action

Morten Giersing, Division of Communication, United Nations Children’s Fund

Changing attitudes

In 1946, when the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) was created to help children in the aftermath of World War II, the very idea that children needed special attention was seen as revolutionary. Today, just over 50 years later, the notion that children have special needs has given way to the conviction that they have rights – the same full spectrum of civil, political, social, cultural and economic rights as adults.

This fundamental change in attitude toward children has coincided with a half century of ground-breaking progress for their survival and development, alongside the increasing empowerment of children and young people. Indeed, lasting improvement for children is dependent on a combination of changing attitudes, measurable progress on such issues as health and education, and the participation of children in their own development. The milestones on this road from service delivery to a genuine focus on children’s rights include the Declaration on Children’s Rights in the 1950s, the International Year of the Child in 1979, the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989 and the World Summit for Children in 1990, with children moving up the political and international agenda at every stage.

The 1950s was the decade of the mass health campaign – an era resulting in the eradication of smallpox and yaws. There was, however, a growing realisation that lasting change could occur only when those most affected by that change were an integral part of the process. UN agencies and NGOs began to push for integrated ‘basic services’, with a greater focus on community participation in the 1970s. By the 1980s, this had led to social mobilisation campaigns in support of the Child Survival and Development Revolution, focusing on four low-cost techniques to reduce child mortality and morbidity: growth monitoring, oral rehydration therapy, breastfeeding and immunisation.

As communities, with support from their governments, began to take control of their own development, there was a growing focus on more complex and deeply rooted problems, such as the impact of poverty, exploitation and conflict on children – problems that demanded a rights-based response. First suggested by the Government of Poland during the International Year of the Child in 1979, a convention on the rights of the child would pull together the various provisions on child rights that were at that time scattered through dozens of different international treaties. It would also include one major and radical addition: child participation.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

Adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has now been ratified by 191 governments, making it the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history. Only Somalia and the United States have yet to ratify. The Convention has produced a profound change that is already beginning to have substantive effects on the world’s attitude towards its children. Once a country ratifies, it is obliged in law to undertake all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures to attain the standards outlined in the Convention and to assist parents and other responsible parties in fulfilling their obligations to children. Now, 96 per cent of the world’s children live in states that are legally obligated to protect children’s rights.

The Convention recognises that not all governments have the resources necessary to ensure all economic, social and cultural rights immediately. But it commits them to making those rights a priority. Fulfilling their obligations sometimes requires states to make fundamental changes in national laws, institutions, plans, policies and practices to bring them into line with the principles of the Convention. The first step must be to generate the political will to do this. As the drafters of the Convention recognised, real change in the lives of children will come about only when social attitudes and ethics progressively change to conform to laws and principles. And when, as actors in the process, children themselves know enough about their rights to claim them.

Children’s participation

Children are fast becoming key players in their own empowerment. Politicians have been unable to ignore the growth of children’s organisations, such as the National Street Children’s Movement in Brazil, which played an important part in mobilising support for the inclusion of children’s rights in the country’s new constitution. In the Philippines, young plantation workers are now acting as child labour advocates, spreading the word about the Convention and the dangers of hazardous labour among their workmates. At the child labour conferences in Amsterdam and more recently in Oslo, children themselves stole the limelight, with representatives from youth movements on the platform at Amsterdam, and young journalists from Bangladesh suprising politicians in Oslo with their probing and well-informed questions.

A rights approach to development

The Convention has allowed UNICEF to broaden its own mandate, moving it farther along the path from service
delivery to the rights approach, and we now have the legal means, and the duty, to take action on a whole range of child-rights issues. UNICEF’s support for the development of children’s movements and initiatives has ranged from training for entire organisations on the standards and the spirit of the Convention, to the coordination of an exchange visit for teenage journalists from the United States and Bangladesh. Around the world, teachers, lawyers, police officials, judges and carers are being trained in the principles and the application of the Convention. Inspired by the Convention, Sierra Leone has begun to demobilise child soldiers. In Rwanda, UNICEF, under the aegis of the Convention, has been working to move children held in adult detention centres for alleged war offences to special juvenile institutions, and has hired lawyers to defend them. Reforms, changes and improvements continue around the world.

Ratifying countries are required to report on their progress to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Of the 83 countries whose reports had been reviewed by the Committee by June 1997, 24 had incorporated the principles of the Convention into their constitutions, and the vast majority had passed new laws or amended existing laws to conform to the Convention. Many had also built the Convention into curricula or courses to begin the key process of educating children about their rights.

Setting goals for child-related development

At the same time, countries have been working towards the child-related development goals set at the World Summit for Children in 1990. These goals, contained in the World Summit Declaration and Plan of Action, include reducing infant and child mortality rates by one third, halving maternal mortality rates, along with severe and moderate malnutrition in children under the age of five, and ensuring universal access to basic education, clean water and adequate sanitation.

According to the United Nations Secretary-General’s Mid-Decade Review of Progress for children, there has been dramatic progress on most of the goals in most countries. Three in five countries are now either on track to reach the overall goal of improved child survival by the year 2000, or are well within striking distance. Most countries have reached or even exceeded the goal of 80 per cent immunisation, and polio is on the verge of eradication. Since 1990, an additional 1.5 billion people have begun to consume iodised salt, protecting around 12 million infants each year from the appalling developmental damage caused by iodine deficiency. Over 12,700 hospitals in 114 countries are now havens of protection for breastfeeding and have been officially recognised as ‘baby-friendly’.

Major challenges

However, key challenges remain that may require fundamental changes in attitude and behaviour, as well as prioritised investment of resources. Despite the many successes since the World Summit for Children, more than 12.5 million children under the age of five continue to die each year. Nine million die from causes for which inexpensive solutions and measures such as immunisation and antibiotics have been routinely applied in the industrialised world for 50 years. The number of women dying as a result of pregnancy and childbirth remains appallingly high, and is higher than was thought in 1990. At the time of the Summit, there were an estimated 500,000 maternal deaths each year. It is now believed that the true number is far higher, at around 600,000. The goal of adequate sanitation is also slipping out of reach, with 2.9 billion people without access to adequate waste disposal – 300 million more than in 1990.

The gender gap in basic education is as wide as ever. Of the 140 million children who do not go to school, around 60 per cent are girls. Both these issues of health and education are inextricably linked to the rights of girls and women. The provision of health services and basic education will not solve such problems without extra measures to overcome the discrimination that deprives girls and women of equal access to their most fundamental rights.

Child malnutrition is another major challenge and is the focus of UNICEF’s 1998 edition of The State of the World’s Children. In spite of the commitments made, there has been little progress on child malnutrition since 1990. It is implicated in more than half of all deaths of young children worldwide each year and in the repeated illnesses and stunted development that stops millions more from reaching their full potential. This is not just about food supply; it is about access to nutritious food, proper health services and, of course, care – nutritional care for pregnant women, infants and growing children.

The way forward

The international community has tried over the last decade to arrive at a consensus on the way forward on a number of fronts: on human rights, protection of the environment, reduction of uncontrolled population growth, the elimination of gender inequality and special protection for the most vulnerable children, such as children in conflict, child labourers or children exploited by the commercial sex industry. The avowed aim is sustainable development for all on the basis of social justice and human fulfilment. While survival issues are being addressed, the challenge of ensuring the full development of the child remains. Education may be the key. As well as helping them reach their full potential, good quality education is essential in the fight to protect children from all kinds of exploitation and is an effective channel for measures aimed at their empowerment.

Good intentions are being translated, albeit slowly, into a shift in aid allocations towards social sectors – a trend which is gathering momentum from the 20/20 initiative supported by UNDP, UNESCO, UNFPA, UNICEF, WHO and a host of NGOs. The initiative calls for developing countries to increase government spending on basic social services from the current average of approximately 13 per cent to 20 per cent. Donor
countries are being asked to earmark 20 per cent of official development assistance for such services, including primary health care, nutrition, basic education and safe drinking water supply and sanitation.

As Philip Alston, the Australian child rights lawyer and activist says: 'In the final analysis, appropriate policies will be adopted ... only in response to widespread and insistent public outrage.'

References

Children and the development agenda: The role of UNICEF

**John Williams, Special Representative, UNICEF Australia**

To most of us, the thesis that the physical, mental and emotional growth of children is central to the very purpose of development seems too obvious to merit much further thought—and that is part of the problem. The late Jim Grant, UNICEF’s executive director from 1980–95, knew that healthy and educated children were the key to a society’s future. It followed logically that a society should invest in children as its first priority. Over the years, he remained both amazed and propelled into action by the fact that this almost never happened.

**Recognising children’s needs: Recent history**

The modern focus on children is, historically speaking, a new development, in Western societies at least. As Joan Bel Geddes writes,

> In Europe in the Middle Ages … children lived, worked, played, ate and slept with their parents … From around the seventeenth century, children of wealthy families began to be treated differently, to receive a long period of careful training. And in the eighteenth century, with the introduction of laws making education compulsory, this view of childhood was gradually extended, at least in theory, to all children. Nevertheless, lower-class children still lived in the adult world. In Victorian London and in other cities, many children drank, gambled, were active sexually, worked hard to support themselves, and never saw the inside of a school (Bel Geddes 1997:2).

Slowly the notions of childhood’s special needs began to expand. During the First World War, the Save the Children Fund was established in London to channel aid to children behind the German lines. In the 1920s and 1930s, the refugee and health arms of the League of Nations, in Geneva, developed policies and programmes for children. During and after the Second World War, the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) assisted millions of people in 25 countries, mostly children in Europe. In 1946, UNICEF was established to carry on UNRRA’s work; a few years later, as European recovery consolidated, UNICEF’s mandate became global.

The next three decades saw rapid expansion in the range and quality of organisations devoted to improving the lives of children. As colonialism retreated, UNICEF developed its early programmes in Asia and Latin America, and later in Africa. During this period of growth and experiment, UNICEF inevitably was a small player on the international scene, pushing its way through pilot projects and learning experiences. It lacked the force or the total conviction to propel major change.

But while progress in the recognition of children’s needs had been considerable, children remained, at best, on the margins of most developmental thinking. The old ‘handout the leftovers’ mentality, engendering feelings of superiority and generosity within the donor, at little or no personal cost, remained strong. This mentality is far from dead in Western societies even today, as the publicity of our aid organisations sometimes shows.

**Confused thinking**

Even within serious social development agencies, thinking on the role of children in development was often confused. ‘Children are a nation’s most precious resource’ was UNICEF’s slogan for many years, as if children were on some list of future national income earners, perhaps alongside petroleum products or palm oil. What UNICEF meant, of course, was that a nation’s future would be impoverished if its children were not healthy and educated. But in overlooking the main point—that children are nobody’s resource, but are part of the nation itself—UNICEF missed an opportunity to lead thinking forward.

At the same time, social development was seen as soft and secondary in hard-nosed economic developmental circles. As one of Grant’s deputies, the late Tarzie Vittachi, wrote:

> Since social programmes, by their very nature, are not initially income-generating but income-spending actions, the political will of national leaders, even when they are sincerely motivated to work for the welfare of their children, is under heavy pressure from the dictates of ‘pragmatism’ (UNICEF 1987:106).

To my mind, the problem was even more fundamental. Investment in children was simply not regarded as sufficiently modern or monumental as a demonstration of national progress. Primary education, child nutrition, basic health, helping women overcome oppression were no doubt all seen as worthwhile objectives, but their place was well below that of macroeconomic development. The real stuff was hydroelectric dams, steel mills, transport networks and so forth. If education got a look in, it was technical and tertiary. Propelled by macroeconomic development, the nation would ‘take off’, and soon the benefits would ‘trickle down’ to ordinary people, including children and women.

As we now know, this is not at all what happened much of the time. In many cases, macroeconomic investment was poor quality and inappropriate to the national level of development. At times it produced frightening levels of corruption and environmental damage. At times the immediately impacted...
people not only were not consulted, but were actually dispossessed. And often there was no ‘trickle down’, but only ‘trickle up’ as the rich and powerful grew richer and more powerful.

**Basic services**

Heyward had gradually developed the concept of basic services, incorporating basic health, education and nutrition programmes into an integrated approach for young children. It seems so obvious now, but it was revolutionary in many development circles in the late 1960s to mid-1970s. Others, notably the Nordic development agencies, were thinking along the same lines. Gradually the idea spread that poverty reduction should be the first line of attack. This turned thinking upside down, for of course most of the poor were, and remain, children and women.

During the 1980s, I worked in UNICEF’s headquarters in New York and Geneva, so perhaps I exaggerate UNICEF’s role, but it seems to me that Grant and his team played the pivotal global role in this change insofar as child health was concerned. The emphases on primary education and family planning, however, were for strategic and political reasons much weaker. This was the cause of much internal dissension within UNICEF over a long period of time.

Grant did not want more unending pilot studies and had no time for ‘trickle’ approaches in any direction. He wanted action on child health, he wanted it global and he wanted it now. He decided UNICEF would concentrate on ending the ‘silent emergency’ in which 15 million children died each year of diseases, dehydration and malnutrition. Immunisation, oral rehydration and breastfeeding were central to the Child Survival and Development Revolution.

Further, he insisted that priorities and targets, both at global and country levels, were essential to progress. He based his argument on the belief that modern technology and communications, when combined, marked the first period in human history where benefits could be shared by all. Now that it could be done, he argued, it was morally incumbent on us to do it. During his time, immunisation levels in developing countries soared from about 20 per cent to somewhere around 70 per cent in just five years, while oral rehydration therapy became far more widely used. These two successes alone prevented over three million child deaths annually.

By now UNICEF had moved far from philanthropy and deep into development thinking. *The State of the World’s Children* report developed into UNICEF’s flagship publication, hammering home the themes of child survival and development year after year, with increasing impact and attention from the media worldwide. The key thesis of the 1991 report was the identification of four broad, synergistically related factors in the transition to lower birth rates: ‘Economic progress can assist women’s advancement; women’s advancement helps to reduce child deaths; reduced child deaths help to lower birth rates; lower birth rates help women’s advancement.’ Child-centered social development was not just an add-on, but was at last recognised as a basic building block of progress.

As UNICEF saw it, many of the conceptual problems that hampered the social development agenda were epitomised by the priorities of the World Bank group in Washington. In particular, the International Monetary Fund’s structural adjustment programmes, especially in Africa, were seen as disastrous to social development and therefore to poverty reduction. Led by Richard Jolly, UNICEF opened a strange twilight war, both public and private, with the Bank group of sister organisations within the United Nations system. Interrupted at times by peace conferences and brief truces, the skirmishes continued over several years and many publications.

**Investing in human capital**

At least partly as a result, the Bank itself was changing its rhetoric. Its own research showed that investment in certain areas of social development could be shown to be the most rewarding investment that could be made in economic terms. In *The East Asian miracle*, for example, an analysis of how East Asia had outstripped the rest of the developing world, the Bank argued that ‘[e]ducation policies that focused on primary and secondary schools generated rapid increases in labor force skills’ (World Bank 1993). This, in turn, was a major factor in East Asian growth, which in fact was not miraculous but ‘largely due to superior accumulation of physical and human capital’. The Bank followed a similar line in its 1994 publication *Adjustment in Africa*, in which it reported that the highest payoff in reducing African poverty might be good basic schooling, especially for girls. Educated girls became more economically productive women. They had healthier, better educated children. They had fewer children, too, thus flattening population growth trends and lessening environmental pressure. Combined with better farming, fair prices and improved basic health services, education for girls was a crucial step forward for Africa. From their very different perspectives, UNICEF and the World Bank were approaching the same position, at least in their rhetoric. For what was ‘human capital’ if not healthy and educated young people?

The high point of UNICEF’s advocacy for children on the development agenda came with the 1990 World Summit for Children at the United Nations in New York. Seventy-one heads of state and government, plus some 80 other senior representatives, met to sign the World Declaration on the Survival, Development and Protection of Children and a Plan of Action for implementation by the year 2000. Economic hardliners, such as George Bush and Margaret Thatcher, spoke up for the place of children in development.

Following Grant’s death, Carol Bellamy became UNICEF’s fourth executive director in 1995, in time to lead the organisation through its 50th anniversary the following year. Writing in the 1997 Annual Report, she noted that:
Children’s survival rates in 1996 were twice those of 1946 ... Immunization rates – covering 15 per cent of children or less in many parts of the world just over a decade ago – now average 80 per cent worldwide, and some countries have rates of 90 per cent and higher. In developing countries, approximately 82 per cent of all children old enough for primary school are now enrolled; in most regions, enrolment rates are around 30 percentage points higher than they were in the 1960s (UNICEF 1997:2).

Children’s rights: A global framework

During the 1980s UNICEF had been slow to recognise the potential of the Convention on the Rights of the Child as it was being drawn up in Geneva by a host of national and non-governmental delegations. UNICEF’s arrival on the scene, late as it was, helped to accelerate action on what the United Nations in 1989 voted to declare the first global legal framework for all children everywhere. Once the Convention was in force, however, UNICEF again lapsed into uncertainty. The Convention, as a United Nations act, of course did not belong to UNICEF, and indeed many of its provisions – on child adoption, for example – lay well outside UNICEF’s mandate and areas of expertise.

UNICEF now places particular emphasis on the Convention, which is ratified almost universally, with the embarrassing exception of the United States, home country of both Grant and Bellamy. As Bellamy has written,

The Convention is the unquestioned framework for UNICEF activities ... With the Convention, children’s development is synonymous with the fullest attainment and protection of children’s rights ... The legal impact of the Convention is being felt in many countries. The Convention has helped shape the constitutions of Angola, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Namibia and South Africa, as well as major legislation affecting children in Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Jordan, Nepal and Tunisia. The Convention also propels progress in children’s nutrition, in strengthening local health systems and in efforts to enrol and keep more girls in school (UNICEF 1997:2).

In keeping with the Convention’s comprehensive approach, UNICEF is placing greater emphasis on a broader range of priorities. The 1996 State of the World’s Children report, for example, set out an anti-war agenda, including steps the world could take to protect children from ‘modern’ warfare in which the victims are increasingly children and women. The 1997 report focused on action against exploitative child labour: one quarter of children aged five to 14 in the developing world are believed to work, many full-time and many in hazardous conditions. The battle against sexual exploitation of children has also been joined more decisively by the Bank in recent times.

It is still too early to forecast the long-term global impact of the Convention on children’s place in the development agenda. Critics see it as diluting the crucial focus on basic social development in poorer countries; supporters see it as providing the overall framework essential for development in the next century. Many developing countries are far from able – and some probably are far from willing – to implement all of its basic articles immediately. And powerful groups in some richer countries believe that they need no advice from outside, despite much evidence to the contrary; they know best how to treat their children, thank you very much.

Seen in a broad context, the World Declaration on the Survival, Development and Protection of Children and Plan of Action, and the Convention, are powerful weapons in the fight to raise children higher still on the development agenda. If the trends of the past half century, and especially of the last two decades, are continued, this certainly will happen.

References

Goals agreed upon at the United Nations conferences for selected Basic Social Services for All (BSSA) indicators

Percentage of population with access to health services

- All countries should seek to make primary health care, including reproductive health care, available universally by the end of the current decade (International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)).

- Governments should provide full access to preventive and curative health care to improve the quality of life, especially of the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, in particular women and children (World Summit for Social Development (WSSD)).

- Governments should provide more accessible, affordable primary health care services of high quality, including sexual and reproductive health care (Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW)).

Family planning

- All countries should seek to provide universal access to a full range of safe and reliable family planning methods (ICPD).

Underweight prevalence among preschool children

- By the year 2000, a reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among children under five years of age by half of the 1990 level should be achieved (WSSD and FWCW).

Maternal mortality ratio

- Countries should strive to effect significant reductions in maternal mortality by 2015: a reduction in maternal mortality by one-half of the 1990 levels by the year 2000 and a further one-half by 2015 (ICPD, WSSD and FWCW).

Infant mortality rate

- By the year 2000, a reduction of mortality rates of infants by one-third of 1990 levels should be attained. By 2015, an infant mortality rate below 35 per 1,000 live births should be achieved (ICPD and WSSD).

Under-five mortality rate

- Countries should strive to reduce their under-five mortality rates by one-third or to 70 per 1,000 live births, whichever is less, by the year 2000. By 2015, all countries should aim to achieve an under-5 mortality rate below 45 per 1,000 live births (ICPD and WSSD).

Life expectancy at birth

- By the year 2000, life expectancy of not less than 60 years should be achieved in every country (WSSD).

- Countries should aim to achieve by 2005, a life expectancy at birth greater than 70 years and by 2015 a life expectancy at birth greater than 75 years (ICPD).

School enrolment ratio

- All countries should strive to ensure the complete access to primary school or an equivalent level of education by both girls and boys as quickly as possible, and in any case before 2015. Countries that have achieved the goal of universal primary education are urged to extend education and training and facilitate access to and completion of education at secondary school and higher levels (ICPD, WSSD and FWCW).

- The gender gap in primary and secondary school education should be closed by 2005 (ICPD, WSSD and FWCW).

Adult illiteracy rate

- The adult illiteracy rate should be reduced to at least half its 1990 level, with an emphasis on female literacy (WSSD).

Percentage of population with access to safe water and to sanitation

- Access to safe drinking water in sufficient quantities and proper sanitation for all should be provided (ICPD, WSSD, FWCW and Habitat).

Floor area per person

- The availability of adequate shelter for all should be improved (WSSD and Habitat).

Source: wall chart on Basic Social Services for All 1997, prepared by the United Nations ACC Task Force on BSSA.
One of the difficulties in clarifying what child-focused development means has been the lack of a cohesive framework which puts the different parts of the debate into a common context. Children’s agenda, child focus, mainstreaming child rights, children’s participation, research on children, child indicators, child development, think children, child rights-linked work are some of the terms which have appeared in various documents over the past two years. Each part of the debate addresses a particular issue, such as child rights, children’s participation or research on children, but for the development worker in the field it is not immediately apparent how they are linked in a meaningful way. The danger of such a piecemeal approach is that much of the innovative work may be wasted if it is not integrated and linked to a coherent strategy or vision. Initiatives, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) training kit, work on child indicators or experiments with child participatory research methods are at risk of remaining isolated and of not adding up to a coherent strategy which achieves measurable improvements in children’s lives. A common framework is needed which would allow projects to learn from each other and to achieve synergy at the country programme, regional and global levels. Save the Children Fund’s (SCF) global programme strategy discussions try to achieve just that. Another weakness of the debate has been that the relationship between the children’s agenda on the one hand and the development agendas of environment, gender, poverty and human rights on the other, have not been made sufficiently clear. The main danger is that the children’s agenda and the child rights agenda become isolated from the rest of the development discourse.

A child-focused approach addresses children's needs, child rights and the structural issues which create the conditions in which children live. Child focus primarily requires a change in the perspective of adults. Similar to the way the women's movement and the gender debate changed the way society looks at the division of labour along gender lines and at the relationships between men and women, child focus forces people to become more sensitive to the point of view of children. This change in viewpoint has a number of implications for development programming. A child-focused programme puts children’s concerns before sectoral considerations, advocates child rights, involves children as active participants, collects age- and gender-sensitive data and indicators and adds a new dimension to the development debate.

There is an implicit age and gender bias in the policies generating poverty. Through their choice of priorities these policies create a world which puts certain groups at a disadvantage. If those issues are not addressed as part of tackling the root causes of poverty, children will not fully benefit from the possible effects of policy changes.

Why focus on children?

There are three reasons why policies and practices that ignore the needs, rights and interests of children have a negative impact on society:

• they undermine the future of the community and society;
• they neglect a significant sector of today’s population; and

Table 1: Gender and generation in policy making

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parallels</th>
<th>Differences</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invisible in policy making</td>
<td>Childhood is transitional, not permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not counted in statistics</td>
<td>The empowerment of children is circumscribed by biological immaturity and parental rights</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies made in their ‘best interests’ by others</td>
<td>Boundary between adults and children is less clear than between men and women</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socially-constr ucted</td>
<td>All adults have been children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large social groups but treated as ‘minorities’</td>
<td>Less likely that children will represent their own interests in the absence of a political movement akin to the women’s movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seen as ‘unproductive’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both suffer oppression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both suffer disproportionate costs of adjustment programmes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both denied participation in decision making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects of ignoring them are long-term as well as short-term</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
• they develop interventions that are likely to fail or that will not have the desired outcomes.

At present this is a hypothesis, though a strong one. Relevant evidence does not exist, and planners have not seen the need to look for it. This lack of understanding is analogous to the situation regarding women and society two or three decades ago. Just as a major shift in understanding the position of women in society has led to better policy, planning and real benefits, so the possibility exists that a similar understanding of children and society will bring positive change (see Table 1).

Approaches to child-focused development

Practice, research and influencing

A child-focused programme uses three interconnected approaches to actively promote change:

• developing practical opportunities for poor and disadvantaged children, their families and communities;
• research on the situation of children; and
• influencing and changing people's behaviours, institutional approaches and policies.

Research informs both practical work and influencing activities. Advocacy work should as far as possible be based on practical work experiences with children, families, communities and partner institutions. This will give the influencing work more credibility and depth. Research issues and topics are determined by the demands of practical and advocacy work and should be based on children's interests.

Children's interests

Since children's voices are easily ignored and their interests overlooked, a child-focused development programme has to pay extra attention to the issue of relevance. Crossing the boundaries from practice to advocacy, an agency may get caught up in institutional demands of lobbying and networking, and lose sight of the original purpose of addressing children's concerns.

How?

Child focus is relevant not just for community development, but also for rights work, sectoral work and policy advocacy. To fulfil children's needs and to enable them to claim their rights, development agencies:

• work for the provision or allocation of resources;
• advocate for rights;
• build institutional and individual capacity; and
• influence change in attitudes and behaviour.

Addressing development issues from a child-focused perspective may take different forms depending on the level at which issues are tackled. Child-focused development agencies may work with children, families, communities, institutions and at the policy level. An exclusive focus on the individual child or the family would ignore root causes. Lobbying is informed by experiences at the grassroots level and community-level work is supported through complementary initiatives at higher levels, since influencing is less effective without practical experience and demonstrable results (see Table 2).

Adding a new dimension

A child-focused programme deals with the same issues as other development programmes which address root causes. The difference lies in ensuring that the practice which influences advocacy is in the children's interest. A child-focused programme tries to put children on the development agenda (poverty, credit, environment, etc.) and development issues (i.e., addressing structural causes) on the agenda of conventional child welfare approaches. Such a programme may address gender, poverty, environmental and human rights issues, and it adds age and generation differences as a new dimension to the development discourse. Placing children on the agenda of other debates will result in a shift in perspective and approaches of mainstream development organisations.

Cooperation

Development is a complex process and no agency can be effective in all areas. This means that organisations need to develop specific expertise and competencies in clearly defined areas and need to forge alliances with other agencies to achieve greater impact. In the case of child-focused development this may lead to alliances between organisations which share common long-term aims and agree on a division of responsibilities to maximise their collective effectiveness. Such a process was initiated by the International Save the Children Alliance (ISCA) in 1995. Within ISCA, Rädda Barna (Sweden) takes a child-rights approach, Redd Barna (Norway) is a community development and child focus organisation, while SCF/UK is in the process of becoming a child-focused development agency.

Maintaining child focus

Specific child-focused issues can be identified and addressed without too much difficulty at virtually all levels from child to family, community and institution to policy level. However, the further an organisation moves physically away from children, the more difficult it may become to conceptually maintain a child focus. Issues become more general and less specific to children. Organisations will need to consider a broader set of issues, have to take into account other agendas, forge alliances with other institutions and strike compromises.

Macroeconomic issues and children

Lobbying for change in specific policies such as health, education and protection from exploitation will be relatively easy to connect to child-specific issues. However,
Table 2: Integrating work at different levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Strategies</th>
<th>Impact and results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLOBAL</td>
<td>• Lobby international agreements (Convention on the Rights of the Child, global trade agreements, land mines, baby milk, etc.)</td>
<td>Addressing root causes. Limitations: It takes a long time before children feel the results. Local factors of equitable access and distribution remain untouched by international agreements and policy changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Influence individual donor policies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NATIONAL</td>
<td>• Influence policy framework, strategy and approach (CRC implementation)</td>
<td>alliances partnering linking networking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Influence overall institutional structure (administrative reform – done by major donors, not NGOs)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Influence specific laws</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Influence policies, strategies and resource allocation of other institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCAL</td>
<td>• Influence institutions in their interpretation and practical application of existing laws (e.g. land law, sexual exploitation)</td>
<td>Immediate results for children, but with little effect on root causes Reasons for working at this level: Tangible results (models) Community participation Equity (gender, age, disability, ethnicity) Data: monitoring of trends and learning from experience to inform influencing work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Address issues of access and equity through strengthening of individual (family) access to services and resources within the existing policy framework and through existing institutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Macroeconomic advocacy from a child-focused perspective poses greater challenges as at the macro level there may be little room and limited understanding for a children’s agenda beyond demonstrating the impact of existing policies on children or the need to have age-disaggregated data. At least initially, macro-level influencing may have to be limited to demonstrating the impact of poverty, transition and structural adjustment on children.

Some programmatic implications

**Integrating different agendas**

A child-focused approach integrates children, gender, poverty and environmental agendas into a comprehensive framework. Addressing children’s concerns in the context of gender, poverty and environment will allow agencies to more effectively engage in discussions with other organisations to become more sensitive to children’s issues. The initial emphasis will be on research on children’s lives, children’s participation and the use of age- and gender-sensitive data and indicators. Based on practical experience, children’s issues will be raised wherever possible to increase awareness among staff, partners, beneficiaries, government, NGOs and donors. In this way an age/generation dimension will be added to the development debate. The first signs of success are likely to be that other NGOs will take a closer look at the impact of their work on children. As more and more people and institutions begin to change the way they look at children, new networks and alliances will be formed to promote this movement.

A child-focused approach provides a common programmatic focus across individual project activities.

**Where to begin?**

One of the first questions which a child-focused programme has to answer is: where to begin? Children’s problems are as wide and complex as those of society as a whole. No organisation will be able to work at all levels and address all...
of the problems affecting children’s development. It is, however, imperative to make use of all five elements of a child-focused strategy:

- Project work is based on children’s abilities and needs
- Children are seen in the context of family, community, society (root causes)
- Child rights form the basis for advocacy work on behalf of children
- Children participate actively in all aspects of project work
- Child indicators and data is disaggregated by age and gender

Children’s participation or age-sensitive data taken in isolation and added to a mainstream development programme do not make a child-focused programme. On the other hand, any new approach requires time to learn, and a more gradual shift towards a child-focused development approach could be to choose one or two elements of child-focused development for each project or programme. Experiences would be shared and over time all work would become fully child-focused. Such a division of labour could also be applied across different country programmes or across agencies. In SCF’s Southeast Asia country programmes, for example, the Philippines could take the lead role on children’s participation in child rights advocacy, the Vietnam programme could take the initiative in developing child-participatory methods to appraisals and reviews, and the China programme could spearhead work on age- and gender-sensitive data. Systematically sharing and exchanging experiences on a regular basis will be essential for developing effective child-focused programmes.

*This paper was extracted from Theis, J. 1996, Child-focused development: An introduction, SEAPRO Documentation Series, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Regional Office, Briefing Paper No.2, Save the Children, and is reproduced with permission.
The psychological and emotional impact of the HIV epidemic on children

Elizabeth Reid, United Nations Development Programme, New York

It is difficult to comprehend this epidemic. There is a growing number of countries where approximately 20 per cent or more of people over the age of 12 are infected, and where, after a decade or so of relative dormancy, more and more people are dying. Even people who live in these societies find the epidemic difficult to come to terms with: difficult to understand what is happening and difficult to learn how to live with it.

How can the epidemic be conceptualised so as to be more understandable? In many ways it is similar to the low intensity warfare waged in Mozambique, Angola, and elsewhere. In this kind of warfare, deliberate and systematic violence is deployed to terrorise whole populations. Derek Summerfield characterises such warfare as follows:

Population, not territory, is the target, and through terror the aim is to penetrate into homes, families, and the entire fabric of grassroots social relations, producing demoralisation and paralysis. To this end, terror is sown not just randomly, but also through the targeted assaults on health workers, teachers, and cooperative leaders: those whose work symbolises shared values and aspirations. Torture, mutilation, and summary execution in front of family members have become routine (1997:58).

This is the same way in which the HIV epidemic strikes at the heart of societies. It produces virtually the same feel, has the same targets, and the same impact as low intensity warfare. The HIV virus does not strike randomly, but no-one knows where or when it will next appear. It rarely attacks singly but infiltrates in clusters. Eighty per cent of affected families have more than one member infected with HIV, usually both husband and wife, and often a number of children. In many affected families, three generations of women are infected. It penetrates homes, families, communities and workplaces. It terrorises whole populations.

It undermines intimacy, love, moral and bodily integrity, respect and trust, unravelling the fabric of interpersonal relations and social cohesion in its wake. It produces demoralisation and fear as people fail to find ways to speak about it or to react and protect themselves. The resulting personal, social, cultural and economic dislocation will continue for generations after a moratorium on its spread has been reached.

It is this quality of the epidemic – its seemingly senseless, unpredictable and violent assault on our bodies and lives – which paralyses and traumatises: individually, interpersonally and socially.

Children and the HIV epidemic

The psychological and emotional aspects of the epidemic are seriously affecting growing numbers of children. Data are not kept on affected families. However, well over four million women have died of AIDS since the beginning of the epidemic and well over 12 million more are infected with HIV, the vast majority of them from non-OECD countries. Most of these women have husbands or regular partners who are also infected or dead: the estimates range between 70 and 90 per cent. Most of these women have children. Thus about 16 million families have already been touched by the epidemic, or approximately 40 to 65 million children. Already over ten million children under the age of 15 have lost a mother or both parents to AIDS.

But the trauma of this epidemic enters a family before death, when one of its members finds out that he or she is infected. Often this is a woman. When infants are clinically diagnosed with AIDS, it is the mother rather than the parents who is told and who is herself assumed to be infected. It may be someone wanting to study overseas – in Australia, for example – or to join the military, or to do something else for which HIV testing is mandatory.

Most people in the world who are infected do not know their infection status. They may have harboured the thought, they may fear that they are infected or the thought may never have crossed their mind. However, most people outside of OECD countries do not have access to voluntary testing and counselling services. Thus, other than those diagnosed when they or their children are sick in hospital, most people diagnosed with HIV who are asymptomatic and well have undergone mandatory HIV testing, with all its brutality of non-consent and disclosure and lack of follow-up services.

Children begin to feel the effects as soon as it is known, rumoured or suspected that someone in the family is infected. They fear the unknown or unspoken, feel ignorant about what may happen, are afraid about their own infection status, concerned about their futures and, beyond all, they experience loss: the anticipation of loss, the experience of loss, the accumulation of losses, as more and more of their family and their extended family fall sick or die.

This trauma is not just limited to affected families. Even in families as yet not directly touched, children may be suffering similar fears and uncertainties, especially in societies where the numbers of people infected and dying are increasing.

January 1998
HIV-traumatised children

Little work has been done on the psychological and emotional impact of the epidemic on children. Stories bring insights.

One 13 year old head of a family of six children in rural Uganda, including three boys who have begun to refuse to help out, saying that ‘work is for girls, boys play soccer’, talks of the envy she feels of other children who have parents or elders to guide and advise them. Some children in Blantyre, Malawi, where over 33 per cent of pregnant women are infected, lean against the palings around the restaurants watching people eat and then push through plastic bags asking for the leftovers. One grandmother in rural Tanzania who has been left with the children of all her children watched one little girl sit, day in, day out, on the edge of the compound, rocking back and forth on her heels, refusing to eat, talk or move. She left the other children to care for themselves and went to sit with her arm around her, knowing that unless she could reach her and nourish the will to live, it would not matter if there was food or not to eat: the little girl would die. Abandoned girls around Lake Victoria in Kenya are more likely to be taken into someone else’s home. They are put to work as household help and often used as prostitutes at night. Abandoned boys are considered to be too great an economic liability and are left to fend for themselves.

These stories give us glimpses of the psycho-social impact of the epidemic on individual children or families of children, but whole communities and societies of children are beginning to be affected in ways we are barely beginning to understand.

If there is some basis to the analogy between the epidemic and low intensity or other forms of warfare directed at civilian populations, then the literature on the psycho-social effects of conflict on children may be relevant. Research has shown that war-traumatised children in any culture have similar emotional and behavioural responses:

- Pre-school children may show frequent or continuous crying, clinging, dependent behaviour, bed-wetting and loss of bowel control, thumb and finger sucking, frequent nightmares and night terrors, as well as unusual fear of actual or imagined objects. They may regress to an earlier developmental stage.

- Children of early school age can have these features too and be overtly unhappy, nervous, restless, irritable, and fearful. There may be self-stimulation such as rocking or head-banging. They may not want to eat, or they may have physical complaints — headache, dizziness, abdominal pains — with a psychosomatic basis. They too can regress to behaviour appropriate to a much younger child, in some cases to prolonged muteness or to bedbound incontinence as if they were babies. They frequently have particular fears: of being left alone in a room or sleeping alone, or of situations which carry some reminder of the traumatic events they have witnessed.

The social behaviour of traumatised children can be markedly affected, some becoming extremely withdrawn and mistrustful, others loud and aggressive. They may have learning problems (Summerfield 1997:65).

Summerfield concludes by saying that war can have an all-pervading impact on child development, on the experience of human relations, moral norms, and basic attitudes to life. So too can the HIV epidemic.

Children in seriously HIV-affected communities are experiencing the terror of its unpredictable, relentless and accumulating death toll, feeling its social demoralisation and paralysis, are silenced by the silence that characterises its advance. Most of them know that one of their parents brought the virus into their family through behaviour that is often socially unaccepted and religiously forbidden. This can cause strong emotional reactions and can have an adverse effect on the children’s sexual and social development.

Many children in these families are placing themselves in, or being forced into, situations where they too might become infected. The National AIDS Secretariat of Malawi estimates that one in five primary school children will contract HIV in the next five years. Eighty per cent of these will be girls. In one study of rural adolescent girls in this country, 55 per cent said they are often forced to have sex.

Increasingly families are becoming headed by children, a phenomenon unknown until now. In the past, wars or illness mostly wiped out only one adult or else took the whole family. Those few families left without adults to guide and care for them in the past could be absorbed into the extended family or the community. This epidemic is leaving in its wake growing numbers of families of children unprepared to fend for themselves, held together by their love for each other.

How are these children giving a meaning to what is happening to them and around them? What do we know about how to respond?

Psycho-social trauma and development

To date, little attention has been given to the development of policies and programmes to address the psychological and emotional impact of the epidemic on children. Yet increasing numbers of children are being drawn into its vortex.

People who have been diagnosed as infected while well and who have had the courage to work for the changes which would help to protect others have broken the paralysis and the silence of the epidemic. Many of them individually have thought about the future of their children and attempted to work out ways to safeguard them. However, their strategies are usually focused on education and training rather than emotional and psychological support: placing them early in school, training in skills for income generation, setting up trust funds or looking for scholarships or benefactors.
The issue is only rarely raised collectively, perhaps because it is so difficult to see a way forward. The demand of HIV-infected people in developing countries for access to antiviral treatments, a demand unlikely to be widely or equitably met in their lifetimes, has taken their attention away from this concern.

Communities are beginning to recognise the need to address the trauma. Some women in an extremely poor neighbourhood in Lusaka, Zambia, decided that what these children most needed was the feeling that someone cared about what happened to them, that there was someone that they could turn to for help and guidance, someone to ask how their day went and to sit them on their lap: "By helping these children, we are also helping our own children for we want our children to know that in helping others lies the only hope for the future".

Soon nations will be forced to ask how the trauma and the pain of these children can be eased, for there can be no national development without their participation in economic production and social and biological reproduction. But if these children's sexual and social development has been arrested, if their experience of interpersonal and family relations is of death and abandonment, if moral norms and social values have not been instilled and nourished, what sort of lives will they be leading, what will they understand by development? What social and governance institutions and relations will these traumatised generations create?

Reference

Supporting transformational development through child sponsorship

Heather Elliott, World Vision Australia

Essential to the ability of development agencies to respond to the aspirations of poor people is the need to raise funds from donors. Agencies have traditionaWy sought to link these two partners in the development process – the poor and donors – through child sponsorship. Yet child sponsorship is often caricatured as being short-term, top-down, paternalistic charity which makes the poor dependent on external agencies.

Over the last 45 years the nature of sponsorship has changed dramatically, mirroring the learning of development agencies as they have come to better understand the processes which cause and sustain poverty. As we have become more effective in tackling these processes, so the impact of individual sponsors' donations has been significantly amplified – beyond changing an individual child’s life to bringing hope to whole communities.

Transformational development is the methodology through which communities reinvigorate their land, create new sources of income, or secure their first safe drinking water. Child sponsorship adds a child focus to this process, lifting children from anonymity and vulnerability to recognition as channels of change for their communities. It opens new doors for community participation and provides a flexible source of long-term development funding. The unique partnership of child sponsorship also allows donors in developed countries to share in the achievements of communities as they transform their own contexts.

Keeping children at the heart of development

Where the needs of children are neglected – for example, when exploitative labour damages a child’s early years or health – their future prospects as individuals, family members and citizens are diminished. Lost educational opportunities are a result of divorcing economic development from children’s needs, and the education and nutrition of girls impact on such fundamental indicators as population growth and mortality. Recognition of such issues has led the World Bank (often seen as the arch-proponent of the economic growth model of development) to initiate projects addressing children’s issues.

In the decade following World War II, World Vision was typical of humanitarian agencies that saw child sponsorship as a simple, effective way to assist children orphaned or at risk from conflict or poverty. US journalist Bob Pierce visited China in 1947-48, was challenged to pledge $5 a month to support one little girl in an orphanage, and encouraged friends back home to do likewise. By 1966, this simple model had grown into an international programme of people committing regular amounts to cover the cost of housing, feeding and educating over 22,000 orphans in schools or orphanages across 19 countries.

The institutional approach made sense as conflicts in Korea, Vietnam and parts of Africa led to increasing numbers of homeless and orphaned children. It was also relatively easy to administer through established local partners, and allowed clear accountability as to where donors’ money was spent. At a time when many developing countries were emphasising education as essential to economic progress, it was also producing highly visible ‘success stories’: sponsored children graduating to become doctors, teachers and engineers.

An understanding of the weaknesses of this approach began emerging in the early 1970s. Children were getting a new start in life, but the communities they came from remained in poverty; polluted water or poor nutrition led to children dying before they were old enough to attend a sponsorship institution; and progress in education did not necessarily solve unemployment. In 1974 there was a shift of focus: community improvements (e.g. sanitation) would parallel benefits to sponsored children and families.

However, it became increasingly clear that rather than grafting the traditional sponsorship model onto a community-based approach, World Vision should firmly shift to utilising most funds raised through sponsorship for child-focused community development. Since the late 1980s, the Area Development Programme (ADP) approach (which will eventually embrace all sponsorship-funded projects) has been empowering communities across geographical areas to pool their skills to tackle shared concerns, and enhancing World Vision’s understanding of the ‘macro’ contexts of project communities. This offers sponsors an even wider window onto the development process.

Funding long-term development

Child sponsorship funding has become the bedrock upon which most of World Vision’s development programmes rest. Its reliability enables us to commit to working long-term with needy communities.

ADPs are set up to operate in a given district over a period of 10–15 years. This longer time frame, often needed in order to bring about lasting impact, can give communities more scope to set their own agendas, and freedom to experiment with
new approaches to seemingly intractable problems. It also makes it more worthwhile for us to invest substantial human or financial resources. In contrast, projects funded through government grants or major corporate sponsors are usually between three and five years’ duration, and the type of funding has tended to determine the projects’ character and focus – such as specified inputs in health or agriculture.

Detailed adherence to original goals, monitoring and audit methods required by large or government donors, may limit a project’s flexibility, and a large donor’s power can sometimes act as a negative constraint on communities’ ability to act. Sponsors have their requirements, but it is generally more possible for uses of the funding to be negotiated.

**The Phulbani ADP in Central Orissa, India, assists 49 tribal communities who had historically been uprooted from their land and cultural values. After over a year of building up these people’s trust, in late 1992 World Vision staff saw a whole community gather for the first time to talk about how they saw their village. Two weeks later they met again to draw their ‘dream map’: clean surroundings, new bridge and road, credit union and loans, pre-school, a central drain, good health, compost pits, electricity, community hall, shop, toilets, bullocks, clean water and tube-well. By late 1996, the sponsorship of over 1,000 children in this area had enabled these villagers to achieve nearly all of the elements of their dream map – and more.**

**Transforming donors**

Where child sponsorship is undertaken responsibly, it provides a quality of relationship between donor and community which is unique. The average donor’s sponsorship period is seven years – and this allows donors to take special interest in the processes taking place in communities, and to be challenged by information discussing causes of poverty and the importance of sustainable, participatory development.

Few would dispute that sponsorship involves some degree of emotional bond, a sense of concern for an individual child, a belief that in the enormity of world poverty, committing a few dollars a month might at least help someone break free. Such understandable emotions are strengths of sponsorship, and do not necessarily equate to paternalism, guilt or patronising handouts. Where paternalistic attitudes do exist, a sponsorship agency that is committed to development education is well-placed to address them by consistently encouraging donors to consider the long-term aspirations of the poor.

Traditional methods for the public to assist the poor, whether buying clothes in charity shops or putting change in envelopes received in the letter-box, rarely offer feedback on the use of donors’ money. Child sponsorship offers a longer term and more personal link.

During the 1990s, child sponsorship’s fundamentally positive message – that through one child donors could help a community help itself – became critically important for international NGO aid as so-called ‘compassion fatigue’ affected public response to emergency relief appeals. Child sponsorship continues to account for a sizeable proportion of private contributions to NGOs.

**Empowering communities**

Child sponsorship provides avenues for greater community participation and ownership, especially where communities administer the whole sponsorship process themselves. Community members are normally the ones to select which children will be sponsored, on the criteria that they be from the poorest participating families, but the way to achieve this differs from place to place. In one village in Trach tong commune, Cambodia, each family with children under 13 could select one of their children to be sponsored; later, when more sponsors became available, all families with suitably aged children could select a second child to be sponsored.

Interventions chosen are very much part of the communities’ own agendas for development, and where sponsored children still receive some direct benefits, rather than creating inequalities these can actually be levellers – enabling children, for example, to receive nutritional supplements, or to join their peers at school where previously they had stayed at home. Special interventions, such as hospital treatment for sick children, are sanctioned by the community.

**Funded by the sponsorship of over 3,000 local children, the Mehel Meda ADP works in partnership with 23 rural peasant associations and an urban dwellers’ association in Northern Shoa zone, Ethiopia. Interventions are based around needs identified, prioritised and validated by community-level discussions, structured interviews with households, Participatory Rural Appraisal and annual joint evaluations by the community, local government representatives and World Vision staff.** Community delegates undergo leadership training to serve on committees coordinating and monitoring all programmes, including sponsorship. In 1990, agency staff were forced to leave the area for one year during intense government rebel conflict. They returned to find that the community had protected the project compound and resources from looting, and had continued with the forestry activities, nurturing and planting 950,000 seedlings. The farmers explained that the project was for the community benefit and needed to be preserved.

**As the number of children being sponsored increases, World Vision project staff have to develop more effective ways of monitoring programme impacts on child health, education and family income, and to establish new baselines. Having**
administrative functions like taking children's photographs and delivering sponsors' mail performed as close to the grassroots as possible reduces the burden on staff time. It is also an opportunity to build local capacity in planning and resource management, so that the project eventually becomes self-directing and administratively self-sufficient in dealing with all stakeholders.

**Putting a face on development aid: Partnership between people**

Child sponsorship is more personal, not only for the donors but also for many poor communities. People assisted by the Phulbani ADP in India, for example, were encouraged to build a partnership with a 'community' of donors. World Vision Cambodia reports that while foreigners opposed to sponsorship may consider it paternalistic, Asians tend to think in terms of family, and of family members being part of an organic whole. Very extensive family ties in Khmer society, with implicit benefits and responsibilities, perhaps make it easier for Khmers than for Westerners to accept someone they have never met taking a benevolent interest in them—in fact, this may be easier to understand and accept than a single large donation from a faceless entity.

Some people in Phnom Penh claim that child sponsorship may cause village people to look down on their country or want to migrate overseas, but we have not heard this from the village people. Participation and ownership makes dependency unlikely. Agencies might provide funding, and sometimes food-for-work to free people from daily income-earning so they can contribute to a community project such as digging a well, but most changes in their villages have come about through their own efforts. Sponsorship also motivates development: some villagers showed interest in adult literacy classes only when they began receiving letters (translated into Khmer) from their sponsors, and wanted to be able to read them themselves.

**Mobilising advocacy**

Child sponsorship confers on development agencies a responsibility to defend and promote the interests of children. Flexible and secure sponsorship funding has allowed World Vision to tailor many sponsorship projects to protect and empower children at particular risk—such as disabled children, children in bonded labour, children traumatised by conflict, or children in danger of being sold into the sex industry.

An emphasis on children heightens the agency's responsibility to be a vocal advocate for the rights of children internationally—to campaign against child exploitation, promote high standards of child protection and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and provide recommendations to governments on children's issues. Through coalitions of aid agencies, we are able to bring our expertise in children and development to the widest possible audience.

We have also witnessed the strengthening of civil society as project communities have been prompted by their sponsorship involvement to take up children's advocacy issues.

* This article is based on a forthcoming report to be published by World Vision UK. Its authorship is collaborative—the work of staff in Brazil, Cambodia, Ethiopia, India and the UK, among others. It was abridged and adapted for Development Bulletin by Heather Elliott, researcher in World Vision Australia's Public Affairs Bureau. For the full published report of the same title, contact:

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Endnote

1 Reflections on the child sponsorship experience, and more detailed case studies in the full report, were provided by Siddhartha Sahu (India) and Getacheu Michael (Ethiopia).
Child labour and the rights of the child

Sharon Bessell, Politics Department, Monash University

Children are variously seen as recipients, beneficiaries or victims of the processes of development, but rarely are they identified as participants. Working children present a direct challenge to this assumption. Through their labour, both paid and unpaid, children contribute to the family economy and are active members of their societies. In some cases, children support themselves. Their labour is, however, undercounted and is often excluded from censuses and labour force surveys. It is seldom fully valued and often illegal. The invisible nature of child labour makes working children difficult to reach and places them in situations of enormous vulnerability. This vulnerability is exacerbated by children's still developing physical, psychological and emotional capabilities and their relatively powerless positions in social hierarchies. The abuse and exploitation suffered by many have been well documented, but the existing body of literature, although growing, gives us only fleeting glimpses into the lives of working children.

Policies remain underdeveloped and uncoordinated. With the emergence of forceful anti-child labour campaigns in recent years, debate has erupted about appropriate policy responses. Should the aim be the abolition of all forms of child labour? Should trade sanctions be used to force recalcitrant governments to comply with international standards? Or should the aim be to protect working children? Do children have the right to work? Deep divisions over these questions have threatened to hinder practical efforts to intervene in the lives of working children. The many vested interests that benefit from the existence of a pool of cheap and relatively submissive labour constitute another dimension to the 'child labour problem'. Many employers overtly flaunt the law, while others are unaware that legislation exists. Labour inspectors often turn a blind eye to the employment of children, and governments are generally loathe to acknowledge the extent of the problem.

In a global environment characterised by entrenched poverty and increasing disparities between rich and poor, work will remain a feature of many children's lives. Prohibition alone will not end child labour. While the goal of abolishing full-time work for children is one that we should pursue, we must also find effective ways of assisting and protecting children who continue to work. In this paper, I draw on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) to explore the ways in which human rights can be used as a framework for policy and programmes. If appropriate responses are to be developed, it is necessary to move away from an exclusive focus on the phenomenon of 'child labour' to an emphasis on the needs and interests of working children. A rights-based approach is a useful means of facilitating this shift. This does not imply the use of rights talk to legitimise the exploitation of children. Rather, it calls for approaches that ensure that the best interests of the child are paramount.

Defining child labour, differentiating responses

The internationally recognised minimum age for employment, based on ILO Convention 138, is 15 years. Children may begin light work at the age of 13 years. Entry to employment in hazardous work is delayed until 18 years. In developing countries, the lower age of 14 years, and 12 for light work, may be initially adopted. In international and national debates, achieving consensus on an age-based definition has raised difficulties, but has proven considerably easier than identifying precisely what forms of work are unacceptable for children. Debates have often been paralysed by appeals to cultural relativism. The Indonesian Government, for example, has argued that child labour in that country is carried out primarily in the tradition of mutual cooperation (gotong royong), whereby children have a duty to assist their parents. According to the Government, this form of work is benign or has educative and social benefits for children. There has been a strong reluctance to acknowledge the many environments in which children's work is exploitative or dangerous, or is carried out beyond the family or local community. In contrast, some anti-child labour campaigners in the developed world have called for the abolition of all forms of paid employment. The focus of attention on the export sector has, on occasion, failed to recognise that alternative forms of work in the informal sector may be even more egregious and are extremely difficult to monitor or regulate.

Appropriate responses to the phenomenon of child labour need to recognise and respond to the significant differences between the types of work that children perform. Rather than attempting to provide a global definition of what comprises child labour, it is more useful to see the range of children's work as lying along a continuum. This continuum ranges from the least controversial activities which are carried out in safe conditions for a limited number of hours, through to the most extreme and savage forms of exploitation, such as bonded labour and trafficking, that are in effect forms of slavery. Between these two extremes lies a wide range of children's work. While few people would object to children performing tasks at the former end of the continuum, the latter extreme must be universally condemned - for both adults and children.

Policy makers and activists may need to challenge their own assumptions about where various forms of work fall along this continuum. For example, consider the following scenario: two 12 year old children work, and both make an important contribution to the family economy. While both have finished
primary school, secondary school is an expense that is beyond their families' reach. Isyana is employed in a small factory that produces goods for export. Budi sells newspapers. We would generally assume that the child in the factory is exposed to greater danger and should be removed from that environment, while newspaper delivery is a more acceptable means for a child to earn pocket money. But what if Isyana's main task is to pack candy into boxes, and does not involve contact with machinery. Isyana is paid low but regular wages, and will be promoted to the mixing section in a year or two. In contrast, Budi works outdoors in all weathers in a busy, polluted city, dodging between cars, buses and motorbikes. The risk of injury or death is high, pay is low and uncertain. Should Isyana be expelled from work, or is it preferable to explore ways of providing informal education, limiting hours, and improving occupational health and safety standards? Should Budi be abandoned by child labour policies and interventions, because the activities performed are assumed to be more appropriate than factory work? Appropriate responses must be based on an understanding of the specific problems presented by particular forms of work.

The age of the children involved is a central factor in shaping policies. For example, a 13 year old who has been outside the education system for several years, or has never attended school, is unlikely to be best served by demands that he or she returns to the classroom. This is particularly the case when education is of a very low standard and is seen by both child and parents to be irrelevant. Efforts to provide informal education in or near the workplace are likely to be better equipped to meet children's needs. In contrast, a child under the age of ten is far more likely to reintegrate successfully into school, as long as financial and social support is available. In most countries, school is not the panacea for child labour. In some instances the inaccessibility, expense and seeming irrelevance of school is part of the problem. Educational planners and donor governments need to pay far greater attention to ways in which primary education can be made not only free to all, but also accessible and attractive.

Ending extreme forms of child labour

Article 32 of the UNCRC relates directly to child labour and states that parties are obliged to ensure that children are 'protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development'. The UNCRC also guarantees protection from sexual exploitation, sale, trafficking and abduction, and all forms of abuse. While the Convention does not prohibit all forms of work, it aims to ensure that children are not involved in labour that is highly deleterious.

In seeking to abolish particular forms of child labour, it is the most damaging manifestations, located at the extreme end of the continuum described above, that must receive priority. Forms of slavery, bondage, forced labour and child prostitution are issues on which there is little room for debate. Advocates of children's rights must demand measures to remove children from such environments immediately. Complementary, rehabilitative measures are necessary if children are not to fall back into abusive situations. Similarly, situations that expose children to high risk, such as mining, construction, domestic service, work with dangerous machinery or hazardous chemicals, must be approached from an abolitionist perspective and with a sense of urgency (Bequele and Myers 1995).

As we approach the 21st century, we are faced with the tragic reality that labour dominates the lives of many children. Moreover, most have little alternative. Factors such as macroeconomic policies that fail the poor, entrenched poverty, gender discrimination and distributive injustice - both nationally and globally - all militate against the elimination of child labour in the foreseeable future. But even if all forms of child labour could be eradicated in the next ten years, a task that would be almost impossible to achieve, tens or perhaps hundreds of millions of children would already have passed through the ranks of 'child labourers' without support or protection. Consequently, for those children who will inevitably continue to work, measures to intervene positively in their lives are vital.

Identifying working children's rights

The UNCRC guarantees the child's right to education (Article 28), leisure and recreation (Article 31), and health services (Article 24). Rights-based strategies to support working children should aim to incorporate each of these principles. The provision of informal education and health care, improvements in occupational health and safety standards, limitations on working hours, and wages that are commensurate with the work performed, all have the potential to improve the lives of working children. If this is to be achieved, it is vital that governments acknowledge the existence of working children, that they are enumerated as accurately as possible in censuses and surveys, and that efforts are undertaken to characterise their work and assess their needs. Consequently, blanket legislation that essentially prohibits all forms of employment for children may actually prevent the provision of services and protection. In some cases, governments have used legislation to define away child labour or to justify the absence of complementary strategies of intervention. What are needed are comprehensive policy approaches that move beyond a relatively narrow legalistic approach.

If we use the UNCRC as a guide, it is important that responses to child labour include the views of working children wherever possible. Article 12(1) states that 'the child who is capable of forming his or her own views has the right to express those views freely in all matters affecting the child, the views of the child being given due weight in accordance with the age and maturity of the child'. Article 12 does not give children the right to form policy, but it does demand that they are given the opportunity to inform policy makers on issues that impact on their lives. It is striking that debates on child labour have
rarely included the views of working children themselves. From a rights perspective, the inclusion of children’s own views about their work and lives is a fundamental principle. The rights to freedom of expression and association (Articles 13 and 15 of the UNCRC) must be invoked to give children an opportunity to participate in decisions that impact on them. In December 1996, the first international meeting of working children was held in Kandupur, India. The meeting clearly demonstrated that working children are quite capable of articulating their problems and needs when given the opportunity. During the meeting, a young girl said, ’For many years people have struggled to redress our situation, to find a solution to the problem of children’s work. No one has succeeded so far. Why not? Because they took decisions without consulting us. Now if you want the problem to be solved you must consult the children.’ This is indeed food for thought for policy makers, activists and researchers alike.

Conclusion

Demands for the abolition of all forms of child labour run the risk of making working children even more invisible as they are pushed out of regulated sectors of the economy into activities where it is impossible to provide services or protection. Yet, as Michael Freeman has cogently argued, ‘when children had the “right” to work ... they suffered’ (Freeman 1992:36). Where does this contradiction leave us?

Responses to child labour must be multifaceted and must place children at the centre. This involves measures to identify and eradicate forms of child labour that are by their very nature exploitative and hazardous, complemented by strategies to support children who are removed from such environments. Parallel efforts to promote and protect the rights of children who continue to work are also necessary if working children are not to be abandoned in the drive to eliminate child labour at all costs.

National governments must adopt and apply comprehensive policies designed to protect the rights of children and secure their best interests. Such policies should include:

- legislation prohibiting some forms of work and strictly regulating others
- monitoring and enforcement of legislation
- a focus on all sectors in which children are employed
- service provision, particularly education and health care
- the promotion of and commitment to children’s rights
- improvements in the quality, accessibility and relevance of formal education
- increased budgets for formal and quality informal education
- the enumeration of children’s work in censuses, labour force and household surveys.

Governments in developing countries are unlikely to be able to provide the resources necessary to implement a comprehensive policy. Indeed, many may be unwilling to do so without support and encouragement from the international community. Consequently, there is a need to identify working children as a priority target group within development cooperation programmes. The incorporation of child impact statements into the aid process, analogous to those relating to gender and the environment, is one important means by which working children can be made visible and supported. Impact statements are also vital to ensure that children are not neglected or even worse, harmed, by development cooperation programmes. Non-government organisations already play a vital role in providing services to working children and lobbying governments. In many cases they are better placed than governments to reach children. Financial and institutional support for NGOs that are engaged in positive and often innovative projects for working children is an important aspect of official policy responses.

Child labour is a human rights and development issue that has been neglected for far too long. The issue is now finally on the international agenda, and it is vital that children themselves are the beneficiaries of increased concern. The UNCRC, which has now been ratified by all but two nations, provides a useful guide to ensure that children’s rights and interests underpin efforts to deal with children’s work and child labour.

References


January 1998
Eliminating child labour: Some issues for project planning

Pamela Thomas, Australian Development Studies Network

Child labour today

It is estimated that in the world today there are around 250 million children between the ages of five and 14 years who are working. At least 120 million of them work full-time. International Labour Organisation (ILO) figures indicate that some 40 per cent of children in Africa, and 20 per cent of all children in Asia and Latin America are in the labour force. In numerical terms, most of the world's working children live in Asia (ILO 1997:3). Although in Thailand, Bangladesh and Indonesia the percentage of children working in exploitative labour has gone down, and school enrolments and the length of time children remain in school have gone up, the actual number of child labourers is increasing.

One of the most disturbing aspects of child labour is that of commercial sexual exploitation, accompanied in some situations by the sale and trafficking of children on both national and international sex markets. Although firm data are impossible to obtain, ILO and NGOs working with child labourers and children in the sex trade indicate that over the last ten years commercial sexual exploitation of children has increased considerably. This is likely to be exacerbated by the recent economic collapse of some Asian countries, as case studies suggest that most of these children come from poor communities.

While it is recognised that children in most societies engage in some form of work, most particularly farm and household work, many children are in work that is illegal, and mentally and physically hazardous. Child labour, as defined by ILO, is that type of work that:

... deprives children of their childhood and their dignity, which hampers their access to education and the acquisition of skills, and which is performed under conditions harmful to their health and their development (ILO 1997:2).

Child work, in contrast, is that which is occasional, legal and light and which respects rights to health and education (Table 1). The ILO Minimum Age Convention No.138 requires that UN member states take measures for the effective elimination of child labour. It sets the basic minimum age for employment at 15 years, and specifies that no child under 18 is to engage in hazardous work. For developing countries, the Convention allows some flexibility on lower age limits and types of work legally allowed. This has resulted in considerable variation around the world (see Chart). ILO is currently preparing a new convention on the most intolerable forms of child labour, of which the commercial sexual exploitation of children is one. At the national level, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) is supporting projects to eliminate child labour in a number of developing countries. UNICEF and national and international NGOs are also becoming increasingly involved in addressing the issue of child labour.

Table 1: Differences between child labour and child work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child work</th>
<th>Child labour</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Light, safe work</td>
<td>Heavy, hazardous work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect of rights to health and education</td>
<td>Deprivation of rights to health and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasional work</td>
<td>Constant work often for long hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>Illegal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF Philippines, 1997

Addressing child labour

Greater national and international recognition is now being given to the need to address the number of children who work full-time in exploitative situations. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as two recent international conferences, the Stockholm Congress on Commercial Exploitation of Children held in October 1996 and the International Conference on Child Labour, in Oslo, October 1997, have developed strategies for action aimed at eliminating child labour and for removing and rehabilitating those children who are already in the labour market. These include:

- enactment and enforcement of appropriate legislation;
- mobilisation of public support to prevent the exploitation of children;
- changing cultural values and perceptions regarding the role and value of children; and
- establishing income generating activities.

Planning projects to eliminate child labour

The experience to date in Bangladesh, Thailand and the Philippines of projects designed to alleviate and eventually eliminate child labour indicates that considerable progress can be made in implementing all three strategies, but that prevention is a long-term process, and that addressing a major cause of the problem – poverty – is particularly difficult. Designing, implementing and evaluating child labour projects have a number of inherent difficulties, not least the short-term nature of most project planning and funding cycles and the very long-term nature of effectively addressing the problem of child labour.
Assessing the problem

Child labour projects require a more flexible approach to planning, implementation and budgeting than is usual. A major initial difficulty is that the size and severity of the problem is often unknown. Accurate data collection is almost impossible, particularly with regard to children working in the sex trade. If the size and scope of the problem is uncertain, it is difficult to set goals and objectives other than those that deal with assessing the scope of the problem. In some countries child labour is seen as the norm, and in many there is insufficient infrastructure to allow efficient inspection of factories, small businesses, or other places of work to enable some indication of the size of the problem. Collecting accurate data on the number of children in full-time agricultural work or those working in individual households is almost impossible. However, considerable progress can be made. In the Philippines, for example, the trade unions and workers’ cooperatives are assisting in documenting and masterlisting child labourers, and the Department of Labour and Employment have designed a survey form which will provide standardised national data. An effective media campaign has enlisted support from the public to report suspected cases of child labour.

Multiple goals

Unlike most development projects, those dealing with child labour have a number of major components. Not only must they try to assess the size and scope of the problem, but they must attempt to prevent it, while at the same time dealing with an existing situation by removing children from exploitative situations and providing care, livelihood, counselling and, in many cases, psychosocial therapy. Few countries have the infrastructure or the resources to do all three, particularly when the successful implementation of one component generates much greater demand for services than those planned for in another component. The need for services is usually much greater than the project, the province or the country can provide.

Of necessity, most projects aim to deal, at least initially, with only the worst cases of abuse.

Some issues of implementation

Enacting and enforcing legislation

A first step for most child labour projects has been enacting appropriate legislation to ensure that children are not only protected from abusive and exploitative work, but that the process of the law is appropriate for dealing with children. Few legal systems anywhere in the world are 'child friendly', and in many the legal system very seriously exacerbates an already traumatic situation for children. In cases where an employer has been prosecuted, it is common for the children involved to be rescued from the job and kept in care until the court case is heard, as the children are required to appear in court. When it takes up to three years for the case to be heard, as happens often, the situation becomes untenable – for the children, for their parents who often rely on the children’s earnings, and for the under-resourced organisation running the children’s home or hostel. As sometimes happens in cases involving child victims of abuse in Australia, the legal system can further victimise the innocent party. Projects like those in the Philippines must ensure that those working in the legal system have special training in how to deal with child-related cases and, if possible, advocate for a core of officers who deal specifically with child-related cases. More women in the legal system, including in the police and in the judiciary, would help.

The law not only needs to be protective of children and in keeping with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, but it also needs to be in keeping with perceived cultural values. More important, it needs to be enforceable. Enforcing the law not only requires a community and a police force that will report and inspect violations, but it also requires a legal system and a judiciary that treats infringements seriously and is prepared to prosecute. In the case of new legislation, or legislation that the judiciary does not consider important or appropriate, a considerable component of a child labour project may have to be devoted to providing relevant information on the new laws and their interpretation to the legal system, the judiciary and law schools.

Removing children from exploitative and dangerous occupations

Most child labour projects include activities for removing children from exploitative situations and providing counselling and rehabilitation. Few developing countries have the resources to provide appropriate institutional care, including health and educational services, and trauma counselling, which is a necessity in cases of sexual exploitation. Existing services are overcrowded and under-staffed, making it difficult to provide educational or therapeutic activities for children in care. Only very few staff have professional skills in counselling or therapy. Children often see institutional care as a form of punishment or imprisonment rather than an attempt to help them. It is particularly difficult to provide appropriate institutional care for children who have been sexually exploited, as their requirements are very different from those of other child labourers. Most children’s homes or hostels for child labourers are unwilling to accept children who have been involved in the sex trade, as these children have become so traumatised that they are disruptive. This is a ‘catch 22’ situation – projects aim to remove children from exploitative situations, but once removed or 'rescued', there are few services available to help them, and many return to their previous work. Police and other services involved in investigating child exploitation cases often have no option but to issue a warning to employers and to leave children in employment. The situation highlights the need for governments and NGOs, with donor support where necessary, to put in place adequate services to deal with the most severe cases of exploitation, particularly in situations where children are very young and need to be in care for some years.
As global experience with child labour projects increases, it is becoming clear that different strategies are required for dealing with child labourers and with those children in the commercial sex trade. UNICEF, for example, is reviewing its experience with child labour projects and is now developing specific project components for each group.

Providing family income

The major single cause of child labour and sexual exploitation of children is poverty, and successful child labour projects focus not only on the geographical areas where children are working, but the areas they have come from. Although parents are often aware of the negative impact of work on children's lives, and many would like their children to be at school, survival is the family's first priority. Unless family livelihood can be addressed, child labour will continue. Discussions with families of child labourers highlight their deep concern at children being removed from work without any income substitution. Income-generating activities, including micro-credit schemes undertaken as a component of child labour projects in Bangladesh, Thailand and the Philippines, have been successful in providing families and women's groups with a small but regular income which, in some cases, has allowed children to stop working or to reduce their working hours and to attend school.

Providing education for child labourers

A widely held belief that parents of child labourers do not see any value in educating their children has not been borne out by my own research in Pakistan, Thailand and the Philippines, or by the work of UNICEF. Many parents of child labourers aspire to educating their children but are unable to meet the cost of uniforms, pencils or writing books. Some child labour projects, particularly those implemented by NGOs, incorporate this type of support. However, in the areas from which a high proportion of child labour is drawn, both the quantity and quality of education is poor and drop-out rates are high. The curriculum does not equip children for employment of any kind. In poor rural areas, the reality is that there are few high school places available and most children are forced to leave school at 12 or 13 years. It is not surprising, therefore, that there are relatively large numbers of children under the age of 15 years working full time. It is only one generation ago that there were 14 year old Australians in the full-time workforce.

Conclusions

The experience to date indicates that the worst forms of exploitative child labour can be reduced and may, in future, be largely prevented. It is unlikely, however, that child labour will be totally eliminated while national and international economic disparities remain so polarised and children remain at the bottom of the development agenda. While international conventions, conferences and legislation have raised awareness of the situation of children, there is a long way to go before children will be the first to benefit from development activities rather than the last, and the last to suffer from inequitable global economic policies, rather than the first.

Development projects that aim to address the inequities of exploitative child labour also need to address national political, social and economic inequities. The time scale for these projects must of necessity be long-term. Flexibility is needed in setting project goals and developing objectives. The project must ensure that there are the resources and the management capacity to operate simultaneously in a variety of diverse geographical locations, with different government and non-government sectors, and to integrate and oversee a variety of very different activities. It can be done.

References

Legal minimum ages for different types of work, in selected countries

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Photo: UNICEF/93-0024/Murray-Lee

The State of the World’s Children 1997
UNICEF

January 1998
Images of young children being exploited have coloured many people’s perceptions of the lives of Thai children. These images, however, have been created in part by dubious reports from international organisations and NGOs claiming the situation of child labour, including child prostitution, is deteriorating. They argue that urbanisation has resulted in increasing numbers of children leaving their villages to work in the factories fuelling the Thai economy and the brothels satisfying the desires of sex tourists who believe younger prostitutes are HIV/AIDS free.

Despite the improvements that have taken place, child labour is still a problem in Thailand and exploitative forms of child labour do exist. Horrifying reports appear in the Thai and international media and during 1996, the year that I carried out my research, I witnessed cases that were clearly exploitative. Nonetheless, questions can be asked of some current reporting of and reactions to the situation of children in Thailand.

The image of the exploited child is true for some Thai children but it is not true for most working Thai children. The situation of child labour is improving as more children stay in education, and stay for longer.

This article highlights some of the dubious reports and demonstrates improvements in recent years with examples from Khon Kaen, the province with which I am most familiar.

Ban Thai products?

The issue of child exploitation in Thailand has not gone unnoticed. An Internet campaign, ‘Don’t!Buy!Thai!’ is pressuring the Thai government to tackle the problem. This campaign is predominantly aimed at attacking child prostitution, one form of child labour, but also attacks child labour in general.

The ‘Don’t!Buy!Thai!’ campaign has created strong feelings. The Thai government has responded (Internet site A). arguing that the attacks represent double standards since the sexual exploitation of children also occurs in other countries. It argues further that not only does the campaign not recognise the Thai government’s efforts in countering the sexual exploitation of children but also the campaign reinforces very offensive, damaging, and untrue stereotypes about Thai women and girls.

A response by Thai students (Internet site B) is far more direct in their counterattack. They question the accuracy of the claims, labelling the campaign racist. They are offended at the assertion that there are 200,000 child sex slaves in Thailand and that Thais tolerate this situation. Nor do they agree that child exploitation is so ingrained in the lives of the people of Thailand that selling children into prostitution has become part of their culture.

Kader: An example of child labour exploitation?

In May 1993 the world’s worst factory fire took place near Bangkok. One hundred and eighty-eight workers died while working at the Kader toy factory. Many of those killed were women and girls including, according to some reports, many who were around 13 years of age. Survivors reported locked doors and barred windows prevented many of the victims from escaping. An internet article by ‘Don’t!Buy!Thai!’ titled ‘Terror in toyland’ claimed that:

The toy companies have embraced the Far East sweatshops for the same reason as other industries: there is an enormous supply of semi-slave laborers, including legions of poor and ignorant women and young girls, who will work for grotesquely low wages in disgusting and extremely dangerous conditions (Internet site C).

The statements that many of those who died were around the age of 13 and that the doors were locked and the windows were barred create the image that the factory was dependent on child labour and that they were working against their will.

This fire was clearly a disaster for those involved as well as their families. However, it is not so clear that the event was a case of child labour exploitation as portrayed by the reports. Determining what actually happened at this factory is not easy.

Reports in the papers indicated confusion as bodies were discovered. The body count reached 225 at one point, with the Interior Ministry putting the unofficial death toll at 240. This final figure was 188. Reports from survivors indicated that students were employed during their summer holidays. A 16 year old girl recovering from injuries received during the fire said that many students approached the factory for work during the summer holidays. This was because they were paid 125 baht per day, equal to the salary paid to long-term employees.

Other reports reveal a very different picture. Data collected by government offices and those from Thai NGO sources indicated that 188 people did die. Of these there were two girls aged 14 and five aged 15. There were no reports of girls aged 13 injured or killed as a result of the fire.
The case of the Kader factory fire indicates the dangers of accepting at face value reports of child labour. Reality is far more complex. Yes, there were under-aged workers. It is likely that these young workers lied about their age to gain employment as they were attracted by the wages and conditions the company was offering.

So what is the extent of child labour?

Child labour is a serious issue in Thailand. Bad cases of exploitation do exist, with children working long hours for low pay, but these are the exception. The figure of 315,700 child workers in Thailand in 1995, based on the National Statistical Office (NSO) Labour Force Survey, is a concern. Yet, the 1984 figure was over one million. There is a very positive trend of a declining child labour population and this must be emphasised.

The number of child labourers in Thailand, based on NSO data, has been declining since 1988. In 1988 there were over 988,000 children aged between 13 and 14 in the paid workforce. That same year over 189,000 children aged 11 to 12 were working. By 1995 the number of working children aged 13 to 14 had declined to over 315,000 (Figure 1). Unfortunately, there is no 1995 data on children aged 11 to 12.
Education and child labour

The decline in child labour numbers in Thailand has been matched by dramatic changes in school enrolment rates. Children are staying on in education longer. An example from Khon Kaen province illustrates changes in education enrolments (Figure 2).

Previously, the majority of children only finished primary school but now most finish junior high school. Figure 2 shows this dramatic shift in education enrolments. In 1988 only slightly more than 30 per cent of students completed primary school and continued onto the first year of high school. By 1996, 98 per cent of students who had completed primary school had progressed to the next year.

Figure 3 illustrates the changes that have taken place in Khon Kaen in a 12 year period. The graph indicates that in 1984 Year 6 was the standard for the majority of children. When they finished this level they dropped out of school. By 1996, however, the standard had shifted to Year 9.

Changing attitudes to education

Increasing school enrolments have been matched by changing attitudes towards education. In interviews, respondents stressed the importance of education. Parents who had limited education were trying to ensure that their children gained a proper education. For these people, education is seen as a key to access to new opportunities in the rapidly changing Thai society. More importantly, it was a matter of security to ensure that their children did not face the hardships that they themselves faced:

I wanted to study a lot but there was no one who would pay for me. There was no money. I wanted to study but no one would pay. As soon as I had my child I have tried to ensure that the child would study. I want her to be better off than me, I don’t want her to face difficulties like us. I have tried to let her study as much as possible (Owner of a fruit shop, Khon Kaen, 9 October 1996).

Teachers that I interviewed were aware of the dramatic changes to the lives of children. They were seeing the increasing numbers of students each year entering their schools. The following discussion with Rot, a Khon Kaen high school teacher, typifies many of the teachers’ comments about the changes to education:

Simon: In the five years that you have been here have you seen a changing attitude of the villagers concerning the importance of education?

Rot: Yes, before the kids would only finish Year 6 and they would go and work, this was difficult work and they were being exploited. Now they think that if they study further they will not be exploited. The views on education I feel are better as the villagers are sending...
their children to study more and more. They are saying when you finish Year 9 your wage is lower than those who have finished Year 12. They are thus sending their kids to study until Year 12. Whatever the family, if they have money they will send their children to school.

Simon: Five years ago was there a thought that Year 6 was enough?

Rot: Yes, it was but today you have to study until Year 12. Further the villagers want to have all these material goods. These things have entered the family, such as TVs, fridges and motorbikes. The villagers today, they believe that these things are necessary for their lives. If they have an opportunity to send their children to study Year 9 or Year 12 they will send them to school. They believe that their kids, once they finish, will be able to get more money and thus will be able to help their families in the future. From agriculture these days there are no real benefits so it is better to send their kids to work elsewhere so that they can send money back. This is a reason why the villagers are wanting their children to study more. To summarise it is the truth, the way the villagers are perceiving education has improved. They understand that if their kids study as much as possible they will not be exploited and they will understand social change much better (Teacher at a Khon Kaen high school, 9 November 1996).

Conclusion

Many aspects of Thai society are being transformed in recent years. One of the most important developments has been the improvements in the lives of Thai children. Resulting from fertility declines, improvements in health and gains in education, today Thai children are fewer (as a proportion of the total population), healthier and better educated than any other time. The status of the Thai child, the amount of time they spend in school and in work, are being revolutionised. Like the youth in developed nations, Thai children are spending less time in employment and a greater proportion of their lives in educational institutions.

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Homeless street children in Yogyakarta, Indonesia

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An increasingly familiar sight in Indonesia is the number of children living and working on the streets and in other public places. This paper gives a brief overview of homeless street children's experiences in the city of Yogyakarta, Indonesia. It describes street children in Indonesian society as a subculture, with specific values, ideologies, hierarchies and behaviour patterns. This is followed by a discussion on the ways in which the children's lives, experiences, attitudes, and income earning opportunities are socially and spatially structured on the street.

Victims of 'progress': Street children in Indonesian development

Street children's lives cannot be fully explained without first understanding the way in which they are treated by the state and mainstream society. In Indonesia, the existence of street children is partly as a result of the New Order's economic growth strategy. Based on an ideology of modernisation of Indonesian society, key words in the state's ideological discourse are pembangunan (development) and kemajuan (progress). Through this economic strategy, the state is responsible for creating a social order that accepts extreme marginalisation to support their system of economic development. Poverty is often the reason that children first drift on to the streets, in order to find alternative sources of income for their impoverished families.

Financial hardship, however, is not the only reason children start living on the streets. There are a complex range of factors to explain the phenomenon: violence and physical abuse at home, pressure to do well at school, absent/separated parents, the influence of friends and the attraction of street children's subcultures. These subcultures have been created by children in response to their social marginality, and within them the children have created their own values, language, hierarchies, identities and attitudes as a way of forming an impenetrable community. In Yogyakarta, the street boys call themselves tekyan, from sithik ning lumayan (just a little but enough) (Beazley and Berman 1997). The tekyan subculture is a form of resistance to and solution for the problems children face in a world which is hostile to their very existence.

Who are they?

The majority of children who are visible and working on the streets are boys, aged 7–18. There are also girls living on the streets, aged 12–18, although street girls are neither as prolific in numbers nor as visible as the boys. This is because they do not engage in the same income earning activities as the boys (shoeshining, busking, selling water or sweets, parking cars, scavenging and begging). Girls' invisibility can further be understood in terms of the official discourse on sexuality, which has been termed as 'state ibuism' (Suryakusuma 1991), an ideology which emphasises the 'traditional' role of women as mothers and housewives. The girl child is socialised to stay at home and do domestic chores, learning to be the 'ideal girl' (Walkerdine 1990), unlike boys who are free to roam the streets from an early age. 'Invisibility' is also a necessary survival strategy for girls in a violent and male-dominated street world, where girls on the street are regarded with suspicion by mainstream society. The girls usually survive on the streets by being looked after by their 'boyfriend', and boyfriends are their principle form of income and protection.

Social and spatial apartheid

As in most countries, Indonesian street children are both spatially and socially oppressed by state and society, and portrayed as a 'problem' which needs to be solved. Economic growth and the increase of an urban middle class in Indonesia have been paralleled by the expansion of a modern consumer culture, with elite control through ideological discourse formulating the expected norms of city life. This ideological control has extended to public spaces in a way that has been described by White (1996:39), as 'spatial apartheid based upon socio-economic status'. The street has been transformed by new notions of consumption which demand stricter regulation of street behaviour (White 1996:41–4). Public spaces such as shopping malls have been socially constructed as commercial or leisure space, and the new middle class does not want to be confronted by poverty and homeless children when they go shopping.

Children living and working in such spaces are, therefore, considered to be undesirable and 'out of place' by these new social groups. The children are seen as a type of failure, and the nation does not want an image of a group of human 'failures'. Their very presence contradicts the state's desired image of a developing, modern metropolitan city which it wishes to portray, not least to visiting foreign dignitaries and potential foreign investors. Within the context of economic policy, street children are perceived to be a threat to national development, by both the state and a dominant section of society which accepts, and wishes to enforce, the government's ideological framework.

Physical repression

Street policing is increasingly oriented toward 'cleaning up the streets' of young hoodlums and thugs, to make invisible the rabbled rubble of late capitalist economics (White 1996:44).
The children's activities are suppressed by agencies of the state attempting to restrict the spaces in which they can operate, and they are frequently evicted from both public and private places. Police are responsible for confiscating and destroying street children's forms of livelihood (musical instruments and goods to sell), for verbal abuse, severe custodial beatings, torture and other mistreatment which street children frequently report they receive.

When I was busking at the traffic lights one night, I was chased by the police, maybe it was an unlucky time for me again, I was arrested and taken to the police station. When I was there I was put in with mad people and asked all kinds of stuff... then that policeman beat me up. Then I was kept for one night and the next day I was released and reminded not to busk at the traffic lights because it spoils the view, since I was arrested I have always been very careful when busking at the traffic lights in case the police have another cleanup operation (Iwan, 15: Jejat 1993:4).³

**Geographies of resistance: Mobile subcultures**

Street children are not passive victims. They adopt various strategies of resistance to the marginalisation imposed on them by state and society, by occupying multiple and shifting sites around the city, and by employing an expansive range of survival strategies across diverse spatial relations. Street children's relationships with different places and their use of geographical spaces are therefore complex and multilayered, and their activities and behaviour patterns change radically over time in response to their changing environment. Such adaptations are part of their survival.

Nobody knows how many street children there are in Indonesia. Estimates range considerably, from the states' official position of none, through to 200,000 (Berman 1994:18). One reason they are hard to count is that they are constantly on the move, either around the city, or from city to city. The train station is the entry and exit point for most street children in Yogyakarta, and high mobility by train via Java's extensive railway system is a noticeable behavioural aspect of the street kid subculture. Foucault (1984:239) talks of how the railroads can be seen as an aspect of the relations of space and power, and says they can also provoke resistances and create familiarity between people. In this way, the children's use of the railways can be viewed as an instrument of power, and their high mobility as a geography of resistance, as the railways are a way of avoiding state authorities' control. Street kids in Yogyakarta travel on goods trains which they call the *keneta api gratis* (the free train), which depart regularly. The railways are also used by the children as a way of communicating with other street children in other cities and of spreading the subculture.

**Urban niches**

Street children all over the world move on the fringes of spaces with other purposes, and in Yogyakarta the children's social marginality is reflected in the marginality of the places they occupy, in the context of work, leisure, friendships, and other street associations. The children busk at traffic lights, bus stops, the sides of roads and rail tracks; they hang out on the street, outside a public toilet or in the city park; they sleep in shop doorways, behind walls and hidden in trees. The children have appropriated these spaces for their own use, and the public spaces where access is not rigidly controlled have become their own territories, their urban survival niches, where they can earn money, obtain food, find enjoyment and sleep.

For example, Malioboro is the main street in Yogyakarta, and with its craft markets, food stalls, shops and prevalence of tourists, it is where many of the city's street children sleep, work and play. Malioboro has a specific type of atmosphere, unlike anywhere else in Java, and is a place where the street children community finds its identity. At the food stalls along Malioboro, people sit, chat and eat and listen to street musicians serenade them, until the early hours. The children earn money by going up and down Malioboro at night, offering to shine the shoes of people eating at the many food stalls, or to serenade them with a song. If the *penyakit* (the 'disease') or police are not around, they beg or sing at the traffic lights. In the daytime they wait at bus stops with their guitars and singing songs on board the buses, jumping off after a couple of stops. At night, when the children want to relax in between working they go and hang around outside the public toilet on Malioboro. The toilet is a space which has been appropriated by the Malioboro street kid subculture, and is the place that brings all the children together from their various activities in the city. It is a ritual centre for meeting, relaxing, drinking and *nongkrong*, or 'hanging out' at night.

**Conclusion**

Street children are marginalised and stigmatised by rigid laws and social attitudes, and claim and share those spaces in the city which are available. These spaces are important for empowering progressive alliances between the children and for creating a common identity in opposition to oppression. The territories such as the public toilet, bus stops, traffic lights and shop doorways are 'alternative spaces' and sites of interaction for street children. They are the children's own produced urban niches, spaces in which they can form alternative subcultural communities; spaces for establishing and maintaining solidarity within their groups, as a tactic to help them feel as though they are in charge of their own lives, and that they 'belong' and 'exist' in a world which would rather they did not.

*January 1998*
Endnotes

1 Homeless children are those who live, work and spend the majority of their time on the streets, and who have very little, if any, contact with their families. I use the term 'homeless' although this 'type' of street child is often referred to in academic literature as children of the street, while children on the street are children who still live at home but work on the street during the day and go home most nights (Balanan 1989:160).

2 Indonesia's 'New Order' is the name given to the regime headed by President Suharto, who has been in power since a coup in 1965. The 'New Order' stands for social, cultural, economic and political change, distinct from the 'Old Order' of President Sukarno (1945–65).

3 Jejal is an acronym of Jerit Jalan, meaning 'Shrieks from the street', and is a magazine written by street kids from all over Indonesia, compiled and published (unedited) by an NGO in Yogyakarta, Humana (GIRLI).

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Jejal 1993, Yayasan Humana, Yogyakarta.
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Children’s health and survival as measures of economic and social well-being

Christine McMurray, Graduate Studies in Demography, Australian National University

Children are among the most vulnerable members of any society. Throughout their infancy and childhood - indeed, even before birth - their growth and development is determined by the quality of their environment and living conditions.

Gestation duration and birth weight are affected by the host of economic and social factors which influence a mother’s health and her ability to nurture a foetus. Her nutrition, her workload, her access to antenatal care and her personal choices, such as whether she smokes tobacco, takes narcotics or drinks alcohol, all affect the unborn child's physical development in utero and its chances of remaining there for a full term. At the end of the gestation period, a child's chances of surviving the trauma of birth are strongly influenced by the place where its mother chooses to give birth, the knowledge and skills of the birth attendants and the facilities available at the place of birth. In some cases the child's survival may depend on whether or not the mother receives any assistance at delivery at all.

In the succeeding months, newborns are totally dependent on the care given to them by their mother and by the people around them. They need appropriate nutrition, shelter, hygiene and a safe environment. While most children become mobile during their second year of life, they need supervision and someone to provide the basic life essentials for a much longer period. Although there are instances of street children as young as three or four years surviving alone, in most societies throughout the world children remain largely dependent on parents or guardians, at least until puberty.

The dependence of children means that their health and welfare can provide a sensitive indicator of the economic and social well-being of the society around them. This indicator changes according to the child’s life cycle stage. The child’s gestation period is largely a reflection of maternal health, but survival rates at delivery are largely a reflection of the quality of health services available. The health and survival of infants reflect both economic conditions and the quality of health services in their community, and these factors continue to be important throughout childhood and adolescence. Other factors which become increasingly important as the child progresses towards adolescence are its parents’ education levels and personal economic circumstances, as well as factors such as culture and social attitudes.

Infant mortality as a measure of development

The vulnerability and sensitivity of very young children to economic and social conditions is becoming increasingly recognised by those concerned with the measurement of economic and social progress. In particular, it is now widely recognised that per capita income statistics may mask important details about economic and social well-being. The infant mortality rate (IMR) is now often used as a country-level indicator to compare levels of economic and social development, in addition to economic indicators such as per capita income. It is a simple and easily understood measure, which probably largely explains its popularity, and it has proved a fairly robust indicator of relative economic and social conditions.

Although in general terms there tends to be a negative association between the IMR and per capita GNP, not all countries have diverted the benefits of their higher income to population welfare. For example, according to UNICEF’s 1996 State of the World’s Children report, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya’s 1993 GNP per capita of US$5,310 was almost four times that of Papua New Guinea, but its IMR in 1994 was only three deaths lower at 64 per thousand live births. This indicates relatively little progress in human welfare in Libya, despite its wealth. Similarly Gabon’s per capita GNP of US$4,960 compares with only US$630 in Côte d’Ivoire, but its IMR was actually one death higher at 91. By investing heavily in health and welfare services, Cuba, with a per capita GNP of only US$1,170, has achieved an IMR of only nine. This compares very favourably with much richer nations like the United States, whose IMR is eight (per capita GNP US$24,740), and Belgium (US$21,650).

For a number of reasons, however, reported IMRs may give only a general indication of relative well-being, and may not be very accurate. In less developed countries, many infant deaths go unrecorded by registration systems, and unreported in surveys because people are reluctant to speak of such events. Moreover, because mortality is a relatively infrequent event even in societies with high infant mortality, large samples are needed to derive representative estimates. It is therefore important to know the basis of an estimate in order to determine its level of precision. In some developing countries, many births occur outside hospitals. In such places, IMRs based on large surveys, where interviewers are able to win the confidence of respondents and collect comprehensive birth histories, tend to be more reliable than those based on vital registration or health service statistics. IMRs tend to be most reliable in the most developed countries, and least reliable in the poorest.

The risk of a child dying tends to diminish rapidly in the months following birth and throughout its first year of life, but may still be high in the poorest countries during the
second year, when children face the critical weaning period. Although most children are introduced to food other than breast milk from about six months of age, many children in developing countries continue to receive substantial quantities of breast milk until they reach 18 months or more. Where sufficient nutritious and uncontaminated weaning foods are scarce, breast milk provides a nutritional backstop. When it ceases entirely, children who do not receive adequate and nutritious weaning foods are likely to become weak and vulnerable to infection. Where inadequate health services are available, sick children are more likely to die.

Child mortality and development

The child mortality rate (CMR) indicates the number of children per thousand live births who die after their first birthday but before reaching their fifth birthday. In most countries there is a much greater risk of a child dying in infancy than in the following four years. The IMR is therefore expected to be much greater than the CMR. Some sources use the under five mortality rate (USMR) instead of the CMR, in which case the USMR, which includes infant deaths, would be expected to be only a little higher than the IMR. Where there is a big difference between the IMR and the USMR, or the CMR is close to the level of the IMR, very deprived economic and social conditions and poor health facilities are likely.

For example, according to UNICEF, in 1994 Angola's USMR of 292 was 72 per cent greater than its IMR (170), whereas the difference was only 28 per cent in Botswana, where living standards are much higher. In the most developed countries, both the IMR and the USMR are less than ten deaths per thousand live births. In these countries, most deaths of young children occur in infancy, with only one additional death on average between ages one and five years. This is because most under-five deaths in developed countries are caused by biological factors, such as congenital problems, and so are difficult to prevent, even with the most modern medical technology. Children in developing countries who do not have biological problems have a very high probability of surviving both infancy and childhood, because they are generally well-nourished and well cared for by modern preventive medicine. In such countries a large proportion of the very small number of deaths which do occur between ages one and five years are a consequence of accidents.

Thus, comparing the relative levels of the IMR and the CMR or USMR gives a better indication of health services and nutrition than GNP per capita, or the IMR alone. It also helps to control for differences in data quality between countries.

Nutrition and development

An essential ingredient for child health is good nutrition. Differences between countries in food availability and environmental hygiene are among the most important determinants of differences in the health of young children. When nutrition and hygiene are poor, the interaction (synergy) of malnutrition and infection leads to slow growth and poor growth attainment. When children become sick, they usually lose weight and temporarily stop growing. Although they have the capacity to catch up lost growth quickly when they recover, frequent episodes of illness leave them with insufficient time to attain normal growth levels. Frequent episodes of diarrhoea, in particular, are associated with poor growth attainment, as are episodes of immunisable diseases such as measles, pertussis and hepatitis.

Children who have achieved only 80 per cent or less of normal height-for-age by age two years are unlikely to realise their full growth potential, and are likely to be below normal height as adults, i.e. stunted. They may also suffer from other forms of growth impairment, such as incomplete development of organs, circulatory and neurological systems, although there has been little research on this and findings are inconclusive. Some studies argue that children have impaired learning ability, and that stunted adults are less able to perform physical work.

Most developing countries have high percentages of children who are stunted, and slightly smaller percentages that are underweight for their age. The difference is due to the fact that it is relatively easier and takes less time for the body to regain weight than to catch up height, so stunting is a better indicator of long-term malnutrition, while underweight indicates current malnutrition, and is not necessarily associated with stunting. The percentage of children under age five years who are stunted in most developing countries is therefore a good indicator of food availability and prevalence of illness.

UNICEF data for 1980–94 indicate that stunting of under-fives was most prevalent in Nepal (69 per cent), India (65 per cent), Ethiopia (64 per cent) and Bangladesh (63 per cent). In Nepal, India and Bangladesh, the percentages of underweight children were actually slightly higher than the percentages of stunted children, reflecting the food crises when the data were collected, but in Ethiopia the percentage of underweight was about one third less. Differences of about this magnitude are more typical than equal percentages or higher percentages underweight.

Statistics on the prevalence of stunting and underweight have the advantage that they depict the health of the vast majority of children who survive, whereas the IMR, CMR and USMR are concerned with children who have already died. Stunting and underweight are direct measures of growth attainment, which is largely determined by nutrition and exposure to infection, whereas nutrition and health status can only be inferred from mortality rates. Growth attainment statistics are relatively easily collected in cross-sectional surveys. Although their quality depends on the drawing of representative samples and the availability of accurate ages for children, they tend to be less affected by omission and understatement than are child mortality statistics.

Indicators of child development

Other statistics related to child health, which can provide valuable indicators of economic and social conditions, are
birthweight and statistics on birthplace and birth attendants, and attendance at child health clinics. Prevalence of diarrhoea is also a good indicator. However, these statistics may be more difficult to obtain in the most disadvantaged countries. Statistics on the percentages of children immunised tend not to be a good indicator of economic and social conditions, as coverage merely tends to reflect the presence or absence of an immunisation campaign in a particular location. The World Health Organisation’s Expanded Programme of Immunisation, for example, has reached some of the most disadvantaged regions.

Certain statistics on the health and well-being of children thus have considerable value as indicators of economic and social progress. Differences in actual living conditions between countries may be masked when only per capita income is considered. Social well-being is reflected in healthy, well cared for children, while children are likely to be the first to suffer in times of hardship. In conjunction with statistics on access to safe water and sanitation, and social statistics such as school enrolment and age of entry into the labour force, statistics on child health and survival help to round out the picture of economic and social conditions in any given place.

Endnote

1 The choice of cut-off point to define stunting and underweight varies between studies. Although they are not strictly comparable, the most commonly used cut-off points are minus two standard deviations below the median for each age of a well-nourished population, or 80 per cent of that median.

References


January 1998
Child malnutrition across the globe: A regional comparison

Per cent of children under 5 who are underweight

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sub-Saharan Africa</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Latin America and Caribbean</td>
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<td>East Asia and Pacific</td>
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Per cent of children under 5 who are stunted

<table>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Asia</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and Caribbean</td>
<td>18</td>
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</table>

Per cent of children under 5 who are wasted

<table>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
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<td>South Asia</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latin America and Caribbean</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Malnutrition rates in these charts reflect moderate and severe levels of underweight (low weight for age), wasting (low weight for height) and stunting (low height for age). Data were compiled by UNICEF in 1997 based largely on Demographic and Health Surveys, Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys and other national household surveys (1990-1997).
Malnutrition: Causes, consequences and solutions

The 1998 *State of the World’s Children* report, an annual UNICEF publication, estimates that over six million or 55 per cent of all deaths of children under five years of age are linked to malnutrition. Millions of survivors are left crippled, vulnerable to illness and intellectually disabled. Yet the worldwide crisis of malnutrition has stirred little public alarm. In some parts of the world — notably Latin America and East Asia — there have been dramatic gains in reducing child malnutrition. But overall, the absolute number of malnourished children worldwide has grown. Half of South Asia’s children are malnourished. In Africa, one of every three children is underweight. Child malnutrition is not confined to the developing world. In some industrialised countries, widening income disparities, coupled with reductions in social protection, are a cause for concern about the nutritional well-being of children.

**Causes of malnutrition**

**Immediate:** The interplay between two significant causes of immediate malnutrition — inadequate dietary intake and illness — tends to create a vicious cycle. A malnourished child whose resistance to infection is compromised, falls ill, and malnutrition worsens.

**Underlying:** Three broad categories of underlying cause lead to inadequate dietary intake and illness:

- inadequate food security
- insufficient health services and unhealthy environment
- inadequate caring practices including declining trend of breastfeeding

**Basic:** Political, legal and cultural factors may defeat the best efforts of households to attain good nutrition. Overcoming entrenched poverty and underdevelopment requires resources and inputs that few developing countries can muster. In 1995, aggregate resource flows to the developing world from all sources totalled US$232 billion — yet the two regions of the world most affected by malnutrition, sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia, received only $1.6b and $5.2b respectively. At the same time developing countries owed more than $2 trillion in external debt. If basic causes of malnutrition are to be addressed, more and better-targeted resources and better collaboration are required between various international and national development partners.

**Approaches that work**

Improvement in child nutrition requires the interplay of many factors. Although there is no one blueprint for success, some of the essential factors for nutritional improvement include:

**Improved economic growth:** Most countries in which nutrition has improved over the last two decades also enjoyed relatively high rates of economic growth over a sustained period.

**Nutrition and status of women:** Where nutrition improvement has lagged behind economic growth, social discrimination against women is common.

**Nutrition and social sector spending:** Investments in health, education, sanitation and other social sectors especially with emphasis on access of women and girls to these services and resources, are among the most important policy tools for improving nutrition.

**Eight useful lessons**

1. Solutions must involve those directly affected
2. A balance of approaches is necessary
3. Nutrition components work better in combination
4. Progress hinges on continuing research
5. Food protection is important but not enough
6. Everyone has an obligation to address child rights
7. Community and family-based involvement is vital
8. Government policies must reflect the right to good nutrition
Casualties of development? Child and youth suicide in the Pacific

Heather Booth, Demography Program, Australian National University

Suicide amongst children and youth is an outcome of societal transition resulting from the development process. This paper examines child and youth suicide in the Pacific. It compares Pacific rates with global norms, points to some of the underlying processes that lead to high suicide levels and considers the adequacy of responses.

Data and definitions

The data used in this paper are from police statistics: for Fiji 1982–83 (Deoki 1987); for health statistics in French Polynesia 1988–92 (French Polynesia, annual); for Guam 1988–92 (Guam, annual); for special studies Micronesia 1960–87 (Rubinstein 1992); and for Western Samoa 1981 (Bowles 1985). These data are probably as complete as data collection methods permit, but they should still be regarded as minima since suicide is under-reported in virtually all populations of the world. In line with international reporting of suicide, child is defined as aged 5–14 years and youth as 15–24 years.

Levels of child and youth suicide

It is well known that in some Pacific populations, youth suicide rates are exceedingly high. This is true of Micronesia (in this paper, Micronesia refers to the Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau), Western Samoa and of Fiji Indians. Global comparison, seen in Table 1, shows that Pacific youth suicide rates are the highest in the world. For males, Micronesia, Western Samoa, Fiji Indians and Guam all exceed the highest rate reported elsewhere in the world (WHO 1994). For females, rates for Western Samoa and Fiji Indians far exceed the maximum elsewhere and, indeed, rates for French Polynesia, Guam, Micronesia and Fiji Fijians also rank amongst the ten highest rates reported elsewhere.

Comparison of child suicide rates with global maxima (Table 1) shows a similar pattern. Female levels in Western Samoa and Fiji Indians are two to three times as high as the highest found elsewhere. For males, Micronesia equals the highest non-Pacific rate and the rate for Guam is also relatively high.

Apart from portraying the gravity of the suicide situation in these populations, the data in Table 1 also dispel a common myth. It is widely believed that Pacific suicide is a predominantly male problem, whereas in fact female rates are at least as extreme. This belief has apparently been due to the use of crude comparisons of females with males in the same population, rather than age-specific comparisons of females with males (in the same population), and of Pacific females with females in other populations. Male suicide rates almost always exceed female rates by a considerable margin so the predominance of males, in Micronesia for example, is normal.

In addition to examining high levels of male suicide (as has been the case), therefore, the question that should be asked is why female child and youth suicide rates in Fiji Indians and Western Samoa exceed both those of males and those of females elsewhere in the world.

Table 1: Child and youth suicide rates by sex in selected Pacific populations per 100,000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Child (5–14 years)</th>
<th>Youth (15–24 years)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji: Fijians</td>
<td>1982–83</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fiji: Indians</td>
<td>1982–83</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Micronesia</td>
<td>1960–87</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guam</td>
<td>1988–92</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Polynesia</td>
<td>1988–92</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western Samoa</td>
<td>1981</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Pacific maximum</td>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Marshall Islands, Palau and Federated States of Micronesia

Source: See text; author's calculations; WHO (1994).

Similarly, child suicide has not been given the attention it deserves because child rates have been overshadowed by youth rates and global comparisons have not been made. The fact that most child suicides occur at the older ages in the age range also leads to their being regarded as part of the youth suicide issue. Clearly, the two are related. The fact that populations with high youth suicide rates also have high child suicide rates indicates that the factors that lead to high suicide are common to both children and youth. There is a need, however, to pay more attention to child suicide, especially since, in Western Samoa and Micronesia at least, the average age at suicide is decreasing over time.

Causes of suicide

The broad underlying cause of child and youth suicide in the Pacific is societal transition. In this, the Pacific is no different from other societies. A century ago Durkheim theorised that in each society the collective inclination to suicide remains fairly constant as long as the basic conditions of existence remain the same, and that changes in those conditions produce changes in suicide rates. The transition from a
traditional to a more complex society is a particularly vulnerable period. Intergenerational conflict and pressures on the younger generation are typical features of such a transition. Thus, suicide rates are increased at young ages.

Examples of this include Micronesia and Western Samoa. In Micronesia, Hezel (1989) and Rubinstein (1995) have shown that societal transition has involved both the breakdown of traditional roles, particularly for young males who provided food for the community, and the addition of new and unfamiliar roles and responsibilities of the nuclear family in the cash economy, notably the breadwinner and disciplinary roles of fathers. They argue that young people remain dependent for longer than has traditionally been the case, not only financially but also socially since wider kinship networks have been weakened, leading to intergenerational conflict. In Western Samoa, Macpherson and Macpherson (1987) see the widening gap between the expectations of young people and the opportunities available to them as the underlying cause of youth suicide. Both expectations and opportunities are influenced by societal transition. In addition, intergenerational conflict arises when youth prefer Western-style freedoms to their traditional role of deference and serving the community, thus challenging traditional authoritarian and gerontocratic values and concern with family prestige.

That societal transition and intergenerational conflict lead to elevated suicide rates in childhood and youth, rather than at older ages, is indicative of the low status of children and youth. This is seen in the above examples. For females, there may be the additional factor of low female status. This is the case for Fiji Indians, where high suicide rates are associated with the focus of powerlessness on sexuality, marriage and childbearing (Booth unpublished). Gender is also instrumental in determining high female suicide rates in Western Samoa, through such factors as power structures at the community level, ingestion of paraquat (a highly toxic herbicide) as method of suicide and control over access to paraquat (ibid.). In sum, therefore, elevated suicide rates can be seen as a result of the interaction of societal transition, powerlessness and gender.

Development and suicide

Societal transition is, of course, a direct and intended consequence of development. However, suicide is neither a direct nor intended outcome. Nor are the extraordinary levels experienced in some Pacific populations a necessary outcome, since some populations undergoing development have relatively low suicide rates. To some extent, therefore, it is the nature of development that influences suicide rates. In general terms, we can relate high suicide rates to the precedence of economic concerns over social, of the older over the younger, of male over female and of the powerful over the powerless.

Despite the fact that many development initiatives do not adequately take the well-being and interests of young people into account, the influences of development generally have a greater impact on young people than on other more conservative sections of the community. Young people are receptive to the new and modern influences resulting from development, whether intended or unintended, and seek to adopt such influences into their lives. Thus, the young feel the social stresses inherent in societal transition and the development process more acutely. In the absence of social development commensurate with the rate of economic change, these social stresses increase child and youth vulnerability to suicide.

Responses to suicide

If child and youth suicide has not been foreseen as a possible outcome of development, neither have its underlying causes been adequately recognised in official responses. Along with other social issues, suicide has not been taken into account in evaluating economic development. The social consequences of economic decisions are divorced from those decisions, and social planning is isolated from and very much in second place to economic planning. Furthermore, limited resources and the low status of children and youth mean that suicide receives little attention by way of official response. Responses to suicide have thus been largely ineffective.

Even where suicide has been recognised as an outcome of economic decisions, it has proved impossible to reverse those decisions. In Western Samoa for example, attempts were made by health officials in the mid-1980s to institute a ban on the import of paraquat, but agricultural and economic concerns took precedence and paraquat remains available. Later efforts to curb the use of paraquat in suicide attempts appealed (unsuccessfully) to economic rationalism: the price of paraquat was increased as a means of encouraging farmers to control its use. In Fiji, the availability of paraquat is also maintained due to its 'indispensability' in the sugar industry, though tighter controls on its distribution have recently been considered.

Social responses to suicide include programmes for youth, concentrating mainly on sports and employment opportunities (with economic policies taken as given). Counselling has been slow to develop, since it has not easily attracted the interest of Pacific Islanders either as clients or as counsellors. Much of the response has in fact come from NGOs, indicative perhaps of official impotence in face of this pressing social problem. Many NGOs have moved towards suicide prevention through public education. Such a programme was successfully implemented in Western Samoa in the early 1980s (Oliver 1985) but its effect is believed to have been short-lived. More recently, Samoan women's organisations have been informally charged with addressing the issue at the community level, though they have neither the power nor resources to do so adequately. As noted above, these social initiatives fail to take into account the underlying structural causes of suicide, concentrating instead on the potential victim.

Conclusion

If levels of child and youth suicide can be viewed as an indicator of a society's ability to successfully manage
development for the benefit of all members of that society, many Pacific governments are seen to have failed in this respect. The high levels of suicide experienced indicate that the ongoing process of development has not taken adequate account of its social consequences, including its effect on children and youth. Neither have the underlying causes of suicide been seen to be recognised, since official responses are confined to reactive social initiatives, which in any case are inadequately resourced.

Clearly, if the underlying causes of child and youth suicide are to be addressed there is a need for greater attention to be paid to the links between economic and social development, and for the wider consequences of economic development to be taken into account in the development process. In particular, there is a need for a greater focus on the less powerful members of society, among them children and youth. For such a focus to be effective, children and youth need to be regarded not as victims of the unintended outcomes of development, but as rightful members of society whose well-being and interests warrant incorporation in all aspects of the development process.

Finally, if the high rates of child and youth suicide experienced by Pacific populations are indeed the consequence of societal transition and its interaction with power and gender, as has been argued, then there is a need to examine in detail the message that these tragic events hold for society as a whole.

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Child sex tourism: Child victims of the SAP gap

Christine Beddoe, Campaign to End Child Prostitution,
Pornography and Trafficking (ECPAT) Australia

The development strategy most likely to be conducive to the child's right to survival and development is one which gives priority to growth with equity which fosters a balanced development in which all forms of capital, including institutional and social capital, are respected as indispensable. Inherent in this approach is also a participatory approach which favours small scale, local solutions over large scale paternalistic attempts to modernisation 'from above' (De Vylder 1996:41).

The commercial sexual exploitation of children, including the use of children in prostitution, is a complex phenomenon involving a multitude of 'push' and 'pull' factors. Often included in the term 'child prostitution' is child sex tourism, the exploitation of children and their communities by persons who travel from their own country to another, usually less developed, to engage in sexual acts with minors. Child sex tourism itself involves a complex interplay of supply and demand factors.

Although tourism is not responsible for the sexual exploitation of children, the use of tourism as a catalyst for economic growth has increased the vulnerability of children, and has lured would-be offenders to countries gripped by poverty, unemployment and desperation. Many island states and coastal areas of Africa, Asia and Latin America have been forced to resort to tourism to increase economic revenue in order to pay back debts to First World nations and international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Loans and bail-out credit have been offered freely by the IMF to debt-stricken countries throughout the developing world, and more recently Eastern Europe. In return, recipient countries are forced to accept harsh macroeconomic reform through structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). While it is ultimately up to individual recipient country governments to implement SAPs, their refusal to accept the conditions attached to reform would almost certainly result in their being denied access to commercial loans and credits, debt relief and multilateral aid.

SAPs have been introduced into many of the First World's holiday destinations, and recently IMF adjustment packages have also been imposed on the fallen Asian tigers, including Thailand and Indonesia, which are also key tourist destinations in the Southeast Asian region. Inherent in these packages is structural reform and currency devaluation. In the absence of alternative trading commodities, tourism has been given priority status by debt-stricken governments to increase employment and the development of infrastructure through multinational investment.

SAPs and children's rights – the SAP gap

The decline in public expenditure which accompanies structural adjustment directly affects the family, in particular women and children. Cuts in welfare spending, the increase in import liberalisation, increases in interest rates and the introduction of a 'user pays' philosophy for basic services such as health and education has a direct impact upon the ability of families to survive, forcing women and children to seek employment in non-traditional areas. Reforms introduced as part of SAPs often blatantly contradict state obligations, as defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and other human rights treaties. The introduction of school fees, for example, contradicts Article 28 of the CRC, which states that governments have the obligation to 'make primary education compulsory and free to all'.

Unable to pay for education, school uniforms or books, many families are forced to remove children from school. Girls are especially vulnerable, and are often sent away from their families in search of paid work in whatever form they can find.

The 'SAP gap' is the vortex that the most vulnerable children fall into when trying to survive the effects of the political process of structural adjustment. There is little evidence to suggest that this impact upon children has ever been considered in the development of adjustment programmes. Structural adjustment does little to support those who are already struggling to survive. The SAP gap creates a breeding ground for exploitation and abuse.

Tourism development – fair trade or free trade?

Tourism is used by governments around the world to enter a global economic market, and contemporary mainstream tourism is seen as part of the existing trade system built on neoclassical theories of ‘comparative advantage’, ‘trickle down’ and modernisation. These theories inevitably lead to unequal exchange and unfavourable terms of trade.

The arguments condoning mass tourism in developing countries emphasise that any money spent by tourists is benefiting the economy and bringing some wealth to the people there. There is ample evidence, however, that whilst some of the more fortunate sections of society, such as ruling elites, landowners, government officials or private businesses might benefit, the poor, landless, rural sections are getting poorer, not only materially, but also in terms of their culture and resources. Eviction and displacement to make way for the construction of tourist resorts, rising prices for land, food...
and fuel, and the commoditisation of cultural assets, are just a few examples of this impoverishment (Kalisch 1997).

By allowing foreign investment to direct tourism development, structural reform can disempower local communities even further. Local enterprises are unable to compete with multinationals, mainly due to their small size and poor access to international tourist markets. The 'trickle down' of skills, technology and improved public services that is expected to follow in the wake of foreign tourists often does not reach those who are most in need. With the current focus on sand, sea, sex and surf, the development of tourism has displaced many coastal communities, replacing traditional forms of employment, such as fishing. In the formal sector, the very nature of tourism demands a youthfulness and attractiveness amongst its labour force, which normally excludes the participation of older men and women in favour of younger, more skilled and often urban-educated people. With the accompanying reduction of welfare provisions, many women and children are forced to look for work in the informal tourism sector - as prostitutes, street guides, tea sellers, drug sellers, street vendors, shoe-shiners or flower sellers.

The informal tourism sector is an integral part of the commercial child sex industry in the developing world. Sex tourism and child sex tourism rely on the networks of street guides, prostitutes, unofficial guest houses, brothels, tea-houses and pimps which service the influx of foreign sex tourists as well as local clientele. Many children are drawn into or are forced to find work in these areas to supplement family incomes. Even those children who are not prostituted are, at the very least, exposed to crime and exploitation. For many children, tourism is often the easy option, preferable to other alternatives such as domestic service or hard labour.

Low wages and currency devaluation mean that many tourist destinations have become easily affordable for the foreign tourist, but still out of reach for the local community. This reinforces the difference and separation between the host and guest. The average tourist enjoys a standard of living in Third World tourist destinations that they could never afford at home. Children are often lured into tourist areas because of the comparative wealth and consumerism of foreign travellers.

The prostitution of children

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, child prostitution became an international concern. The number of children involved in the sex industries of Asia, Africa and Latin America were growing rapidly. With the global abuse of children's rights, an increase in child sex tourism and the HIV/AIDS pandemic, the problem of the child sex industry needed to be tackled urgently.

Resolving the problem requires more than a national response. It requires global cooperation to develop international networks, policies, and legislation to monitor and punish those in the Western world for their participation in the commercial child sexual exploitation industry.

Although both girl and boy children are involved in commercial sexual activities, it is recognised that the majority of these exploited children are girls, and that the great majority of abusers and exploiters are men. Underlying all the social and economic forces that drive child prostitution are patterns of gender bias. The female child in many countries is viewed as less of an asset, and more of an unrecoverable economic burden to her family than the male child. She is seen as having less potential to earn a good income, and therefore as less likely to be able to provide support for the family as she grows older. Due to her low social status, she is not provided with the same educational opportunities as her brothers, and she is more likely to enter the informal work sector at the earliest possible age.

In Thailand, men are highly respected by mainstream society for having many sexual partners. Young men are actively encouraged by their fathers, their peers and society as a whole to view women and children as sexual objects, which can be possessed or sold. This traditional view of women and children is reinforced by increasing consumerism and materialism. According to the Centre for the Protection of Children's Rights in Thailand, the selling of children and women into the commercial sex industry has become acceptable in certain sectors of Thai mainstream society.

Although poverty alone is not responsible for child exploitation, many exploited children come from families that are unable to support their children financially. Thai child rights activist, Professor Vitit Muntarbhorn, offers the following list of factors that increase the likelihood of children entering the sex trade:

- Poverty: the current macroeconomic environment prioritises exports over domestic production. The consequences of this are felt most profoundly at the individual household level. The new cash cropping businesses have not provided the levels of rural employment needed to ensure that all families have sufficient income to meet their basic needs.

- Criminality: the willingness of people to act as intermediaries, pimps and procurers for an industry which is profiting from the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

- Commercialisation: the dynamics of supply and demand. Child prostitution has become a business where the child is rendered an object rather than a subject with vested rights and interests.

- Globalisation: communication and information networks have advertised and facilitated the practice, ensuring increasing growth of demand for child prostitutes.

- Transnationalisation: the emergence of transnational criminal networks organising for children to be trafficked across national borders by means of abduction, false documentation and sham marriages.

- Tradition and culture: in many developing countries, certain traditional practices increase the likelihood of children being
sexually exploited. For example, in some cultures children are sent to live in temples to become sex goddesses, ultimately to become involved in prostitution. In many societies, there exists the belief that an older person will rejuvenate himself or herself by having sex with a minor.

Lack of law enforcement: all countries have laws to protect children. However, criminality pervades the legal system in many societies.

Decreasing family and community support: the structures of families and communities are changing due to financial pressures, rural-urban migration, and changing values reflecting increased access to the outside world.

Lucrative business: in countries such as Thailand, commercial child sexual exploitation is seen not only as a source of foreign currency but also as a key to development.

Lack of political commitment: government resources are all being directed towards stimulating production, based on the rationale that the benefits will trickle down to the poor, thereby reducing the need for government support.

Increasing materialism: with increased access to the outside world, perceptions of basic necessities now include such items as a television, a video player and a car. The commercial sexual exploitation of children provides a means for families to acquire these items.

HIV/AIDS: increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS is encouraging the market to seek younger and younger girls in the belief that they are more likely to be virgins and therefore less likely to be infected.

Child sex tourism is part of the global child sex trade. Although it is now commonly acknowledged that the largest demand for children in prostitution comes from local clients, there are also large numbers of foreigners travelling to (mostly) Third World countries and engaging in sexual activity with children. The aggressive promotion of tourism and the stereotyping of Asian cultures as exotic and submissive legitimise the fantasies of would-be offenders. The supply of children for the sex trade will continue for as long as there is a demand and an economic need for children to be sold as commodities.

What needs to be done?

The Campaign to End Child Prostitution, Pornography and Trafficking – ECPAT – is working to raise global consciousness about these issues. More importantly, ECPAT works at the local level to lobby for policy reforms including influencing commercial industries such as tourism to conduct business in a more ethical and responsible manner. The global ECPAT campaign, including the work of ECPAT Australia, has been successful in challenging the factors that force children into prostitution. The underlying causes of exploitation, however, will always be inequalities of wealth and power. The World Bank, the IMF and governments responsible for global and national economic planning must be made accountable and responsible for helping those that suffer as a result of structural adjustment programmes without safety nets. Children, in particular, must be protected from the SAP gap.

References

While developing countries have experienced significant reductions in infant mortality rates in the last 30 years (UNDP 1996:19), many countries still experience high infant mortality rates in comparison to other countries with similar per capita income or human development indices (World Bank 1996: Table 6 and UNDP 1996: Table 11).

The status of infant mortality in developing countries is of prime importance for a whole range of reasons. First, infant mortality rates reflect the level of general socioeconomic well-being. More specifically, they are likely to reflect the level of investment in infant health, and maternal health and education. This in turn may impact indirectly in the long term on maternal productivity and earnings. Infant mortality may also have a feedback effect on fertility. A decline in infant mortality also extends the expected returns to investment in human capital, a vital resource for a country’s future developmental requirements. Lower infant and child mortality also appears to have an effect on birth rates. In economic terms, if parents’ demand for children is price inelastic and the cost per surviving child decreases in proportion to the increases in survival rate, then parents are likely to respond to a decline in infant mortality by having fewer children (Schultz 1981).

Existing literature provides ample evidence that infant mortality rates are influenced by a number of factors: demographic, economic, health-related, biological, socio-cultural and educational. A number of studies have identified a range of factors influencing infant mortality in developing countries (Rosenzweig and Schultz 1983; Hojman 1989, 1992 and 1996; Wolfe and Behrman 1982; Blau 1986; Brittain 1992; and De Meer et al. 1993).

This paper examines how economic and other variables influence infant mortality rates. It also looks at evidence from Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and considers whether theoretical explanations of infant mortality rates hold in these countries. The countries chosen in this study are comparable in a number of ways. Not only are they similar in terms of economic structures, physical geography and cultural characteristics, but the infant mortality rates in these countries are higher than the average of 32 per 1,000 live births in 1995 for the 12 Pacific Island member countries of the Asian Development Bank and all countries in the lower-middle-income category (Asian Development Bank 1997). In 1995, the infant mortality rate was 51 per 1,000 live births in Kiribati, 65 per 1,000 live births in Papua New Guinea, 48 per 1,000 live births in Solomon Islands and 43 per 1,000 live births in Vanuatu.

Incomes
It is often assumed that the level of income, particularly household income, influences infant mortality rates. This assumption is supported in theory by economic choice models, in which children are regarded as consumption goods and the demand for children competes with demand for other consumption goods. Given that the demand for any good or service is a function of some level of income, the demand for children is also a function of the level of income. As household income increases, the supply of resources essential for infant health care is likely to increase, thus contributing to a reduction in infant mortality. In theory, therefore, infant mortality should be inversely correlated with income.

Per capita gross national product (GNP) was used as an indicator of income to test this proposition. The results from the sample Pacific Island countries provide strong evidence to support the fact that infant mortality declines as the level of per capita income increases, suggesting that higher income allows greater availability and wider allocation of resources essential for infant care. Per capita GNP increased in Kiribati from US$500 in 1985 to US$920 in 1995, and infant mortality rates decreased from 82 per thousand live births in 1985, to 51 per thousand in 1995. In Solomon Islands, per capita GNP increased from US$530 to US$910, while infant mortality dropped from 64 to 48 per thousand live births. Similarly, in Vanuatu, where per capita GNP increased from US$920 in 1985 to US$1,200 in 1995, infant mortality dropped from 63 to 43 per thousand live births (World Bank 1996). In Papua New Guinea, however, while per capita GNP increased over the same period from US$750 to US$1,160, infant mortality remained steady at 65 per thousand live births. This can be explained by cuts in public health expenditure over the period (see Gani 1997).

External resources
Tying some proportion of external resources (foreign aid and/or external borrowings) to the provision of essential services for infant health care can influence infant mortality rates. Infant mortality may be either high or low in those countries with high levels of inflows of external resources. The critical issue influencing infant mortality is how these external resources are used. In general, if countries direct their external resources to health services, and in particular to infant health care (for example, health infrastructure, health care personnel and maternal health care and education), then we would expect that they will have lower or reduced infant mortality rates. In
contrast, we would expect countries with high infant mortality rates that direct their external resources towards unproductive ventures and overlook basic human needs to be less likely to make improvements in reducing infant mortality.

High levels of external borrowings also mean that if surplus financial resources are accrued, then they are more likely to be directed towards debt repayment than towards investment in public goods, like infant health care services. It is likely, therefore, that poor countries with high levels of external debt may also face high levels of infant mortality. The empirical evidence from the Pacific Islands sample confirms that high levels of external debt are correlated with high rates of infant mortality. In 1994, external debt as a percentage of GNP amounted to 32.4 in Kiribati, 52.9 in Papua New Guinea, 50.9 in Solomon Islands and 24.7 in Vanuatu (Asian Development Bank 1997).

Health expenditure

It would be expected that the level of government expenditure on health, particularly in relation to infant health care, would directly influence the survival of infants. Conversely, low levels of investment in health would be expected to have direct regressive effects on infant health status. Thus, infant mortality should be inversely correlated with health expenditure. The evidence from the Pacific Islands supports these expectations, with low budgetary allocations to general health care being low in the four countries included in the sample. Total expenditure on health as a percentage of GDP is between two and three per cent in all four economies, less than the average of 4.9 per cent for economies with similar levels of development. Further, the distribution of the health budget in the sample countries is not known with any certainty. The evidence therefore confirms that high infant mortality is correlated with low levels of government expenditure on health care.

Fertility rates

A bi-directional causality is possible between infant mortality and fertility rates: that is, mortality may affect fertility and fertility may affect mortality. Social security and old age assistance are not available in many poor countries, so children are often regarded as a form of investment and insurance against poverty in old age. In such circumstances, one would expect infant mortality and fertility rates to be positively correlated. The evidence from the sample of Pacific Island countries confirms this to be the case. Fertility rates in the sample are high compared with the average fertility rate for Pacific Island countries of 4.2. In 1993, the fertility rate in Kiribati was 3.8; in Papua New Guinea, 5.0; in Solomon Islands, 5.2; and in Vanuatu, 5.1 (Asian Development Bank 1997; World Bank 1996).

Maternal education

Greater provision of education for females is one of the best investments a country can make. Mothers generally have greater influence over their families' health and welfare, and the children of educated mothers are less likely to die. Moreover, educated mothers tend to have fewer children. In contrast, low levels of female literacy may have a negative impact on infant mortality. To test this hypothesis, the percentage of females in secondary school was examined. The recent trends in female education in the sample Pacific Island countries indicate a significant increase in the percentage of females enrolled in secondary school in the ten years 1985–95. In Kiribati, the percentage increased during this period by 22 per cent, 11 per cent in Papua New Guinea, 44 per cent in Solomon Islands and 29 per cent in Vanuatu. These higher enrolment rates are positively correlated with improved infant survival rates over the same period.

Urbanisation

The rural–urban differential is another factor which might reasonably be expected to influence infant mortality. In remote rural areas, people are often deprived of basic services, while people who live in urban areas have higher incomes, are better educated and have better access to health care. Vulnerable groups, such as very young children, are most at risk in remote areas with limited access to health care services. It is therefore reasonable to expect that living in an urban environment would improve the chances of infant survival, and low urbanisation is likely to be associated with high mortality rates. Studies based on evidence from African countries shows that infant mortality rates were lower in urban than rural areas (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa 1993).

The percentage of the population living in urban areas in the Pacific Island sample was used to test this hypothesis. Contrary to expectations, the available evidence does not support the idea that urbanisation influences infant mortality rates. However, given the lack of precise data on urbanisation in these countries, it is difficult to draw any firm conclusions about its influence on infant mortality.

Conclusion

This paper briefly examined the influence of certain economic and other factors on infant mortality, using comparative data from Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Income, maternal education and external debt were found, as expected, to be inversely correlated with infant mortality. It was also found that high fertility is associated with high infant mortality rates. Creating opportunities for generating and enhancing family and individual income levels is therefore seen as vital.

The investment of external resources in infant health care will certainly result in long-term benefits for developing the human capital necessary for economic growth. Because women's education is a crucial factor in reducing infant mortality, more resources need to be invested in female education, including maternal education programmes directed towards health, nutrition and basic hygiene practices.
In conclusion, it is evident that a wide range of economic and other factors are at work in influencing infant mortality. While this paper has only been able to examine a small number of these factors, many others—biological, psychological and social—warrant detailed investigation.

Endnote

1 Infant mortality rate is defined to include the number of deaths of infants under one year of age per 1,000 live births in a given year.

References


Child soldiers

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It usually takes a little time but eventually the younger ones become the most efficient soldiers of them all. (Khmer Rouge army officer quoted in Van Bueren 1995:336).

Can there be any activity more detrimental to a child's well-being than taking up arms in order to participate in politically-sanctioned violence - keeping in mind that war is, as Realists tell us, merely politics by other means - as either the slayer or the slain? Yet accounts are legion of children as young as six years old being forcibly recruited into both government and rebel armies to serve as combatants or as cooks, informants, spies and soldiers' 'wives'. Indeed, Rädda Barnen (Swedish Save the Children) estimated that in the mid-1990s there were at least a quarter of a million child soldiers currently engaged in armed conflict. The United Nations study on the 'Impact of Armed Conflict on Children' observed:

... more and more of the world is being sucked into a space in which children are slaughtered, raped and maimed; a space in which children are exploited as soldiers, a space in which children are starved and exposed to extreme brutality (1996:9-10).

In Uganda, for example, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) has resorted to abducting schoolgirls in order to supply rebel commanders with 'wives': a grotesque euphemism for the sexual abuse of girls as young as 12 years old. Ugandan girl soldiers face not only the risk of contracting a sexually-transmitted disease such as HIV, but later are likely to be rejected by their families and communities as unsuitable for marriage. Victims of sexual abuse during armed conflict and shunned by society after the conflict ends, many former girl soldiers are forced to turn to prostitution in order to survive.

The harmful effects of child soldiering do not stop at sexual victimisation. Teaching children to kill not only robs them of their physical and emotional security, but also begets further violence by contributing to the militarisation of the community. In a climate where children lack education and job skills, knowing only the power of a gun, it is almost inevitable that protracted armed conflict will flourish. For example, Angola faces major problems as it attempts to demobilise and reintegrate into society thousands of child soldiers who have been conditioned through years of war into meeting their basic needs through violent means.

But don't some children actively seek to join the military? For example, nine year old boys in Liberia who joined the National Patriotic Front of Liberia's Small Boys Units for the Rambo-esque adventure of it, or Iranian school children who voluntarily placed themselves before Iraqi tanks in the name of Islam. Surely it is consistent with a child's right to form and express their own views - as enshrined in Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child - that they be allowed to bear arms if they so wish?

Is a child truly giving his/her freely-informed consent to join the military when hunger and poverty, often caused by armed conflict, is their only other alternative? Is it meaningful to label child recruits as 'volunteers' in societies that glorify war and teach children via media images, parades and ceremonies that soldiering is prestigious and glamorous, or promote military activity as an opportunity for boys to prove their manliness and win respect and power? Whether we talk about the 15,000 Iranian children influenced by propaganda and religious fervour to voluntarily cross minefields to face Iraqi tanks or the children of landless peasants in Guatemala for whom rebel groups offered regular meals, clothing and medical attention in return for military service, it is essential to keep in mind that many under-age recruits have been driven to soldiering by cultural, social, political or economic pressures. It is misleading to consider their recruitment as 'voluntary'. Unlike the 17 year old Australian, who may choose military life over university study or perhaps learning a trade, children in Iran, Liberia or Guatemala 'volunteer' to become soldiers because it offers them their only chance of survival.

Why recruit children?

Why do so many armies, be they government or rebel, enlist children into their fighting ranks? Don't child soldiers lack the stamina required on the battlefield and, being children, misbehave or disobey orders, thus requiring commanders to adopt a parenting role to discipline them? True, child soldiers are usually recruited because protracted armed conflict has exhausted the supply of adults available, or willing, to become soldiers. In Afghanistan's drawn-out civil war for instance, the proportion of child combatants has risen from around 30 to over 45 per cent in recent years.

Children are an attractive resource for military commanders for many other reasons. Young, impressionable children are easily moulded into fierce fighters through brutal indoctrination. A common tactic is to expose children to violence in order to instil in them contempt for human life. One Peruvian child soldier told how he was forced to cannibalise victims by eating 'the entrails - heart, liver, kidneys - and to drink the blood of the rebels who were sentenced to death' (Iseberg 1997:2). Alternatively, children are fed drugs, such as amphetamines, tranquillisers and alcohol to remove fear and pain.
The principal attraction of under-age soldiers is as cannon-fodder: in Guatemala and Burma children are thought to be ideally suited to being land mine ‘detectors’ going ahead of more valuable, trained adult soldiers. Indeed, suicide missions were portrayed as a virtue for Iranian children to aspire to. They would chant while marching towards the mined battlefields to meet almost certain death: ‘Come on, come on, plunge on. Those who step on mines will go to paradise’ (Isenberg 1997:3). In fact, Iranian child soldiers had good reason to wish for death, since those who were captured by Iraqi troops were considered traitors and refused permission to return to their families.

**The response of the international community**

Does the international community care about the thousands of children who have been physically and emotionally maimed through prolonged exposure to violence as child soldiers? Do Ugandan girl soldiers like 15 year old Charlotte Atim, abducted by the LRA into household and sexual slavery, figure at all in the policy deliberations of political leaders when they gather at the United Nations in New York? What action have members of the United Nations taken to prevent child soldiering and fulfil their duty, as set out in the Preamble to the United Nations Charter, to ‘save succeeding generations from the scourge of war’?

In 1989 the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), thus transforming children’s rights into binding international law. The CRC exhorts signatories to respect and enhance the rights of children and, when making decisions affecting the child, to give primary consideration to the child’s best interests. One measure of the concern of the international community for children is the fact that the CRC represents the most widely adopted human rights treaty in history; the only states yet to ratify the CRC are Somalia, which currently has no internationally recognised government, and the United States.

Certainly the recruitment of child soldiers seems contrary to the various rights expressed in the CRC that 190 states have pledged to uphold and respect. For example, Article 29 on the aims of education speaks about developing the child’s personality, talents and abilities to their fullest potential and in a spirit of understanding, peace and friendship. Such a right is unobtainable where a child is participating in armed conflict and is denied any education, except that based on brutality and indifference to human life. Likewise, Article 32 recognises the right of the child to be protected from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous. It is difficult to imagine a profession more hazardous than that of a child soldier. Whether it involves facing bullets, crossing minefields or suffering sexual exploitation child soldiering clearly falls foul of the prohibition against hazardous work. The primacy that the Treaty demands to be given to a child’s best interests in all actions concerning them hardly permits their recruitment into the military.

However, it is Article 38 of the CRC that makes explicit reference to the recruitment of child soldiers. It states, in part, that:

- Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of 15 years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of 15 years but who have not attained the age of 18 years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.

This language belies the alleged concern that states have professed to have about eliminating the recruitment of children into armed conflict. Why, for example, is Article 38 the only provision in the CRC which specifies that an age lower than 18 is acceptable? Cultural relativists might argue that the question of when childhood ends depends on cultural, religious and social factors; to impose 18 as the age of transition to adulthood is merely an exercise in cultural imperialism on the part of the West. Why then have African states ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child which specifies 18 as the age when childhood ends?

Another problem with Article 38 is that it requires states only to take all feasible measures to prevent the child’s direct participation in hostilities. Yet indirect participation, such as transporting arms and munitions or being a soldier’s ‘wife’, can be equally dangerous as direct combat. In addition, the Treaty incorporates elements of international humanitarian law; in particular, the provisions that distinguish between an international conflict and an internal struggle. Child soldiers participating in the latter type of conflict receive more protection from international law than child soldiers fighting in international conflict. Finally, because only governments can be parties to a Treaty, it is difficult to see how an insurgency group, such as the LRA in Uganda, could be made to abide by the CRC. Rather than represent the best interests of the child – which must be to prevent the recruitment of child soldiers – Article 38 affords protection to the child so long as (s)he is not in conflict with the state and its perceived needs to preserve sovereignty and keep open a wide range of military options.

In other words, Ugandan girl soldiers like Charlotte Atim receive the protection of international law only insofar as she does not detract from the military’s freedom to fight or from the sanctity of state sovereignty.

If the international community was truly committed to eradicating the recruitment of child soldiers would it distinguish between international and internal conflicts? Surely Uganda’s sovereignty is not more important than the lives of thousands of girls who suffer sexual abuse at the hands of the LRA? If states truly wished to shield children from armed conflict wouldn’t they act to control the arms trade? After all, it is due to the proliferation of inexpensive, cheap weapons that children are able to be combatants.
Indeed, the proliferation of child soldiers is a symptom of the number of armed conflicts being fought today. Armed conflicts fuelled by hunger, poverty, the arms trade – factors that the West could eradicate or at least help reduce.

The CRC is a positive step towards eradicating the recruitment of child soldiers insofar as it makes the issue visible. However, international law is a captive of a system that condones the use of force in international relations, in spite of the words in the Preamble to the United Nations Charter. Child soldiering will exist for as long as armed conflict is accepted as a legitimate means of conducting politics. Moreover, while Western arms exporters such as the United States, France and Germany see underdeveloped nations merely as a burgeoning market for arms, children will continue to be exploited as soldiers.

References

Children and armed conflict

Millions of children are the victims of war – even its principal targets and its instruments. This is despite the fact that throughout history and across cultures, local norms and traditional values have insisted on the protection of children in war. It is also despite international legal instruments which provide for the protection of children in situations of armed conflict: principally the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols.

For all of the children caught in the crossfire or maimed by anti-personnel land mines, many more have been deprived of their physical, mental and emotional needs in the context of societies long at war. Many have lost their homes and their parents, not to mention years of education and socialisation. Some have been permanently traumatised by the events they have witnessed and experienced. In today’s internecine conflicts, children are specifically targeted in strategies to eliminate the next generation of potential adversaries. To the same end, children, and especially girls, have been made the targets of gender-based violence and sexual abuse on a massive scale. Most cynically, children have been compelled to become instruments of war, recruited or kidnapped to become child soldiers, forced to give violent expression to the hatred of adults. In all, an estimated two million children have been killed in situations of armed conflict since 1987, while three times that number have been seriously injured or permanently disabled. Countless more have been psychologically scarred, socially dislocated, physically and sexually abused, orphaned, and deprived of education.

Changes in the nature of conflicts since the end of the Cold War have exacerbated the problem. In these ‘total wars’ fought out within state boundaries, the rules of warfare, which traditionally regulated inter-state wars fought by regular armies, go unobserved. Now that the village is the battlefield and civilian populations the main target, nearly 90 per cent of the casualties are civilians, mostly women and children.

There is an urgent need to focus on the plight of children. As the most innocent and voiceless victims of war, children require special protection. They represent the future of human civilisation. From generation to generation, violence begets violence, as the abused grow up to be abusers. School-age children are forced to learn how to kill when they should be in the classroom gaining the knowledge and skills they need for a better future. For society, the opportunity lost, not least in terms of lives destroyed, could have a devastating effect on its long-term development and well-being. Children have special needs in the periods before, during and after conflict, and prevention of harm, protection during conflict and rehabilitation after must be provided for.

The key challenge is to put existing international humanitarian and human rights instruments to work to protect children. The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols contain some 25 articles that specifically concern children. Protocol 1 stipulates that children shall be the object of special respect and shall be protected against any form of assault during conflict. Article 4.3 of Protocol II is devoted exclusively to children, enjoining that they ‘be provided with the care and aid they require’. The Convention on the Rights of the Child calls for the protection of children’s rights to life, education, health, and other fundamental needs, and specifically enjoins parties against the targeting and recruitment of children during war.

In 1993, the General Assembly of the UN asked the Secretary-General to undertake, in collaboration with UNICEF and the Centre for Human Rights, a comprehensive study of the plight of children affected by armed conflict. In a response to this study, the United Nations announced in October 1997 the appointment of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict. Mr Olara Otunnu has been appointed for a three-year term with a brief to:

serve as advocate for children in conflict situations, to promote measures for their protection in times of conflict and for their healing and reintegration in conflict’s aftermath:
• by taking concrete initiatives in particular cases;
• by informing and mobilising international public opinion;
• by ensuring that the welfare of children affected by armed conflict is a priority on the international agenda; and
• by acting as a catalyst among United Nations agencies and humanitarian NGOs to develop a concerted and focused approach to meet the needs of children affected by violent conflict.
Comments on the Simons Review

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In their recent Review of Australia's aid programme, the commitment expressed by the Simons committee to poverty reduction as the sole objective of the aid programme contrasts bravely with the Jackson Report of 1984, with its emphasis on Australia's commercial and strategic interests. The committee's willingness to recognise the implications of such a change in practical and operational terms for aid strategies is especially important (AusAID 1997:76). What is even more important, and notwithstanding the committee's own view to the contrary (1997:1), is the extent to which giving priority to poverty reduction also implies and requires a major shift away from the underlying notions of development and development policy that inform current aid policy.

Without any explicit consideration of alternatives, the overall focus of the Review leaves the essential growth-dominated development ethic of the Jackson Report intact. At this level the Review committee thus fails to acknowledge the full implications of 'putting the last first' (to borrow Robert Chambers' phrase) in terms of overall development policy. The outcome is unsatisfactory: on the one hand, the Review recommends a major change in (the aim of) the aid programme, while on the other it offers no more than a certain amount of 'tinkering' at the edges of the existing model of development.

This apparent ambivalence about confronting the relationship between poverty and development is reminiscent of the manner in which the World Bank under Robert McNamara incorporated the concept of 'basic needs' into its development strategy in the 1970s. Given the extent to which 'basic needs' failed as a strategy to reduce poverty, the similarities with current thinking in official development circles should be a cause for concern. The result of the Bank's attempt to combine a 'basic needs' strategy with an orthodox growth-based notion of development resulted in a progressive watering-down of 'basic needs' into 'participatory development', with the latter itself largely swept away with the onset of the global depression in the early 1980s. In the meantime, development conceived as growth-oriented modernisation failed to prevent the enormous increase in poverty across major regions of the globe that constitutes the background to the World Bank's return to the 'poverty problem' in the 1990s.

If the Simons Review is not to suffer the same fate, it would seem essential to give more attention to the notion of development that underlies aid policy. At the very least this requires clarification of what is meant by 'sustainable development'. This does not necessarily require a long definitional debate, but it does require a clear understanding of the causes of poverty. A successful poverty reduction strategy depends on the understanding of poverty on which it is based and on how it is measured. What is surprising about the Review, therefore, is how little attention is given to poor people or to the nature and causes of poverty in the late 20th century. Since this remains a highly contested area, the comments below suggest at least some of the key issues missing from the overall focus of the Review.

Poverty and globalisation

The causes of poverty in the former Third World are complex and multiple and have changed in significant ways over time. Nevertheless we are now able to draw upon a large and valuable literature that contributes to our better understanding of the process of impoverishment that has engulfed so much of
the contemporary world - including in Australia - and against which potential poverty reduction strategies can be tested and evaluated.

At the global level, there is little doubt of the relationship between globalisation and economic restructuring on the one hand, and the marginalisation and increased impoverishment of vast numbers of the global community on the other. Recognition of that relationship has been reflected not least in the increasing pressures, particularly from NGOs in poor countries, on the World Bank, the international financial agencies and donors to rethink the whole question of structural adjustment and economic reform. The confrontations over adjustment since the early 1980s in the context of first, 'adjustment with a human face', and today, the strategy of 'safety nets', mean that no serious discussion of poverty eradication strategies can ignore the impact of globalisation and structural adjustment on poverty or on any poverty reduction programmes.

The Review committee, however, makes no attempt to consider the impact of globalisation, the global recession of 1979–83, or of global restructuring on the regional distribution of wealth. Structural adjustment is not discussed in the Review at all. In contrast, the Review committee assumes that the causes of poverty lie essentially in the failure of poor countries to integrate into the world economy (1997:52). They also assume that the approach to poverty reduction must lie through growth, albeit with the caveat that growth alone is not enough (1997:76). They further assume that the East Asia experience of industrialisation can be replicated in other regions of the world. All these assumptions can be and are contested.

The politics of poverty and poverty reduction

The Review sees poverty reduction being achieved through economic and social development. It fails, however, to consider the social causes of poverty. Strangely, there appears to be no attempt to draw on the findings of the Social Development Summit in 1995, to which Australia made an important contribution, or to the work of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development in Geneva. The committee certainly recognises that 'growth by itself is not enough', and refers to the 'distributional impact of project proposals' (1997:80). It does not, however, confront the extent to which poverty is a consequence of the increased inequality between and within states over the past 25 years, or the extent to which the roots of that inequality lie in the present model of development.

The result is the absence of any reference to the politics of poverty. Poverty is primarily about access to the means of productive and therefore sustainable livelihoods. In the grossly unequal world of the 1990s, access to resources is above all a political matter. Nor does the Review committee attempt to address the question of power, notwithstanding its commitment to participation. The links between poverty and human rights (1997:226) therefore need to be explored a good deal more than occurs here. This might be done more profitably by drawing on Amartya Sen's notion of entitlements (meaning 'ownership relations') which determine access to the means of production of an individual or a group rather than in the current framework of 'good governance'.

A poverty reduction policy and poverty reduction strategies

The Review points out (1997:78) that the approach to poverty reduction should be more strategic and better targeted. Recommendation 7.3 urges that priority be given within country programming to education, health, infrastructure and rural development because of the 'critical importance of these sectors to poverty reduction through sustainable development' (1997:16). No one would dispute the critical importance of education, health and rural development to poor people seeking to gain access to productive resources. The question remains, however, whether the focus in terms of targeting should be on the sector or on the people themselves. Basic education by itself, for example, is not necessarily a sufficient answer to the provision of education, as the impact of 'user pays' cost recovery in the 1980s has indicated. Moreover, priorities and targeting have become even more significant since the early 1980s as the impact of structural adjustment programmes hit not only the poorest members of poor communities, but the new middle classes as well. In an environment where structural adjustment has resulted in enormous downward mobility, the question of targeting becomes especially critical. Who now is targeted by poverty reduction programmes - the long-term poor, or those in the formal sector who have suffered from structural adjustment reforms?

Issues raised by targeting and poverty reduction have now been part of the poverty discourse for more than a decade. Lipton's work in the early 1980s, for example, made quite clear the need to distinguish between levels of poverty and to target specific groups. Lipton also pointed out (1983:3) that there could well be necessary preconditions for improving productivity for the ultra-poor, e.g. policies to improve the capacity of the very poor to contest labour and asset markets as a preliminary to any provision of other support. Nor should we forget the evidence that has been presented in the gender debate.

Whether or not the Review committee considered these issues, they seem not to have taken into account the extent to which, as Chambers demonstrates (1983), a successful poverty reduction policy requires a radical change of mindset on the part of the policy makers. From this perspective, the most important (and revealing) assumption in the Review is that 'virtually any aid-supported activity in a developing country is likely to bring some development benefit' (AusAID 1997:168). There is in fact a good deal of empirical evidence of failed development projects which suggests that the committee is wrong. For Australia, the most telling evidence must be the study of the Margarini project in Kenya (Porter et al. 1991). That study more than any other highlights the extent to which aid and aid donors are in fact part of the problem,
rather than the solution to poverty. It is surprising that it is
not included in the Review’s bibliography.

What all this suggests is that the most important
recommendation the Review committee makes is not only
Recommendation 4.3, that AusAID should devise a new
poverty reduction policy framework and an implementation
plan, but also Recommendation 9.3, that new opportunities
for debating development issues should be created,
particularly within AusAID. These two recommendations, to
which we should add 19.5 and 19.6, emphasise the need for
research and debate on development and development issues.

They provide the opportunity to use the committee’s Review
as the basis for a new discourse about the purpose of overseas
aid at the end of the 20th century, as well as the nature of
development. For fullest understanding, we need to discuss
not simply aid in development but the whole issue of
depening global poverty. Only then can the major issues of
resource allocation be properly approached, in terms for
example of appropriate economic strategies, of geographic
location, of gender, or of generational needs. This becomes
all the more important given that the aid Review will now be
debated in the context also of the present Government’s new
White Paper on foreign policy.

References


*January 1998*
Farakka Barrage: Its environmental and social impacts in Bangladesh – A rejoinder

Binayak Ray, National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University

Salim Montaz in his article ‘Farakka Barrage: Its environmental and social impacts in Bangladesh’ (Development Bulletin, 42, July 1997) reviews the impact of the dam, citing a study of 100 households in two districts adjacent to the dam, although it is claimed the dam affects one-third of the country’s population. Results of the study may have limited use since the dam’s impact is felt more in the downstream areas. Furthermore, he concludes by saying that it will be interesting to see if the degradation process is reversed or retarded as a result of the treaty signed by the Bangladesh and the Indian Governments. This expectation cannot be justified; hence this rejoinder.

The Ganges basin occupies about one-third of Bangladesh. The dam affects almost 20 per cent of Bangladesh (30,000 sq km) and 30 million people.1

The Farakka project was conceived in the 1930s, to save the port of Calcutta from silting. At that time the ports of Calcutta and Chittagong (now in Bangladesh) were serving eastern India. Following Partition (1947), ensuring navigability in the downstream Ganges to save the port of Calcutta became an urgent issue for India. Indeed, Partition made the issue critical for both countries, and also brought with it a liberal dose of mistrust and disinformation to cloud the issue further.

The 1996 Agreement is hailed by many as a genuine breakthrough in this long-running dispute, although it has its detractors on both sides: ‘India has given up too much’ or ‘Bangladesh did not get its share’. The Agreement provides for more than one-half of the average flow of the Ganges at Farakka between 1949 and 1988 to Bangladesh during the dry season.2

However, water-sharing alone will not be sufficient to redress this issue; so the author’s optimism on this issue remains somewhat deluded. In the wet season, the flow of water from upstream is not a problem for either of these countries. The issues are how to augment water supply in the lean season and how to manage the available resources better.

The Ganges flows over a distance of about 2,300km (157 km in Bangladesh).3 Before it reaches Bangladesh, it flows through the densely populated Indian states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar with a combined population of 226 million (27 per cent of India’s 1991 population). Thus, even before it enters Farakka a significant proportion of India’s population has used the river for irrigation and other purposes.

Demand for irrigation water will increase as population in these high-density countries (9.4 and 3 persons per hectare in Bangladesh and India respectively in 1993)4 is estimated to increase by 74 per cent (95 million) to 224 million in Bangladesh and by 50 per cent (463 million) to 1,394 million in India by 2025. Currently, 96 per cent and 93 per cent of water from renewable resources are withdrawn for irrigation in Bangladesh and India.5 Besides this agricultural requirement, demand will also increase with urbanisation and industrialisation.

In the 20th century, water use has been growing at more than twice the rate of the population.6 Consumption of water has a direct relationship with the income level of a country: the higher a country’s income the higher the level of consumption. A recent report found that annual per capita water consumption in a high-income country was three times higher than the level in a low-income country (1,167 cubic metre to 386 m3).7 So, as the living standard of the basin population continues to improve, further reduction of water flow can be expected.

Water supply for human use will remain static unless desalination of sea water becomes economically viable and rainwater currently running off into the sea can be tapped. The supply situation in both these countries worsens at times of drought, a regular phenomenon in the subcontinent. The first dry season following the signing of the Agreement saw a lower than expected level of water flow.

It is estimated that Bangladesh’s and India’s internal renewable water resources in 1992 were 1,357 and 1,850 cubic kilometres respectively, and a per capita amount of 11,380 and 2,100 cubic metres respectively.8 In 1990, Bangladesh and India withdrew 1.7 per cent and 20.5 per cent of their respective renewable water resources.9

The plain terrain in riverine Bangladesh makes it extremely difficult to build large storage dams to trap its abundant rainwater for use in the dry season. It has 230 rivers including tributaries, 54 of which are transboundary rivers,10 including major rivers such as the Ganges, Brahmaputra and Meghna.

Both India and Bangladesh have a number of government departments and other organisations dealing with water issues. Institutional, policy and structural shortcomings are somewhat similar in both these countries. However, constitutional authority to manage internal water resources in India is vested in states, similar to Pakistan’s. The World Bank rightly observed that the constraints of federal structure are felt most severely in India where constitutional amendments must be approved by two-thirds of the state legislatures, a virtual impossibility on a matter as sensitive as water.11 Recent shifts in India’s internal political situation, coalition governments at the centre and many states, make
this task virtually impossible. This shift in structure is unlikely to change in the foreseeable future.

The proposed canal to divert water from the Brahmaputra to feed Farakka is unacceptable to Bangladesh. However, whether other options to augment water supply downstream could be made available by using modern technology needs to be looked at. Likewise, whether diverting water through pipelines (similar to Australia's Snowy Mountains Scheme in the 1950s) is an option that remains to be examined. The most important issue is that both governments must consider using modern technology within an appropriate policy framework to manage water resources in a transboundary context.

Governments must urgently examine issues such as delivery efficiency, cost, pricing and sociocultural issues in tandem with supply issues for a long-term solution. The issues are complex in a subcontinent where water is considered a free gift of nature. They become far more complex when issues cross national boundaries.

To conclude, mutual distrust has been the hallmark in the subcontinent during the last 50 years. This prevented India and Bangladesh from arriving at a mutually beneficial long-term solution. The 1996 Agreement should break this ice of mutual distrust. Instead of basking in the euphoria of thinking that the Agreement will solve the water problem, a realistic and pragmatic attitude is required for a total rethinking in the subcontinent on how to resolve water-related issues. This requires political leadership as much as imaginative approaches by persons engaged in the development of water-related policies.

I am grateful to Mr Nur Ahmed for assisting me with valuable research in preparing this rejoinder.

Endnotes

9 Fredericksen et al., *Water resources management*, p.10.
11 Fredericksen et al., *Water resources management*, p.21.
The major justification for AusAID investment in family planning is, of course, to provide couples in developing countries with quality contraceptive services to control their own fertility and improve their health status in general. Words like 'integrated', 'comprehensive', 'voluntary' and 'accessible' are all meant to give an appropriate direction to these efforts when AusAID designs health and family planning projects.

What seems clear is that millions of people across the developing world would prefer to have small healthy families. They understand the burdens brought by frequent childbearing, and they know the trade-offs between numbers of children, the amount that can be invested in each child, and the lifestyles available to mothers. Population policies at the national level reflect similar concerns in the recognition that high rates of population growth present tough challenges to efforts to promote education, employment, and a wide variety of social investments. Thus governments promote policies and programmes designed to reduce rates of population growth by encouraging people to have smaller families.

I do not want to equate these personal and social preferences with issues of population density. The naive 'Holland versus Australia' arguments about optimum or feasible population densities were discredited long ago. At one time, opponents of family planning argued that larger populations were a good thing, and cited densely settled places like Holland as proof that humans could be both affluent and numerous, so there should be no effort to rein-in population growth. This notion was simple to challenge on grounds that land area was not the only constraint to settlement – water, vegetation, and a whole range of other resources would be needed to make a place habitable. Moreover, as human settlements became more dense, other inhabitants would be pushed out of their ecological niches. Human population growth, it was argued, should not be encouraged to achieve total human dominance of the earth, but rather constrained to maintain a balance with other natural features.

But it is interesting to note that in the back of our collective consciousness there is still a series of nagging comparisons of population density – 'what if' statements – which we assume or ignore to our detriment. These fall into the bag of what might be called population growth agnosticism. In political speeches, it is argued that population growth isn't the problem – poverty (or some other issue) is. Density isn't the issue, fertility isn't the issue, in short, demography isn't the issue, because we can always point to other, obviously important, issues of economy, society or justice as policy priorities far removed from sex and contraception. Forget population growth or population density, they argue, but attack injustice and inequity directly.

I agree that we need to continue to work on the truly important questions of justice and equity, although I would see these as requiring specific consideration of population growth and individual fertility behaviour. What I want to look at now, though, are a couple of calculations concerning population density. I was surprised by the comparisons, and I think many readers might share my surprise.

Java today has a population of 105,000,000, give or take a few million. This means an average density of 783.7 persons per square kilometre. When I lived in Java a few years ago I enjoyed driving across the green and mountainous countryside, sometimes for ten or fifteen minutes without seeing people. Some mountain curves reminded me of Tasmania. Mainly, though, the island was noted for large cities and huge plantings of rice, tea, coffee and tobacco.

The population of Tasmania is 473,400, give or take a few hundred. This means a population density of seven per square kilometre. Some Tasmanians can drive for a long while without seeing anybody they don't know personally.

If Tasmania had the density of Java, they would have a population of 53,134,860. Imagining the Apple Isle with such a population requires the most far-fetched science fictional musings. I doubt that any Tasmanians would be attracted to a prospect of population densities related to one-fifth or one-tenth of such a total.

If Java had the density of Tasmania there would be 922,665 Javans, and a lot more tigers and trees. You have to go very far back in history to imagine a time when Java actually had a human population of less than one million. Raffles' census of 1815 counted over four million, and many researchers think the true population then was double that number. In 1815, some writers were already prepared to declare Java an overpopulated island.

One of the longest standing dreams of population settlement in Australia is the notion of the empty north. Playing the density comparison game with Queensland is informative. Say the Sunshine State had the density of Java. The total would be 1,353,606,640 happy taxpayers – a population just over that of China. There are many among the 3.4 million people currently settled in Queensland who think that population growth is too fast for the pace of economic change, and who find the densities in the southeast to be uncomfortable.
Density comparisons of this type are ultimately silly, and aside from providing the springboard for satire they do little to inform a debate about population issues. The one thing they do accomplish, though, is to bring home the point that imagined population numbers and densities are important not so much as targets for policies to achieve, as they are dimensions of a demographic environment which shapes local policy debates.

Still, I find it amusing that the Australian Capital Territory, at Java's density, would have a population of 1,880,880. Don't tell the Real Estate Institute, they might want to adopt it as a target.
NGOs, scientists and the poor: Competitors, combatants or collaborators?

Joseph DeVries, World Vision International*

Scientists play the role of servants to humanity, but history repeatedly reveals that an inequitable distribution of scientific discoveries and advancements can have results such as famine, war and massive population shifts that severely impede development. Clearly, the world has a distribution problem and failure of the market to adequately distribute goods and services to large segments of the world's population, has given rise to agencies which have chosen to pick up this responsibility. It is to this sector of institutions that current non-government organisations (NGOs) belong. In this sense as well, NGOs, like scientists, play the role of servants to humanity.

NGOs today have become almost too diverse to define. For the majority of NGOs, including most large, international agencies, a fundamental question is: is their role primarily to redistribute goods and services produced in the developed world, or should their role be to develop the potential for local production in less developed nations?

The most basic human need is food. Accordingly, there are NGOs which distribute food to needy people, and there are NGOs which assist needy people to produce more food of their own. My own organisation is in the process of evolving from one which did primarily the former, to one which is more heavily involved in the latter. Nevertheless, there remain circumstances in which it is more expedient to focus on food distribution, and some circumstances in which it makes good sense to do both simultaneously.

NGOs, then, can fulfil one or both functions: they can distribute goods and services from one part of the world, where supplies are adequate, to another part where they are not; or they can distribute ideas and capital to assist people to develop production in their own countries. Clearly, the second of these two functions is preferable. Fortunately, NGOs are now no longer limited to providing handouts. In fact, one of the more intelligent applications of NGO work has been to generate economic growth which then extends the global market to those areas where it is not presently functioning.

As such, NGOs have begun initiatives aimed at enterprise development and the creation of improved marketing systems. But even more strategic than this, I believe, is the opportunity for NGOs and scientists to team up in transferring science and technology to the poor, and whenever possible, sharing it with them. Such collaboration is vital to improve the efficacy of agricultural development efforts into the 21st century.

In recent years, World Vision has become involved in this form of collaboration in the context of the global fight for food security. For example:

- Cornell University has seconded one of its faculty members to World Vision Ghana to develop ideas in direct collaboration and contact with local communities.
- In Angola, World Vision is working in collaboration with five international agricultural research centres and four other international NGOs to develop new seeds and other planting material for use by Angolan farmers during the transition from war to peace.
- In 1995 and 1996, World Vision and Purdue University teamed up to transport, test and disseminate varieties of sorghum resistant to the parasitic weed striga in nine different countries. Follow-on phases of the work in Ghana, funded by British aid, will allow World Vision to lend support to national scientists who wish to transfer the trait from these varieties to their own genetic stocks.
- In Washington DC, talks were concluded recently with USAID and a consortium of US universities whereby World Vision will become the outreach facility for work on the genetic improvement and conservation of cowpea in six west African countries.
- In May 1997, some 30 senior agriculturalists representing 21 countries from Africa and other parts of the world met at the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture to discuss strategic initiatives for increasing agricultural productivity in Africa.

In this context, World Vision has specialised in what I have termed the 'systems management' role for the learning process. Indeed, a 'borderless university' is being created as a result of the organisation's ability to bring together scientists, managers, technicians and the poor in the spirit of resolving the terrible problem of world hunger. Due to problems of economies of scale, some consolidation may even occur in future, perhaps to the point where NGOs employ their own scientists to develop new technologies in collaboration with the poor. Already, a significant amount of 'backlot research' is occurring with 45 postgraduate-level agriculturalists working full-time in 29 African countries.

The NGO/scientist/poor collaboration has become a model initiative wherever the necessary elements can be brought together. One of the most common applications of the model has been in recovery/rehabilitation programmes, where
concerted efforts have been made to use international assistance for the poor. In reality, it is a model which could be applied effectively throughout Africa.

World Vision is currently preparing to launch a major initiative for food security in Africa based largely on the NGO/scientist/poor collaboration model. In the first phase, in 1997, crop improvement and seed supply projects were introduced in a further 15 African countries through a regional initiative known within World Vision as the 'Year of the Seed'. World Vision Australia is the principal supporter of the Year of the Seed, using funds raised from public donations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Crop species</th>
<th>Increase in yield (%)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Angola</td>
<td>Maize</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mali</td>
<td>Sorghum</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Sweet Potato</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mozambique</td>
<td>Sorghum</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zaire</td>
<td>Cowpea</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The success of collaboration

But does collaboration work? The table shows several examples where collaboration between World Vision, various national and international research institutes and the poor, has significantly increased the productivity levels of small scale farmers in Africa.

The Year of the Seed is an exciting start, but there is still a long way to go. Funding for such initiatives is still a major concern. This is a mistake. After all, we are not, as the saying goes, talking about rocket science. These projects are not that expensive. Moreover, they provide an important opportunity for global human interaction. Bilateral agencies eager to develop a positive, vibrant showcase for the application of their resources should take note: in a world where scientific and technological advances are being made at a phenomenal rate, models of collaboration must be developed to enhance efforts to attain an acceptable global level of food security. In this ongoing struggle, World Vision is looking for partners.

* J. Devries is the Director of Agricultural Programs in Africa, World Vision International. This is an edited version of the paper presented by the authors to the conference 'NGOs, scientists and the poor: Competitors, combatants or collaborators?', Canberra, 8 April 1997.
Rural development and women in India: The challenge of improving women’s access to credit under liberalisation

Shishir Sharma and Shankariah Chamala, Department of Agriculture, University of Queensland

The major challenge facing rural development is to maintain and improve women’s access to credit in the current atmosphere of economic liberalisation in India. This means balancing economic efficiency with social equity considerations. Although there has been some increase in women’s access to credit as a result of government intervention in the policies and functioning of banking institutions, there is still a long way to go. We urgently need to build upon the achievements so far, if an accelerated agricultural and rural development is to be achieved. The discussion here refers mainly to poor women who are agriculturalists, small and micro entrepreneurs, in the context of existing rural development policies aimed at small agriculturalists, small farmers and other rural poor entrepreneurs.

Visibility of women in rural development

Building up the access of the rural poor to formal, non-exploitative sources of credit has been an integral part of the strategy for agricultural and rural development in India since Independence (1947). After a comprehensive survey of rural credit in 1951–52, attempts were made to increase credit flow to agriculture. With the onset of the Green Revolution in the 1960s, it became evident that more credit was needed to finance the adoption of new technology for agricultural development. As the existing banking structure was found to be unenthusiastic about providing credit to small agriculturalists and rural entrepreneurs, massive bank nationalisation was undertaken between 1969 and 1980. The nationalised banks and a new set of local rural banking institutions — called ‘Grameen banks’ — were directed to provide finance to this neglected rural population.

Prior to 1969, most surveys, studies and policies in agricultural credit did not consider development differentials between men and women. Women were considered only as part of the rural poor group because of the general assumption in developing countries (Saito and Spurling 1992) that since the major determinants of agricultural productivity were common to all farmers irrespective of gender, all farmers would benefit from strategies such as improving technologies, input and credit supply, infrastructure development and links to markets, etc., irrespective of gender. Since the late 1970s and the 1980s, however, rural development policies have given more attention to women, in recognition of the fact that many of those engaged in agriculture and allied activities were women, who faced greater difficulty in gaining access to such services than men.

Once this visibility was granted to women in rural development policy, more concentrated efforts to provide agricultural and other rural services to women were initiated to increase their productivity. These included appointing women extension workers, setting specific quotas for women in the rural development programmes and educational and other social services, and providing subsidised and cheap credit to women for their enterprises and for agricultural activities. Government made efforts to increase rural women’s access to credit through orienting regulated bank credit towards them. There has thus been a changed focus in development policy and practice favouring equity considerations and more credit for women.
However, it has been generally accepted that there is still a
crying need for further increasing sustainable access to
credit for women in rural areas. It has been argued in many
studies that, in comparison to men, women still have less
access to bank credit. Recently we carried out a study on
rural credit in two villages in northern India, some preliminary
results of which suggested that generally, across different
socioeconomic groups (e.g. class, caste, etc.), women have
less access to credit than men.

Nevertheless, what was very evident was the indication of
an all-encompassing change in gender credit-access
patterns. Women do seem to have gained *some* access to
formal credit, in contrast to their earlier position of almost
total exclusion. Moreover, a higher percentage of women of
low and backward castes had credit access in comparison
with women of higher castes; a higher percentage of women of
low and middle economic status had credit access in
comparison with women of higher economic status; and a
higher percentage of women of landless class had credit
access in comparison with women of landholder class.

The socioeconomic analyses of access for women reflected
that the formal credit system had succeeded to some extent
in increasing women’s access to credit. This has to be seen
in relation to the various government programmes such as
the Integrated Rural Development Programme and the
Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes development
programmes which especially target women of low caste/
class, the landless and poor. It must, however, be pointed
out that, as such programmes are unfortunately marked by
high levels of leakages, their achievements (in respect of
women’s access), although impressive given the
sociopolitical complexity of rural India, are seen as limited
and meagre (except in governmental reports and publicity
materials). Nonetheless, and while we may be treating on
treacherous ground here, it must be admitted that the
improved situation of women’s access could not have emerged
without government intervention in the rural
financial markets, supplying credit with the specific objective
of enabling the adoption of new technology packages for
achieving agricultural development and meeting the rising
foodgrain demands of the nation.

**Credit access to rural women: Constraints and
liberalisation dilemmas**

Undoubtedly, women are still faced with the general credit
access problems of the rural poor as well as problems specific
to their gender. As also noted by Kabeer and Murthy (1996),
while women not only suffer from the same contractual
disadvantages as men of an equivalent class or caste but
face these in a more intensified form, they also suffer from
certain additional gender-specific disadvantages which do
not apply to men. These gender-specific disadvantages may
be seen in the biases and preconceptions embedded in the
bureaucratic norms and credit delivery which often lead to
the exclusion of poor women from the formal credit market,
forcing them to use informal, exploitative sources of credit.

The chief constraints faced specifically by women in access
to bank credit are:

- collateral requirements;
- higher borrower’s transaction costs;
- illiteracy and low educational levels and inability to
  negotiate with the formal institutions;
- social and cultural restrictions on women; and
- the uneconomical subsistence nature of women’s
  agricultural operations (Lycette and White 1989; Holt

The banking institutions in developing countries also
Generally perceive the transaction costs to be higher in the
case of poor women. Incidentally, rural women were unable
to get credit from banks till fairly recently even in developed
countries such as Australia. It would be a truism to say that
in developing countries, credit does not flow to rural poor
women unless directed by the government (or socially
motivated NGOs).

Increasing women’s access to credit in developing countries,
however, is particularly fraught with problems. This is
especially so in the environment of liberalisation. The
economic liberalisation currently underway in India, which
has a special bearing on the agricultural sector, has its own
problems. While steps are being taken to reform policies and
reduce subsidies, more efforts need to be made to increase
both agricultural productivity and production, neither of which
have shown much improvement so far. Foodgrains production
since liberalisation has been near stagnation.

While the phasing out of subsidies in agricultural
development efforts is a part of the goal of economic efficiency, at the small
landholder level this would make inputs such as improved
seeds and fertilisers more expensive, thus entailing more
investment by the landholders and subsequently more
requirement of bank credit for the adoption of new
 technological packages. This is of great significance for the
overall success of liberalisation. As Tabor points out:

> The degree to which the agriculture sector responds
to the changed policy environment is a critical variable
in the entire adjustment process. If agricultural supply
remains depressed, then it will be difficult to finance
imports, to feed the population, and to generate the
employment and incomes vital to stimulating broadly

A number of factors contribute to increasing agricultural
production including the availability and suitability of
technology, extension organisation and the availability of
credit. During the adjustment/liberalisation period, rural
banking institutions need to provide packages that meet the
rural people’s needs within the broad national goals of
increasing productivity and production. Considerations of
economic efficiency and liberalisation of the banking system
might not be enough to orient the banking institutions to
meeting the needs of the rural poor – especially for women. It
hardly needs much skill to foresee that in the absence of social objectives, banking institutions will take the easier course of excluding poor rural women from credit, leaving them prey to exploitative informal sources. Formal credit and rural extension agencies will need to make a more emphatic effort in enabling the rural poor, especially women, to gain greater access to credit in the unregulated banking environment.

Studies in this area have yet to fully deal with the particular problems of ensuring equitable access in the new liberalised atmosphere and of creating strategies to achieve social and gender equity goals under liberalisation. We suggest below one way which might improve poor women's access to credit while ensuring a relatively easy transition period for them.

Maintaining/increasing women's access to formal credit

For agricultural development under liberalisation, an agricultural research system that provides suitable technologies is necessary in order to support agricultural innovation, growth and development (Tabor 1995). In addition, an appropriately designed extension system geared to the special needs of women becomes imperative. Saito and Spurling recommend that, in the case of women, 'services and resources must be targeted to them' and project designs 'should explicitly target women farmers to avoid tokenism' (1992: xvi). At the same time, if women are to be able to use technologies and extension advice it is also important to increase their access to other factors of production. Institutional capacity in terms of research, extension, credit, storage and marketing, along with improved infrastructural facilities, is needed for motivating and educating the farmers. It could also be useful in making the farmers aware of the incentives for increasing production and productivity, thereby building up a better supply response to reform (Tabor 1995) and thus contributing to the goals of growth and liberalisation.

Extension services need to step up their programmes for helping the rural poor in obtaining timely and sufficient credit and in changing credit behaviour - adoption of formal credit, optimal utilisation of borrowed money, and responsible repayment. Extension services have a big role as facilitators and as educators in changing credit behaviour. The catch is that in the atmosphere of economic liberalisation there is a danger of reduction in extension services themselves, as has been reported to be the case in other economies undergoing liberalisation (McIntyre 1995). In such a scenario, extension workers would find more demands being made on them to adapt their traditional roles in accordance with the demands of practice.

Extension education about credit and technological innovations could play a significant role in providing an enabling environment for the introduction and success of group-lending schemes. This would be a significant contribution, as group-lending has immense potential for increasing the access of poor people, especially women, to credit resources which in turn lead to an increase in their productivity. Until women-focused group-lending innovations are completely diffused throughout rural credit practice in India, there is an undeniable need to formalise credit and extension links with particular focus on women. This will ensure that credit will better reach rural women in the transitional phase and will ensure an accelerated agricultural development through sustainable credit access to women. Women extension workers with training in credit support functions might be able to help women in obtaining credit services and this could, thus, be an option in the strategy to both maintain and enhance productivity, production and equity in rural areas.

The use of women's groups for credit and extension delivery might be an effective approach to the problems of gender equity in rural development. Traditional women's groups could be utilised for this purpose. As Saito and Spurling (1992:xv) found:

Most rural communities have a long tradition of women's groups that exchange labor, mobilise savings and credit, help each other, and cooperate in social and ceremonial activities.

Building upon such groups may be a cost-effective way for rural extension services to help poor women in gaining access to credit and in adopting new technologies. Further, the direct employment of para-extension agents by such groups may prove to be an effective way to guarantee an agent's motivation to answer the farmers' needs.

Conclusion

India's economic liberalisation risks increasing gender differentials in credit distribution. Rural extension services could play a crucial role in the long-term success or failure of macro-level policy reforms by placing a check on this growing inequity. Equally importantly, they could ensure the success of the national development endeavour by increasing production and productivity in the globalised agricultural environment.

There is a need for more specific studies focusing on this aspect of maintenance and improvement of gender equity in credit, and on the effects of financial sector reforms on gender differentials in technology adoption, and foodgrains production. There is also a great need for designing appropriate financial technologies/packages for redressing the reduced supply of credit in the deregulated rural credit markets to the rural poor (especially women) and for research and extension personnel to be reoriented towards the needs of rural women in the changing economic environment.

* The authors gratefully acknowledge the editorial help provided by Meenakshi Sharma, Department of English, University of Queensland, Brisbane. More detailed versions of this argument are presented in a paper submitted to the Scandinavian Journal of Development Alternatives.
1 Bakker (1994) and Berger (1995) not excluded. While Bakker only notes that credit access under the regulated regimes reduced women’s access, Berger assumes that the financial sector liberalisation would automatically improve women’s access to credit. On the problem of maintaining women’s access obtained under the regulated period during liberalisation (without necessitating the creation of new institutions), there is inadequate treatment in most of the literature on liberalisation issues, even if there is no ‘silence’.

References

Overview of current economic, strategic and political developments in Southeast and South Asia

Walden Bello, Focus on the Global South Group

Overviews are always broad-strokes affairs that inevitably miss many key dimensions, trends and nuances. And when one tries to select the key developments to emphasise and analyse in such vast regions of the world as Southeast Asia and South Asia, the risks of distortion through omission, overemphasis, or underemphasis are even greater. Nevertheless, let us try, realising full well that the result may be less an objective panorama than a portrait of the cognitive map and biases of the painter.

Southeast Asia – economic developments

Let me begin with the economic dimension in Southeast Asia. A good starting point is the currency crisis that has hit all the major economies in the region: Thailand, the Philippines, Malaysia, Indonesia, and even Singapore. In the case of Thailand, of course, we have seen the sudden, spectacular collapse of the economy. Now the governments would have us believe that the depreciation of currencies, by as much as 25 per cent relative to the dollar in the case of the baht and 10–15 per cent in the case of the peso, rupiah, and ringgit, is the work of speculators, evil people like George Soros trying to make a fortune on shifts in exchange rates that they themselves provoke.

True, speculators have played a role, but the causes of the currency fluctuations are much, much deeper. A currency, it is said, is only as strong as one’s economy. What we see happening in the region today is the crisis of a model of development that is highly dependent on foreign capital inflows. The current crisis is traceable back to the Plaza Accord of 1985, which forced the drastic appreciation of the yen relative to the dollar as a way of solving the US trade deficit with Japan. This made continued production of manufactured exports within Japan quite prohibitive, forcing the Japanese conglomerates to relocate the more labour-intensive phases of their production systems in East and Southeast Asia. Some US$15 billion worth of Japanese direct investment, a large portion in the form of industrial plant and technology, flowed into the region in one of the largest and swiftest flows of capital to the Third World in recent history. Of course, it was not just Japanese direct investment that flowed in, but also Japanese capital in the form of bank loans, government loans, and government grants. Also, Japanese direct investment triggered a flow of ancillary capital from Korea, Taiwan, and Hong Kong which at times was even bigger than Japanese capital.

Just to give you a sense of the dimensions of this inflow of Japanese capital, let me cite three facts:

- in 1987, Thailand received more Japanese investment than it received in the previous 20 years;
- Indonesia now has a total stock of US$18 billion worth of Japanese direct investment, and Japan is also that country’s top creditor and top aid donor; and
- the Japanese conglomerate Matsushita Electrical Company’s operations alone are said to account for between four and five per cent of Malaysia’s gross domestic product.

There were several consequences of these developments. First, it lifted the region’s economies from the deep recession of the mid-1980s. Second, it gave these countries leverage vis-à-vis the IMF and the World Bank to forestall or abort the structural adjustment of their economies then being pushed on them by the World Bank and the IMF.

Third, the combination of massive capital inflow and avoidance of structural adjustment allowed these countries, with the exception of the Philippines, to undergo a decade of rapid growth. Here the comparison with the Philippines and Latin America is instructive. For in contrast to Southeast Asia, Latin America and the Philippines were boycotted by foreign capital because of the debt crisis and were subjected to ten years of structural adjustment. Unlike its neighbours, the Philippines was skirted by Japanese capital because of severe political instability at the time of the transition from the Marcos dictatorship to a democratic government, which was interrupted by six coup attempts. In any event, in the Philippines and Latin America, there was a decade-long recession marked by zero or minimal growth rates.

The point here is that the difference in the economic record of the two groups is not accounted for by policies of deregulation, privatisation, and free market reform; but by an external factor, the massive inflow of foreign capital. In Malaysia and Indonesia, government continued to be the most significant economic actor, with a highly interventionist role, while in Thailand, technocrats moved to a second stage of import substitution, or building up an intermediate and capital goods industry via protectionist trade policies.

But to return to our narrative: in the early 1990s, the flow of direct investment, Japanese and otherwise, began to significantly decline. By that time, however, the prosperity triggered by Japanese direct investment had begun to attract new players, this time portfolio investors, particularly the
managers of mutual funds that tapped into pension funds and other savings in the US who were looking for quick and easy returns for the massive amounts of capital in their trust.

To attract these capitalists in order to trigger a second stage of foreign-capital fuelled growth, what were now called the new newly industrialising countries or tiger cubs or baby dragons, adopted a similar set of macroeconomic policies:

- First, foreign exchange restrictions were abolished or eased, stock exchanges were opened to foreign investors, and foreign banks were attracted with more liberal lending rules, including allowing the making of dollar loans to local borrowers.

- Second, interest rates were kept high (higher than comparative benchmarks like US interest rates) in order to suck in foreign capital.

- Third, the local currency, while not formally fixed to a particular rate of exchange, was informally pegged to a stable rate fixed to the dollar via periodic interventions in the foreign exchange market by the central monetary authority. This was to eliminate or reduce currency risk for both foreign investors and local borrowers. These policies were immensely successful in attracting portfolio investment, with Thailand's Bangkok International Banking Facility, for instance, attracting over US$50 billion over just three years.

It soon became clear, however, that portfolio investment was not an unmixed blessing. They were, for one, extremely volatile — coming in one day, leaving the next, as it were, in search of higher returns elsewhere. As the managing director of the Philippine Central Bank put it, in an era of globalised markets brought about by financial liberalisation, billions of dollars worth of funds can be moved across the globe 'at the tap of a finger'.

Further, these funds zeroed in on those parts of the domestic economy that promised a high rate of return with a quick turnaround time and, invariably, from Bangkok to Kuala Lumpur, this was the real estate sector. Manufacturing and agriculture were dismissed as low-yield sectors, where decent rates of return to capital could, moreover, be achieved only with significant amounts of investment over the long term. Bondholders and mutual fund shareholders could not wait that long.

So great were the prospects in real estate that even manufacturers gambled their profits in property rather than reinvesting it in upgrading their technology or the skills of their workers, an absolute necessity in the intense global competition for markets. Not surprisingly, the growth in the region's manufactured exports slowed down. In the case of Thailand, the export powerhouse of the early 1990s, manufactured exports registered zero growth in 1996. Not surprisingly, the property sector became overheated in Bangkok, Manila and Kuala Lumpur.

By 1995, the inevitable glut came to Bangkok, with the consequent domino effect of developers with unsold spanking new residential and commercial units dragging their financiers into bankruptcy with their non-performing loans.

With similar gluts expected to develop in Manila, Kuala Lumpur, Jakarta, and even Ho Chi Minh City, portfolio investors began to grow skittish. Skittishness began to turn to panic when investors took other dimensions of the economy into account, particularly widening current account deficits owing to the slow growth of exports, anemic local manufacturing sectors, and troubled or stagnant agricultural sectors. They started withdrawing capital from these markets, resulting in plunges in stock market indicators throughout the region. It was this rapid deflation of confidence among foreign investors that created the climate for the recent speculative attack on the Thai baht, the Philippine peso, the Malaysian ringgit, and the Indonesian rupiah.

I have spent a great deal of time on the recent crisis because it is a milestone, because it ushers in the end of the so-called Southeast Asian miracle.

Let me move now to ask the question: what is the legacy of this era of rapid growth, besides the scores of unoccupied high-rise buildings in Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur?

Social and ecological considerations

True, average per capita income, a standard measure of economic improvement, rose rapidly in all countries. But these figures masked several negative distributional phenomena. One is that income distribution has worsened along with rapid growth, a fact acknowledged by a recent World Bank study. Thailand, for instance, has become one of the most unequal societies in the world, with an income distribution very similar to Brazil's: the proportion of household income going to the top 20 per cent of households rose from 50 per cent in 1970-75 to 53 per cent in 1989-94, while that going to the bottom 40 per cent of households declined from 15 to 14 per cent.

Another problem is that the rural areas have been left behind by a process of development that has benefited mainly the cities. In Thailand, the development process has benefited mainly the 15 per cent of the population that lives in Bangkok, leaving a very significant part of the population — estimated at 30 per cent — trapped in poverty.

A third problem is that the development has been gender-biased. Despite the fact that the 'Southeast Asian miracle' has depended on women's labour, especially in the electronics and garment industries, women have not benefited equitably in the process. Indeed, it has impacted on them negatively in many ways. Market reforms in Vietnam resulted in a significant spread of prostitution. One of the consequences of the Thai boom has been the systematisation and expansion of the involuntary recruitment not only of Thai rural women, but also women from Thailand's cultural minorities and from Burma, for a sex trade that reaches as far as Japan.
A fourth problem is that growth has been a process that has involved a massive rundown of natural capital and a massive externalisation of environmental costs, leading to a sharply deteriorated ecological base for the present and future generation.

In Indonesia, logging practices, including a concession system that benefits mainly business interests allied to President Suharto, are said to be responsible for a deforestation rate of 2.4 million hectares a year, one of the highest in the world. Industrial pollution is significant in centres like Jakarta and Surabaya, with about 73 per cent of water samples taken in Jakarta discovered to be highly contaminated by chemical pollutants. Already one of the most thickly populated places on the globe, the island of Java sees about 40,000 hectares of agricultural land converted to industrial and residential areas every year, contributing to a decline of 600,000 tons in rice production.

In the Malaysian state of Sarawak, loggers eliminated 30 per cent of the forest area in barely 23 years and are expected to eat up the rest by the year 2000. Meanwhile, in Peninsular Malaysia, only 27 per cent of 116 rivers surveyed were said to be ‘pollution free’, the rest being ranked either ‘biologically dead’ or ‘dying’. Thailand is an ecological disaster area, with only 17 per cent of its land area now occupied by forests — and this is an underestimate. The great Chao Phraya River which runs through Bangkok is biologically dead in its lower reaches. Only 50,000 metric tons of the 3.5 million metric tons of hazardous waste produced each year are treated, the rest being disposed of in ways that pose a severe threat to public health. So dangerous is Bangkok’s air by northern standards that a University of Hawaii team measuring air pollution refused to return to the city for fear of incurring lung cancer.

Political trends

What has been the main political development over the last few years? Well, I think it has been the stalling of the democratic revolution after the unhorsing of the Suchinda dictatorship in 1992, and the ideological and political counteroffensive mounted by authoritarian regimes under the banner of ‘Asian values’.

As formulated by its prime exponent, Senior Minister Lee Kwan Yew of Singapore, Asian values or ‘Asian governance’ ideology holds that Asians, like good Confucians, value order over change, hierarchy over equality, and cooperation and mutual respect over conflict between the elite and the masses. Moreover, Asians have their own forms of governance that do not have the Western emphasis on individual rights, electoral competition, the free press, free assembly, and checks and balances. Let me just say that when I first came across Lee’s list of supposed Asian values, I saw values that were not so much specific to Asian culture as good British, upper-class Tory values dear to threatened elites everywhere. It was not without good reason that one British cabinet minister once referred to Lee, when he was still known as Harry Lee, as the ‘best bloody Englishman East of Suez’.

This paper was originally prepared for the Hivos Partner Consultation, Trivandrum, Kerala, India, 1–3 September 1997, and is reprinted with the kind permission of the author.
The state in a changing world:
Highlights from the
1997 World Development Report*

Martin Minogue, Charles Polidano and David Hulme, Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester

The 1997 World Development Report represents the World Bank's current position on the role of government in a post-adjustment world of liberalisation, deregulation and other forms of policy change attributed to a 'new public management revolution'.

• In evaluating developmental success and failure, 'the determining factor ... is the effectiveness of the state'.

• The sheer size of government, measured by total state expenditure as a proportion of GDP (some 50 per cent in OECD countries, nearly 30 per cent in developing countries) gives the central state an irreducible role in economic and social development.

• There is a clear relationship between 'good government' - a combination of good policies and stable institutions - and levels of economic growth: this is expressed in the Report as a 'credibility index'.

• The obvious path, therefore, to economic success is to make the state work better - to raise its level of 'credibility'. Two forms of strategy could help achieve this.

• One strategy is to match the state's role to its capability. Warns the Bank: 'many states try to do too much with few resources ... and often do more harm than good'.

• Another strategy move commended in the Report is to 'raise state capability by reinvigorating public institutions'. By this is meant creating effective rules and restraints, sponsoring greater competition in service provision, applying measures to monitor performance gains, and achieving a more responsive mix of central and local governance by steering policies in the direction of greater decentralisation.

Some of this analysis will excite controversy, not least the weight given to the perceptions of a particular group - private businessmen - and to the promotion of private markets as the most significant purpose of government. Nonetheless, the Report is a manifest departure from the Bank's earlier position on the role of the state.

* This overview is based on a paper presented at an international conference on 'Public sector management for the next century', organised by the Institute for Development Policy and Management at the University of Manchester, UK, 29 June - 2 July 1997. A book based on conference proceedings, edited by the above authors, will appear in 1998. Contact IDPM for further details.
What our readers think of us: Results of the questionnaire survey

Nguyen Huu Dung, National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University

Over the past few months, we have been conducting a survey of readers' evaluations of the content and format of the Development Bulletin. The aim of the survey was to improve the quality of the Bulletin by better responding to the needs of our subscribers. A questionnaire was attached to the July 1997 issue of the Bulletin, which many of you took the time and trouble to complete. We are now able to present a summary of the results, based on a large number of responses from Australia and overseas.

Respondents' background

Subscribers to the Bulletin, both in Australia and overseas, work in a broad spectrum of development-related disciplines and fields, including agric business, demography, economics, education and geography. In Australia, feedback to the questionnaire came from all states and territories. Most Australian respondents are aged between 35 and 64 years, and are associated with tertiary institutions and non-government organisations (NGOs). Others work with government agencies, consulting companies and other institutions.

On average, respondents had subscribed to the Bulletin for about five years. Female and male subscribers in Australia accounted for 39 per cent and 61 per cent, respectively.

Overseas responses to the questionnaire came from 12 countries. The majority of overseas subscribers are aged between 25 and 54 years, and work with NGOs and other institutions, while some others work in tertiary institutions and governmental agencies. Their average subscription time is three years. A few overseas readers have subscribed for the full 11 years, while others have only recently started subscribing. The proportion of female and male subscribers is roughly equal.

Bulletin's sections

On average, Australian subscribers found the Bulletin very useful. There were no cases where subscribers thought that the Bulletin was less than useful. Three sections - Features, Briefing papers and Publications - were rated, on average, as very useful. Features was the most highly rated section, and was seen as providing a wide range of interesting coverage. Briefing papers usually met the interest of subscribers, especially with regard to contemporary issues. Publications helped readers keep in touch with current literature. Readers also reported finding the book reviews useful as a guide to further reading.

Next in rank were five sections: Resources, Conferences, From the Field, Updates and Viewpoint. The majority of subscribers reported finding these sections useful and very useful. Of the remainder, however, subscribers' opinions with regard to these sections were rather divided. On the one hand, some found them excellent because they provided required information. On the other hand, some reported finding them of little use or 'irrelevant'. With regard to the remaining two sections, From the Press and Courses, most subscribers found them useful. However, in contrast to other sections, there was a higher degree of difference between subscribers in assessing their usefulness, which ranged from 'no use at all' to 'excellent'.

The opinions of overseas subscribers on the usefulness of the Bulletin's sections were more focused. All overseas readers reported that they found the Bulletin 'very useful' and 'excellent'. Most subscribers found the sections Resources, Publications, Conferences and Viewpoint very useful. Resources and Publications ranked highest, and were mostly assessed as 'very useful' and 'excellent'. According to subscribers they provided much needed information on community development and library procurement. From the Press, Updates, Features, Courses, Briefing papers and From the Field were evaluated as 'useful' or 'very useful'.

Most subscribers, Australian and overseas, either read all sections or scan them to find topics of interest. Some subscribers reported that they never read certain sections, such as Courses, From the Press, Updates, Conferences, Publications, Viewpoint and Briefing papers, because they were of no interest.

Fifty six per cent of Australian subscribers believed that there was no need to add new sections to the Bulletin, while 42 per cent suggested new sections or topics. These included brief notes on interesting changes in economic and social trends; consultancies; country reflections, e.g. PNG education system before independence compared with the present position; critiques of AusAID projects and Australian corporations, e.g. analysis of the psychology of AusAID, mining in PNG; development in practice; events in Australia; feedback/letters from readers; grants; international relations; Internet and consulting news; keys to growth; issues relating to Aboriginal people in Australia; NGO activities; photographic essays on development; project reviews; resource development; role of voluntary bodies; and a UN section, including its reforms, conferences and treaties.

About half of the overseas subscribers saw no need to add new sections to the Bulletin, while the rest said yes. The sections they would like to see introduced included: features on information technology; gender issues; human rights; important economic data; infrastructure development; monitoring of development policy; NGO activities; and issues related to peace.
With regard to the inserts, Australian subscribers reported finding them useful sometimes (46 per cent), often (48 per cent) and always (six per cent). Overseas subscribers found the inserts useful sometimes (40 per cent), never (27 per cent), always (27 per cent) and often (seven per cent).

**Bulletin's coverage**

Most Australian and overseas respondents found that the issues covered by the Bulletin were very topical and dealt with in depth. However the opinions of Australians on this issue were more varied than those of overseas readers.

There were some areas which both Australian and overseas respondents thought needed more coverage. According to the order of priority of the respondents, these areas were:

**Australian subscribers:** aid delivery/policy; NGO and community work; trade; human rights; international bodies; environment; indigenous issues; governance; health and population; work and labour; children and youth; and gender and sexuality.

Other areas which respondents felt needed more coverage were North-South relations; technology/industry; education, especially informal education in rural areas; politics of development; international relations and conflict resolution; the arts; global issues such as world population growth, future availability of fresh water and food in the third world; aboriginal resource rights; social security in Australia; and education in Australia.

**Overseas subscribers:** children and youth; work and labour; health and population; aid delivery/policy; indigenous issues; human rights; international bodies; NGO and community; environment; trade; governance; gender and sexuality; and country specific coverage, e.g. Nepal.

**Bulletin's quality and value**

With regard to the Bulletin's value, 88 per cent of Australian and overseas respondents were satisfied with the quality of the journal. Twelve per cent, however, expressed various opinions on this issue, for example wishing the Bulletin would improve its indexing system and expand the coverage of feature articles to include additional areas listed above.

**Bulletin's presentation and layout**

Most subscribers reported being satisfied with the presentation of the Bulletin, with 84 per cent of Australian respondents and 87 per cent of overseas respondents saying they found the Bulletin's layout to be 'very good' to 'excellent'. The majority of respondents believe that there was no need to change the presentation of the Bulletin. Twenty-four per cent of Australian readers and 31 per cent of overseas readers, however, suggested some changes to the presentation. Some would prefer, for example, that the Bulletin be published more frequently, say every two months, in a smaller, less formal format. Others would like to see more articles, open topics, a diversity of themes and e-mail addresses in the Bulletin. There were also suggestions that the Bulletin include an editorial board and annual prizes, for example, for the best articles and Briefing papers.

**Other information**

There were many channels through which subscribers first knew about the Bulletin. Australian subscribers heard about the Bulletin mainly through AusAID, the Australian National University (ANU) and conferences. Other sources included workshops, training courses, postgraduate study courses, personal contact with staff from the ANU, the National Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) and the Australian Development Studies Network, and from colleagues, friends and relatives. The NCDS mailing list, libraries and the offices of private companies were additional sources.

Overseas readers knew about the Bulletin from other development publications, e-mail, libraries, international newspapers, the National University of Singapore, the ANU and NCDS. They also heard about it through personal contact with university and Network staff, and from friends and colleagues.

**Conclusion**

Overall, we were encouraged by the results of the survey, particularly the fact that virtually all subscribers agreed that they would recommend the Bulletin to their friends and colleagues. While there is always room for improvement, there appears to be a high level of satisfaction amongst our readers with both the content and presentation of the journal. This is reflected by the fact that while the Bulletin is able to maintain a solid core of 'traditional' subscribers who have been reading the journal since its inception 11 years ago, it is also able to attract a steady stream of fresh subscribers.

As far as readers' recommendations are concerned, we will certainly give these serious consideration, particularly the suggestions for new topics and sections. Interestingly, one of the topics which was given high priority by both Australian and overseas readers—children and development—has ended up as our focus for this issue.

Whether or not you completed the questionnaire, we invite you to share your ideas, recommendations and suggestions. Original contributions are always welcome, whether in the form of discussion papers, Updates or reports From the Field. If you feel strongly about a particular issue (e.g. human rights, tied aid, structural adjustment, participation in development), why not write a short piece for Viewpoint? Read a good book lately? Share your thoughts on it by preparing a book review. Reviews of films with a development focus are also welcome.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone who took the trouble to participate. Your continuing support and feedback is highly valued—indeed, we are depending on you!
Almost one million children in southern and central Iraq are chronically malnourished, according to a recent survey.

A Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) was carried out by the Government of Iraq with the full participation of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). A total of 6,375 households were surveyed – 425 households in each of the 15 governorates of southern and central Iraq. Each governorate had two survey teams, including two CSO interviewers and a Ministry of Health representative. UNICEF worked with the surveyors to check all data. Field work was completed by 5 September 1996 and analysis began after further checks and return visits were made to clarify all details. The survey looked at a range of health, nutrition and education issues – from immunisation and safe water to school enrolment rates.

A nutritional status survey of children under five years of age was conducted between 12 and 14 April 1997 in 87 primary health centres throughout southern and central Iraq. A total of 15,466 children aged 0-59 months were measured for weight and length to provide additional baseline information on SCR 986/1111, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding under Food Items (No. 38).

A further nutritional status survey of infants was conducted between 27 October and 2 November 1997 at the same primary health centres throughout southern and central Iraq. A total of 3,153 children aged 0-11 months were measured for weight and length in order to provide timely follow-up on SCR 986/1111.

The most alarming results are those on malnutrition, with 32 per cent of children under the age of five, some 960,000 children, chronically malnourished – a rise of 72 per cent since 1991. Almost one quarter (around 23 per cent) are underweight – twice as high as the levels found in neighbouring Jordan or Turkey.

All three surveys found that around one quarter of children under the age of five were underweight, with no improvement since the first survey was carried out in 1996. There was little or no improvement in the figures for underweight infants in 1997, with 14.6 per cent of infants underweight in October, compared to 14.7 per cent in April.

Some areas have been particularly badly hit, with the MICS results from the Governorate of Missan, in the east of the country, showing chronic malnutrition in almost half the children under the age of five.

There is also concern at the low primary school enrolment rate across southern and central Iraq which, according to the MICS, stands at 73 per cent of children aged 6 to 11 years. This suggests that around one quarter of primary school age children are not in school at all.
'It is clear that children are bearing the brunt of the current economic hardship,' says Philippe Heffinck, UNICEF representative in Baghdad. 'They must be protected from the impact of sanctions. Otherwise, they will continue to suffer, and that we cannot accept.'

The MICS also reveals serious problems in rural areas, where only 50 per cent of people have access to a water supply from a network, public tap or well, compared to 96 per cent of people living in towns and cities. Only 34 per cent have a sanitary type of latrine, compared to 97 per cent of the urban population. Immunisation rates are some 10 to 15 per cent lower in rural areas and the survey found similar gaps in the proportion of rural children who have received Vitamin A supplements and on the numbers entering primary school.

Unexpectedly perhaps, the rural–urban division evaporates when it comes to malnutrition, with children no more malnourished in the countryside than in the towns and cities. Ready access to locally produced food and higher incidence of breastfeeding provide at least some protection for rural children who, according to the survey, lag behind in so many other areas.

The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey does reveal some positive, as well as negative, trends. Around half of all children surveyed had received at least one dose of Vitamin A, and immunisation coverage remains adequate, with at least 80 per cent of children aged one to two years immunised against measles. The survey reveals no significant gender disparities between boys and girls in any of the areas examined.

UNICEF is working throughout Iraq to tackle child malnutrition by organising training workshops for nutrition workers and promoting the benefits of breastfeeding. UNICEF also supports growth monitoring in 1,000 community child care units and therapeutic feeding in 60 Nutrition Rehabilitation centres.

Women bring about behavioural change in India

In Parakasam district of Andhra Pradesh, India, women’s involvement in water management and sanitation in 26 fluoride-affected villages has made a difference. Under the Chandavaram Scheme of a joint project between the Royal Netherlands Government and the Government of Andhra Pradesh, protected drinking water was to be supplied to the villages. After the technical component of the project had been implemented, the Society for National Integration through Rural Development (SNIRD), a local NGO, was made responsible for implementing the community participation aspect, through the Netherlands Project Office as monitoring agency. The objectives of the ‘community education in water management and sanitation promotion’ included awareness raising among women, school children and youth on water, sanitation and hygiene behaviour; setting up village-level operation and maintenance committees; supporting Gram Panchayats in developing the project according to felt needs; and enhancing leadership qualities in informal and formal leaders.

Two-fold strategy

The first step in the two-fold strategy to reach the objectives is the promotion of village-level institutions. For each public standpost, five women members are identified who form the public standpost committee. Once a month they meet to discuss health, hygiene and sanitation and maintenance of water supply systems. Eighteen-member village action committees are also formed, half of whose members are women. The decision making body meets once a month to discuss water supply systems. To actively involve younger members of the community, youth groups are formed in each village which meet monthly regarding water management and sanitation promotion activities. Bi-weekly school health programmes raise awareness on health, hygiene and nutrition and school health clubs are also promoted to encourage involvement in school sanitation. Through training, women’s hygiene practices and skills in water management and sanitation are improved, and campaigns and cultural programmes create awareness among the community as a whole.

The second step, which is included in the technical component of the programme, includes reinforcement of awareness and training in management of the water systems. This part of the programme is designed and formulated from a women’s perspective as each all-women public standpost committee is formed. The committee members number public standposts, handpumps and wells for monitoring purposes, share responsibility in keeping the platforms and drainage areas clean and chlorinating the wells regularly, and carry out minor standpost repairs. They assess the supply of protected water at each standpost and produce monthly reports. Of all the standpost committees formed, some 70 per cent were found to be very active during the most recent project phase.
The village action committees contribute to the maintenance of the overhead storage reservoir areas. Their enthusiastic efforts in improving fencing, planting flowers and removing thorn bushes have led to nearly park-like reservoir areas in two of the villages. Formal village-level mahila sangams (women’s groups) are formed, and these in turn are involved in a thrift programme, to contribute to maintenance costs. The mahila members are also involved in kitchen garden promotion under a wastewater management and nutrition programme.

Monitoring indicators for the programme include maintenance of water supply systems, participation of the community in the programme components, women’s involvement and development, and resource mobilisation and awareness level within the target villages.

Noticeable behavioural changes

Before SNIRD began its community participation project, the women used protected water for washing clothes, as the water had a chlorine odour. They would wash their clothes on the platform of the water sources, affecting the sanitation situation adversely. Now, aware of fluoride in underground water, the women only use the protected water for drinking purposes. The protected water is supplied every second day, and the women properly store it in their homes. The community members did not feel a sense of ownership of the overhead storage reservoirs which held the water supply and the area around the reservoirs was used for defecation. With raised awareness on water management, water committees have taken the initiative to maintain the water sources properly, and mothers no longer allow their children to defecate in the reservoir area. Education and awareness raising has also contributed to noticeable increases in awareness of diarrhoea treatment, filtering and boiling drinking water, and awareness of the overall village environment.

Reprinted from Water Newsletter, No. 250, July 1997, pp.2–3
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Child labour spawns shameful litany of abuse and mutilation

The list is long and shameful, from lung diseases to bone deformation, from chemical poisoning to sexual abuse; children world-wide are victims in the labour market. The litany of abuse has been exposed here this week at an international conference on child labour convened by the Norwegian Government and attended by government ministers from 39 countries, United Nations agencies, NGOs, trade unions and child-labour experts.

Hard facts are difficult to come by, but the International Labour Organisation has estimated that as many as 250 million children are being made to work when they should be at school. That conceals a broad spectrum of activities from the relatively benign to the positively lurid, which in some of the worst cases hearken back to the dark recesses of the Middle Ages.

Pesticides are also potential killers of child labourers in the tobacco plantations of Zimbabwe and the cornfields of the United States. The ILO has estimated that agricultural employment accounts for 70 per cent of the injuries and illnesses contracted by child labourers ...

In carpet factories in Rajastan, India, where child employment has trebled in the last year, loom owners regularly scraped sulphur from matches on to the children's wounds and then set the wounds on fire to stop the bleeding. ... Children are also being badly abused in the building industry, according to the ILO—citing Pakistan, Portugal and Italy. They are forced to lug heavy loads and are often the victims of bone-crushing falls and debilitating back injuries.

Even in the United States where children work in pizza delivery, car washes, fast-food outlets, or out in the fields, the Labour Department registered 48 child deaths and 128,000 injuries for 1987–88.

*The Canberra Times*, 31 October 1997, p.9

Children living in a world with AIDS

Everyday, 1,000 children are infected with HIV. UNAIDS estimates that, by the end of 1997, one million children under the age of 15 will be living with the virus and suffering the physical and psychological consequences of the infection.

If the spread of HIV is not immediately contained, the gains registered in reducing infant and child death rates will be reversed in many countries. Estimates quoted in UNAIDS' report indicates that, by the year 2010, AIDS may increase infant mortality by as high as 75 per cent and under-five mortality by 100 per cent in the most hard-hit countries in the world.

*Christian Relief & Development Association News*, September 1997, p.3
Children pay the price of sanctions

[Apart from the sale and use of landmines], there are two other examples of indiscriminate threats to children perpetrated by Western governments. The first of these is the sanctions policy directed against Iraq by (of all institutions) the United Nations. The second is the trade embargo which the United States has unilaterally operated against Cuba for almost 40 years. ... [While] there are signs of renewed pressure inside the UN bureaucracy for an easing of the sanctions in order to relieve the suffering of Iraqi children ... there is no sign of relaxation towards Cuba. On the contrary, the American stranglehold has been tightened as Washington seeks to enforce a recent Act of Congress which, in defiance of international law, imposes tough penalties on foreign firms which try to breach the unilateral blockade.

What this means for the children of Cuba is well known in Washington, because a recent study by the American committee attached to the World Health Organisation has spelled it all out in grim detail. Its findings, recorded in the British Medical Journal, were that the American blockade has caused a significant rise in suffering and death in Cuba, especially since the collapse of the Soviet bloc deprived the island of its main source of medical supplies. After noting that a recent outbreak of serious eye disease affecting 50,000 Cubans was directly attributable to the undernourishment caused by the embargo, the report goes on to pass this verdict. 'Few other embargoes in recent history – including those targeting Iran, Libya, South Africa, Chile or Iraq – have included an outright ban on the sale of food. Few other embargoes have so restricted medical commerce as to deny the availability of life-saving medicine to ordinary citizens. Such an embargo appears to violate the most basic international conventions governing human rights, including the Geneva Convention governing the treatment of civilians during wartime.' What's more, as the BMJ points out, Cuba isn't even at war with America.


UN warns Asia-Pacific of AIDS cost blow-out

AIDS would become the scourge of Asian economies and the region's governments had to step up efforts to head off a health disaster, a UN official warned yesterday. ... Indochina States, India, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics had seen the most rapid rises in infections in recent years, he said. He gave no cost figures for Asia, but cited estimates that by 2007, Cambodia would be spending $2.8 billion every year in relation to AIDS.

The Australian, 27 October 1997, p.6

New untied aid loans tipped

Any future loans scheme attached to the Australian aid budget will be tied to the interests of poor recipient countries and not Australian companies. Foreign Minister Alexander Downer will table today the Government's response to the Simons Review of the Government's $1.4 billion aid programme, which accepts the review's major recommendation to untie $650 million spent exclusively with Australian companies. He will reinforce the Government's commitment to an aid budget target of 0.7 per cent of GNP.

The Canberra Times, 18 November 1997, p.5

Foreign-aid policy announced

More than 40 per cent of Australia's $1.4 billion aid budget would remain tied to Australian providers of aid, Foreign Minister Alexander Downer said yesterday. Thus the Government has rejected a major recommendation of the Simons review of overseas aid funding, though it has not ruled out a subsidised or soft-loans scheme for poor countries when budgetary circumstances allow. Tabling the review in Parliament, Mr Downer restated the Government's commitment to focusing the program on poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

Recommendations the Government accepted include:

- The geographic focus of Australia's aid should remain, in descending order, on Papua New Guinea and the Pacific, East Asia, South Asia, Africa and the Middle East.
- Priority to education, health, infrastructure, rural development and governance.
- The establishment of an aid advisory committee.

The Canberra Times, 19 November 1997, p.4

Mapping the mines that maim

Buried land mines as small as 10 centimetres across can be detected by a radar being developed by the Pentagon. Fitted to a robot aircraft, the radar could map minefields without anyone setting foot in them. No other ground-penetrating radar has been able to identify mines this small.

The tests at Yuma Proving Ground in Arizona showed that at low frequencies the radar can penetrate both foliage and a few centimetres into the soil. The radar successfully detected 35-centimetre anti-tank mines and Valmara 69 antipersonnel mines, which are a particular problem in northern Iraq, where the mines have been laid by Saddam Hussein's forces in their confrontation with the Kurds. The radar was unable to detect buried plastic mines, but the project manager hopes that the researchers will be able to develop computer algorithms that will pick them out from the radar data.

New Scientist, 26 April 1997, p.24
Workers go through hell for leather

An internal audit for the multinational sports goods company Nike has found that employees at its shoe factory near Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, work in profoundly unhealthy conditions and most suffer respiratory problems caused by prolonged exposure to carcinogens.

Auditors Ernst and Young found the largely female workforce at the Korean-owned Tae Kwang Vina Industrial factory, in the Bien Hoa Industrial Zone, was exposed to carcinogens, forced to work up to 65 hours a week and earned only slightly more than $US10 ($14.40) a week. ... The audit said the factory 'lacks adequate safety equipment and training, encourages excess overtime and exposes workers to hazardous chemicals, noise, heat and dust'. It revealed the presence of carcinogens, such as the solvent toluene, in the factory's air exceeded the permissible local legal standards by 177 times. Vietnamese standards were reported to be four times as strict as in the US. ... The report cited 43 cases where employees were required to work above the maximum 50 hours and 104 cases where workers were aged under 18. ...

Details of the report, prepared last January, were published in The New York Times, to whom they were leaked by a disgruntled Nike employee ...

The Australian, 11 November 1997, p.8

IMF holds tight rein on Asia rescue

East Asia's aspirations to establish a major new regional fund to substitute for the more punitive pro-market International Monetary Fund were buried in Manila yesterday in a compromise decision at a 13-nation meeting. The stage is set for leaders meeting in Canada next week at the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum to endorse measures to help prevent financial meltdowns in Asia and a new arrangement by which IMF support to regional nations can be augmented.

[It was confirmed that] the recent IMF support package for Indonesia was the model for this framework. The result is a long way from the initial Japanese proposal for a $US100 billion ($143 billion) fund outside IMF rules — an idea which was seized upon by South-East Asian leaders reeling from the currency crisis. The upshot is that the US and the IMF have carried the day in defining the new arrangements. ...

[The] key section of the decision specifies that the new financing arrangement for the region must occur with IMF consultation, apply only to IMF-supported programmes and operate as a second 'line' augmenting resources made available by the IMF.

The Australian, 20 November 1997, p.7

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female/male = females as a % of males
(from PNG Social Development Newsletter, October 1997, p.9)

Among the dying

After three years of massive crop failures, North Korea cannot feed itself. The North Koreans try to blame the famine on floods in 1995 and 1996 and a drought in 1997. In fact, most experts say that roots of the famine lie more in the withdrawal of Soviet assistance to North Korea in 1989, and to years of disastrous agricultural policies ... Staff of the Food and Agriculture Organization predict that the country's early November harvest of cereals will barely last four months ...

In the Tokchon nursery, attendance had fallen to 15 percent of enrolment until WFP supplies arrived. Eight children, sitting cross-legged in front of their cots, looked about 18 months old. They were actually 4 years old. Six had lost their hair; all had open, festering sores, twiglike limbs and bow-legs. [We] clapped to get their attention, but they sat and stared listlessly into space, as flies hovered over their faces. Western donors and American nutritionists fear many children may be damaged for life.

UN war on waste saves millions

The UN says it has recovered $US30 million ($43 million) through a campaign against waste and corruption but cautions that much remains to be done to combat inefficiency in the global organisation.

UN inspector-general Karl Paschke said in a report last week that millions more had probably been saved by discouraging fraud and tightening controls on spending. ... His report says almost all UN operations ... suffer from poor accounting, favouritism in awarding contracts and disregard for UN regulations.

Mr Paschke said many UN offices operated as if they were under no obligation to follow regulations laid down in New York. ... [The] report found that an official of the UN agency that assists Palestinian refugees siphoned off thousands of dollars in bogus medical claims. UN officials said investigators were looking into several cases where staffers awarded lucrative contracts to lovers or friends.

The Australian, 4 November 1997, p.8

Major de-mining effort underway by World Bank and other donors in Bosnia and Herzegovina

For the first time in its 52 year history, the World Bank is financing landmine clearance in Bosnia and Herzegovina, where, 20 months after the war’s end, landmines continue to claim lives and impede progress in the region. The World Bank’s efforts are part of an ongoing $16.2 million multi-donor de-mining effort ... in Bosnia and Herzegovina. While other donors, including the European Commission, the United States, and the United Nations have financed activities related to preventing further mine accidents (training, awareness-raising and institution building), the World Bank, using its own resources and grants from Italy, the Netherlands and Canada, is concentrating on mine-clearing activities in both the Federation and Republika Srpska.

World Bank News, 28 August 1997, p.8

Tobacco plague

Illnesses related to smoking could kill 150 million smokers in China, a study published in the Journal of American Medical Association says.

‘About half of the 300 million smokers in China will eventually die of smoking-related diseases if urgent tobacco-control measures are not instituted to prevent this growing epidemic,’ the study by researchers at the University of Hong Kong said.

The Australian, 13 November 1997, p.10
Rethinking development and the role of development cooperation

Sida-Sandy, Sweden, 14–18 June 1997

Development studies should make a meaningful contribution to the process of development: there is no moral justification for intellectual voyeurism. And yet, development has been likened by Michael Edwards (1989: 124) to a 'spectator sport' with the poor being treated as 'laboratory specimens', according to David Lehmann (1997: 577). Academic careers have been built upon the plight of the world's disadvantaged people, but, hand on heart, how much difference has our work ever made to their predicament? Not everyone will agree with these sentiments, of course, but they are relevant to the current debate on the meaning and direction of 'development' as we claw a way out of the post-Marxian impasse (Booth 1994). Conferences are a potentially useful means of pushing forward debates such as these, and thus it was gratifying to be invited to an international gathering which aimed to contribute both to the rethinking of development and to an evaluation of the effectiveness and appropriateness of North-South development assistance. This was doubly stimulating because it offered the prospect of academics and practitioners contemplating their navels together - a rare if not altogether a pretty sight - and finding some common ground where each could learn from the other. A common criticism is that academics often have their heads so high in the clouds they lack a proper appreciation of what is happening on the ground, whereas practitioners are sometimes too immersed in grassroots realities to see where their work fits into the wider framework.

The meeting was triply exciting because it provided a truly international forum for the furtherance of this debate. Organised by the Swedish Association of Development Geographers, and drawing in colleagues from other Nordic countries, the conference moreover constituted the third leg of a tripartite series which also included the Developing Countries Section of the Royal Dutch Geographical Society, and the Developing Areas Research Group of the Royal Geographical Society/Institute of British Geographers. With such a diverse and distinguished gathering, surely we could not fail to make a meaningful contribution to refining the meaning and redefining the direction of 'development'?

Alas, I believe we achieved neither. Not for want of trying, I hasten to add: the meeting was exceptionally well-organised; a large number of papers were presented; much discussion ensued; and the location and surroundings were highly inspirational and conducive (it even rained all the time forcing us to remain indoors). The trouble was that, with a few notable exceptions, the papers were very much like those we are used to seeing at academic conferences - field reports from across the developing world, almost all of which represented the voice of the North, and a surprising proportion of which did not address the objective of the meeting. The discussion was
dominated by substantive matters pertaining to the individual papers, and there was insufficient attempt or opportunity to probe beneath the surface to explore where we were all coming from and where, collectively, we might be headed. Also, we were all rather too nice to each other; perhaps if we had spilled blood rather than coffee we might have got somewhere. But this was Sweden, after all. Convention ruled, when it was frustratingly obvious after the conference that the forum required innovation in format, space for discussion and pause for thought. In defence of the organisers, it should be pointed out that the latter had been their original intention, but at the last minute they had been literally swamped with offers of papers and, because people could not get funding unless they were presenting something, these were accepted lest the debate should take place between only a handful of participants.

So returning to the sentiments expressed in the beginning of this report, even though the conference allowed a good airing of academic development discourses. I am not sure we contributed significantly to the debate on the meaning and future direction of development and, most depressingly, our actions contributed not an iota to an improvement in the daily lives of the world's disadvantaged peoples. Certainly, this was the view expressed to me by some representatives of grassroots development organisations who were invited to attend the conference on the final day: 'a group of academics talking academically about the developing world'. If this is what development geography is supposed to be about, all well and good, but I for one would argue that our concern with development gives us a particular responsibility to do more than pontificate and pout: we should be seeking to make a difference where it matters, in the backyards of people's daily lives.

The next tripartite meeting of European and Scandinavian development geographers will be in Britain in the year 2000. Perhaps then we might debate whether, why and how development geographers could make a difference where it really counts?

References


Mike Parnwell, Centre for South-East Asian Studies, Department of Politics and Asian Studies, University of Hull

Indonesia Update 1997

Canberra, 19–20 September 1997

This year's Update Conference was held in the Coombs Lecture Theatre at the Australian National University. Once again, the ANU's Indonesia Project was able to attract a capacity audience to hear a galaxy of distinguished speakers, including the Indonesian Minister of the Cabinet Secretariat, Saadillah Mursid.

Following the usual format, the Update began with surveys of political and economic developments in Indonesia and then turned to the 1997 special subject – Indonesia's Technological Challenge. The political and economic surveys, by Dr Mochtar Pabottingi of the Indonesian Science Council and Dr Sri Mulyani of the University of Indonesia, did not mince words about the many serious problems Indonesia has encountered during the year, although Dr Mulyani was able to report on the prompt and effective measures the Government has taken to restore confidence in the rupiah. The outstanding papers on the special subject were by two distinguished Indonesian scholars, Dr Hadi Soesastro, Okita Fellow at the ANU, on technology flows, and Dr Thee Kian Wie (joint convenor of the Update with Professor Hill) on determinants of technology development, and a sparkling performance by Shanti Poepoesoetojipto, computer scientist and businesswoman, who spoke about information technology.

Three of the case studies dealt with the controversial issue of Indonesian forays into high-tech manufacturing. Minister Mursid reported on an ambitious project for the development of a passenger jet (for which the necessary $2 billion has yet to be raised); Dr Gunadi on the dismal condition of the Indonesian motorcar industry (although motorcycle production has been doing well); and Dr Rice discussed the ideas of Minister Habibie, who has been the most influential proponent of the high-tech strategy. Dr Barlow pointed out that in agriculture, Indonesia has a good record of transfer and adaptation of new technology, most conspicuously with the high-yielding varieties of rice. But Dr Manning stressed the crucial importance of raising the quality of education and R&D if Indonesia is to meet the technological challenge.

The proceedings of the Update will, as always, be published shortly in the annual Indonesia Assessment volume.

Emeritus Professor Heinz Arndt, National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University
African Studies Conference

Canberra, 25–27 September 1997

The 1997 African Studies Conference was held at the Australian National University, and was preceded by the Second Annual Postgraduate Workshop. Drawing on the ANU's strength in demography, almost half of the Conference's 27 papers were on population and health. Political science and law also figured strongly in the programme. Mining, however, was scarcely mentioned, except by Jane Ellis, despite the fact that it is the key economic reason for Australian interest in many African countries. Three tantalising historical papers were presented. David Dorward's account of Arthur London's life as a trader on the West Coast of Africa in the first two decades of this century dovetailed beautifully with the display of the London collection of African artifacts at the ANU's Drill Hall Gallery.

The six plenary sessions began with a panel comprised of the seven Heads of Mission organised by their Dean, H.E. Professor Hasu Patel. The next series of papers in the Population and Health session, presented by Thomas Schindlmayr, Helen Avong, Paul Seakamela and Habtemariam Tesfaghiorgips, approached the subject from different viewpoints. Schindlmayr's paper highlighted the disconcerting lack of rationale regarding funding decisions. The two other papers were country case studies. In the third session, papers on marriage by Joseph Pitso and Antonio Francisco helped explode some widely held misconceptions, including doubts about whether African people in certain regions 'know' whether they are married. To a non-demographer, these were fascinating presentations as they showed some of the pitfalls of trying to make sense of customs or traditions outside the cultural experience of the researcher.

The second day opened with some interesting presentations on human rights, economic development, and citizenship. Robert McCorquodale started a vigorous debate on the benefits (if any) of economic globalisation in promoting human rights. Rudo Gaidzanwa spoke about women, human rights and citizenship. A panel on Australian aid in Africa, consisting of representatives from AusAID, IDP Australia, ACIAR and ACFOA, reminded us that although Australia is not a major donor in Africa, it can still make valuable, specialist contributions to African development.

One of the conference's most distinguished African speakers, James Ntozi from Makerere University, Uganda, spoke on the HIV/AIDS epidemic in sub-Saharan Africa. His paper stimulated a lively discussion on what Australia can do to help curb the epidemic, given Australia's relative success in dealing with HIV/AIDS.

In the next session, Yohannes Kinfu looked at the risk differentials of under-nutrition within a war-torn society. The second paper by Sara Johnson considered different patterns of growth experienced by two groups of children from the same tribal grouping in Botswana.

The final session started with a very lively presentation by Yash Tandon, from the University of Zimbabwe, on the impact of economic globalisation on the environment and sovereignty of African and other less developed countries. He looked at the role of the World Trade Organisation and the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade in transferring wealth from the South to the North. Jane Ellis discussed the roles and responsibilities of multinational corporations in Africa. She made the point that as corporations are primarily responsible for acting in the best interests of their shareholders, it is naïve to expect them to behave in a way that is anything other than essentially self-interested. Discussion related to possible changes to the law, requiring corporations to be more responsible to the communities in which they do business. Jacob Record Mulungo spoke about population pressure and the urban environment in Zambia, focusing on the squatter compounds in Lusaka, and on some of the community work which has been undertaken there.

On the final day, Christine Mason presented an interesting paper on women and Eritrean Independence. While we might expect that women would become empowered by playing a major role in freedom fighting, this is not always the case and there is evidence to suggest that, post independence, women again have to struggle against being forced back into their traditional role. John Bock's paper on economic development and changing household dynamics among the Okavango Delta peoples in Botswana looked at the complex effects of changing perceptions of the role of children.

The final plenary, in which Cherry Gertzel led a panel discussion on African studies in Australia, proved positive about the future. With increasing emphasis on Australia's links with Asia, Africanists have felt themselves under threat in recent years. Resources have dwindled and the relevance of the topic is being questioned. However, with the increasing importance of Southern Africa, the panel concluded that African studies are a resource that Australian universities cannot afford to lose.

Dianne Proctor and Lindsay Beaton, Australian Reproductive Health Alliance, and David Lucas, Demography Program, Australian National University

January 1998

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African Studies Association of Australasia and the Pacific (AFSAAP) Second Annual Postgraduate Workshop

Canberra, 24 September 1997

Primarily organised to encourage African studies students to meet and discuss their work and possibilities for research and employment in the future, the workshop was opened by Professor Cherry Gertzel (Curtin University) who suggested that Australia could learn a great deal from African experiences. Professor Paul Nursey-Bray, AFSAAP President, opened the postgraduate sessions after morning tea.

Robert Jansen (ANU) discussed various problems affecting postgraduate students, while Tanya Lyons (University of Adelaide) examined dilemmas that 'Western' Africanist feminists face whilst conducting fieldwork in Africa. Sarah Romney (rural NSW) discussed literature by white women in colonial Nigeria; Nancy Openda-Omar (Melbourne University) talked about her field research in Kenya, where she explored the status of female entrepreneurs; and Chima Korieh (University of Adelaide) tied up the session with an assessment of agricultural crisis, gender and poverty in Nigeria.

Record Malungo (ANU) opened the afternoon session by raising complex questions concerning HIV/AIDS in Zambia; Yohannes Kinfu (ANU) spoke of his research into households and poverty in Ethiopia; Zitha Dewah (ANU) spoke about the role of unemployment in Botswana; Christine Mason (University of NSW) questioned the position of the 'new' Eritrean women in post-liberation; Simon Stratton (University of Adelaide) raised the theory of flexible accumulation in South Africa; and France Desaubin (ANU) concluded the session by examining the contemporary South African trade union movement.

Well organised by Tanya Lyons and Sarah Romney, the workshop was well attended by African studies postgraduates from a range of institutions, and proved to be an excellent forum for expanding knowledge, and facilitating lively discussions and valuable networks.

Christine Mason, School of Political Science, University of New South Wales

XXIII IUSSP General Conference

Beijing, 9-17 October 1997

The International Union for the Scientific Study of Population (IUSSP), which holds its General Conference every four years, attracts a large number of demographers, social scientists and others interested in the population issues from both the developed and developing countries. Since this was the first IUSSP General Conference in Beijing, 40 per cent of the estimated 1,200 delegates were from China itself.

There were two concurrent sessions on the first day: 'WHO's Social Science Research on Reproductive Health' and the International Sociological Association's workshop on population. The following day was devoted to a day-long symposium on 'Demography of China'. Since the conference was officially opened towards the end of the second day, attendance at the above sessions was comparatively thin as most delegates were either in the process of arriving or nursing their jet-lag. In contrast, the first plenary session at the end of day two was extremely well attended and graced by the Chinese Premier. Professor Jack Caldwell of the Australian National University gave the presidential address on 'The global fertility transition: the need for a unifying theory', thus providing the requisite background for the sessions that followed over the next five days.

To accommodate the diverse range of issues confronting population scientists, the conference was organised around a large number of concurrent formal and informal sessions. The formal sessions dealt with established research themes while the informal sessions were partly based around emerging issues and special interest groups. As with any large conference, the number of sessions that delegates were interested in attending exceeded what they could actually attend. The informal sessions were disadvantaged as they had to compete with the formal sessions for time and attention, most had smaller audiences, and no interpreting services were available. On the other hand, most of the formal sessions had one too many speakers, which left little time for discussion and debate. Nonetheless, the conference had many excellent papers that combined scientific soundness with a new analytic/policy perspective. Overall, the most interesting and exciting aspect was the general mood of the conference, which reflected a growing appreciation that demography needs to adopt a more multidisciplinary focus and must move beyond the use of conventional cross-sectional survey data to adopt other research designs that have long been used in other health disciplines.

Given the scale of the conference, it was only to be expected that some issues would not receive adequate attention. However, the lack of substantive discussion on issues such as rapid urbanisation in most of the Third World, the changing nature of labour markets, and increasing poverty and destitution in many parts of the world, were notable omissions.
The session on 'Donor perspectives on priorities in population research' would have worked better as an open debate, rather than as a structured format of presentations that did not address the concerns that many in the audience had regarding shrinking research funds and the politicisation of the reproductive health research agenda and other related issues.

The conference provided plenty of opportunity for networking and, given the lack of café space in the International Convention Centre, it was not unusual to run into a number of conference delegates several times over the week-long conference. As an aside, tours to the Great Wall and other places provided additional opportunities for networking. The proceedings of the formal sessions are available from the IUSSP Secretariat in Liège, Belgium, as a three-volume publication. The list of papers presented at the informal sessions and contact details for speakers and conference delegates are also available from the Secretariat.

Rafat Hussain, National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University
Conference calendar

IRISS'98: Internet Research and Information for Social Scientists

Bristol, UK, 25–27 March 1998

The first international IRISS conference aims to bring together social scientists who are interested in the Internet, either as a means of supporting their work, or as a focus of their research. The conference’s three themes—skills, sites and social effects—reflect the practical and theoretical questions raised by the increased role of networked information in the social sciences and society.

For more information contact:
Isobel Clarke
Institute for Learning and Research Technology
University of Bristol
8 Woodland Road
Bristol BS8 1TN
UK
Tel +44 (0)117 928 8474
Fax +44 (0)117 928 8473
E-mail iriss-info@bris.ac.uk
Web http://www.scsig.ac.uk/iriss/

Asia-Pacific Solidarity Conference

Sydney, 9–13 April 1998

Some of the topics to be looked at in this conference include self determination in East Timor, Sri Lanka, West Papua and Bougainville; women’s liberation, development and democratisation; NGOs, political movements and the universities; democratisation, development and social class; indigenous people’s struggles and land rights in Australia and New Zealand; and the struggle for democracy and the end of the Suharto dictatorship.

For more information contact:
Max Lane
Asia-Pacific Solidarity Conference
PO Box 458
Broadway, NSW 2007
Australia
Tel +61 (0)2 9690 1320
Fax +61 (0)2 9690 1381

Education for Sustainable Development: Getting it Right

Canberra, 23–25 April 1998

Education is arguably the most important prerequisite for development. In its many forms, education constitutes a major part of government development plans and overseas aid programmes. This conference reviews the effectiveness of education in development projects and programmes, and questions the relevance and cost-effectiveness of educational policy and practice in meeting the requirements of sustainable development. Plenary and workshop sessions will consider educational methods, policy, curricula, financial support and a host of other issues. Papers are invited.

For more information contact:
Australian Development Studies Network
NCDs
Australian National University
Canberra, ACT 0200
Australia
Tel +61 (0)2 6249 2466
Fax +61 (0)2 6257 2886
E-mail devnetwork@ncds.anu.edu.au
Web http://devnet.anu.edu.au

International Youth 98 Symposium: Public Spaces, Public Voices

Melbourne, 23–26 April 1998

Organised jointly by the National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies (University of Tasmania) and the Youth Research Centre (University of Melbourne), this symposium aims to discuss young people and public spaces; activating young people’s voices; and youth agency and action.

For more information contact:
Youth 98, Youth Research Centre
Faculty of Education
University of Melbourne
Parkville, VIC 3052
Australia
Tel +61 (0)3 9344 8251
Fax +61 (0)3 9344 8256
E-mail yrc@edfac.unimelb.edu.au

Social Justice, Social Judgement: Questions of Value and Contemporary Australian Society

Sydney, 25–26 April 1998

Globalisation and the victory of capitalism in the Cold War are producing fundamental changes in the discourses and practices in the public sphere. Intolerance and the demonisation of difference are rising, while
the welfare state and traditional social democratic customs are threatened. This conference aims to pose questions such as rethinking economic values in relation to social needs; racial and gender difference; social justice; human rights; the value of the environment; and governmentality and globalisation. Papers are invited.

For more information contact:
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Richmond, NSW 2753
Australia
Tel +61 (0)2 4570 1555
Fax +61 (0)2 4570 1819
E-mail a.uhlmann@uws.edu.au

Reclaiming African Pride and Self-Esteem: Resurrecting African Self-Knowledge and Identity through an African Awareness

Bu låwayo, Zimbabwe, 22–25 May 1998

The Second International African People’s Conference, organised by the School of African Awareness, aims to provide a better understanding of African people by looking at their past, present and future aspirations. It will also promote African culture, and analyse the role and influence of Africa in shaping world civilisation. Fields to be addressed include education, arts and culture, current affairs, history and archaeology, science and technology, gender studies, economics, environmental studies, social and welfare studies.

For more information contact:
Sabelo Sibanda
The School of African Awareness
PO Box 3710
Bu låwayo
Zimbabwe
Fax +263 9 540 997
E-mail advskms@byo.zol.co.zw

Canadian Association for the Study of International Development Fourteenth Annual Conference: A Future for Food Aid?

Ottawa, 2–4 June 1998

Food aid has been an important element of major funding agencies’ development strategies for the past 30 years. However, media attention on emergency food distribution has tended to ignore other types of aid such as project or programme food aid used to support development. This proposed panel is open to contributions that discuss all issues of food aid. Questions to be asked include what have been the policy changes of bilateral donor agencies in this sector? How have multilateral agencies adapted? What have been the experiences of NGOs in large emergency or local distributions?

For more information contact:
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Tel +1 514 722 7193
Fax +1 514 376 0240
E-mail gervais@total.net

Community, Citizenship and Enterprise Culture

Malvern, Victoria, 17–19 June 1998

The fourth national conference of the Australian and New Zealand Third Sector Research (ANZTSR) aims to set a new agenda for the third sector. The third sector is comprised of those organisations that are non-profit, non-government, and at times are based on voluntary activities. Issues to be examined include: the contribution that third sector organisations make to the development of an active citizenship; the impact of enterprise culture on third sector organisations; strategic responses of third sector organisations to challenges emerging in their environment; an awareness of the social, economic and environmental importance of third sector organisations; and developments in third sector research.

For more information contact:
Centre for Citizenship and Human Rights
Faculty of Arts
Deakin University
Geelong, VIC 3217
Australia
Tel +61 (0)3 5227 2113
Fax +61 (0)3 5227 2018
E-mail cchr@deakin.edu.au
Web http://www2.deakin.edu.au/cchr/anztsr/

XVI World Conference on Health Promotion and Education

San Juan, Puerto Rico, 21–27 June 1998

Four major themes dominate this conference – equity, empowerment, environment and the economy. Organised by the International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE), the conference will examine the impact of these themes on health; identify the challenges to health; and strengthen global health promotion and health education efforts.

For more information contact:
Ms M. Wise
IUHPE/SWP
National Centre for Health Promotion
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Sydney, NSW 2006
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Tel +61 (0)2 9351 5129
Fax +61 (0)2 9351 5205

Twelfth Pacific History Association Conference

Honiara, 22–26 June 1998

This conference will include four days of papers, plenary sessions, keynote addresses and the Association’s Annual General Meeting. Themes include participatory approaches to island planning; the Pacific war; forest

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history of Melanesia; women's social movements and the State in the southwest Pacific; intellectual and cultural property rights for indigenous peoples; and commercial transformations of tradition.

For more information contact:
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Australia
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Fax +61 (0)7 3864 4719
E-mail m.quanchi@qut.edu.au

Twelfth World AIDS Conference

The International AIDS Society is organising this conference. The conference aims to provide news of the latest scientific advances, issues of access to treatment, equity, and the distribution of resources between North and South. Presentations and discussions are arranged according to four 'tracks' – basic science; clinical science and care; epidemiology, prevention and public health; and social sciences.

For more information contact:
Conference Secretariat
Congrex (Sweden) AB
PO Box 3619
Linnégatan 89A
SE-114 86 Stockholm
Sweden
Tel +46 8 459 6600
Fax +46 8 661 8155
E-mail aids98@congrex.se
Web http://www.ias.se

The Tenth World Congress of Comparative Education Societies

Cape Town, 12–17 July 1998

The conference takes place at a time when education is under intense scrutiny in many countries of the world. The issues which are being raised are disparate, ranging from concerns for educational attainment to concerns about the ability of the educational system to provide access to people of different backgrounds and persuasions. This conference is an opportunity for scholars and stakeholder groups and individuals working in the field of education to make a contribution to these discussions. It brings together educationists from across the globe working in areas such as gender, race, class, religion, development, curriculum, policy and provides an opportunity for interrogating both theory and practice of education.

For more information contact:
Vandra Masemann
Secretary General WCCES
College of Education
Florida State University
206 Stone Building
Tallahassee, FL 32306
USA
E-mail Masemann@mail.coe.fsu.edu
Web http://www.uct.ac.za/education/wcces/index.htm

Vietnamese Studies and the Enhancement of International Cooperation

Hanoi, 15–17 July 1998

Jointly organised by the Vietnam National University, Hanoi and the National Centre for Social and Human Sciences in Vietnam, this conference aims to present research work on Vietnamese studies carried out locally, as well as overseas, in order to better understand Vietnam and enhance international cooperation.

For more information contact:
Conference Organising Committee
528 Nguyen Khuyen Street
Hanoi
Vietnam
Tel +84 4 824 8371
Fax +84 4 843 3224
E-mail rminv@netnam.org.vn

Fifth International Congress of Behavioural Medicine

Copenhagen, 19–22 August 1998

Issues to be looked at include work-related health; cancer/psychoneuroimmunology/AIDS; social and economic factors and health; children and adolescents; health behaviour/health education; public health, policy and prevention; stress and psychophysiology; ageing; and pain, chronic disease and musculoskeletal disorders.

For more information contact:
International Conference Services
PO Box 41
Strandvejen 171
DK 2900 Hellerup
Denmark
Tel +45 3946 0500
Fax +45 3946 0515
E-mail icbm98@ics.dk
Web http://www.ics.dk

New Partnerships – Better Care: Information Technology and Community Health

Victoria, Canada, 1–4 November 1998

This conference addresses issues in information technology and community health. In particular, it will focus on how information management and information systems are changing to improve community health. Prospective topics may include community health information systems; evaluation of information management; integrated health planning; medical practices and community medicine.

For more information contact:
Leslie Wood, Secretary
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Paradoxes and contradictions are ubiquitous in societies throughout the world and indeed in the writing of this review. I read this book in an air-conditioned hotel room whose vista was dominated by Malaysia’s foremost symbol of modernity – the nearly completed Petronas twin towers, Asia’s tallest building. Yet the book told me that the age of development was all washed up. The myths which supported the ideologies of development were fully exposed and all the illusions which sustained them had been shattered. Development as theory and practice had no future. But there were the towers, the other construction sites, and the exhortations to fulfil the national vision of 2020. It seemed that reports of development’s death were exaggerated and that the post-development era was by no means fully established.

But this collection of writings on development does raise many issues of vital importance for the future of ‘developing countries’, the millions of people who development has bypassed or discarded, and for the future for humanity. The questions are fundamental, well chosen and often uncomfortable for development ‘professionals’ like myself. They attack orthodoxy and force consideration of what we, as individuals or collectivities, have done in the name of progress and development. The results of our endeavours are frequently unpleasant, an indictment of the arrogance associated with power and of our faith in the efficacy of science and rationality.

The editors of The post-development reader have been guided by three qualities in selecting material. Firstly, the writings should be ‘subversive’ in the sense that situations should be turned round and looked at from the other side – the victims, the casualties and the excluded. Secondly, the items should be human-oriented: ‘that is, they represent a perception of the human beings involved in the processes of change’ (p.xii). Finally, the ideas should be ‘radical’ in the etymological sense of going to the roots of the questions.

Thirty-seven major readings are included in this substantial book, plus numerous boxes which provide additional but succinct and often illuminating complements. The volume is sub-divided into five parts although ideas, arguments and themes overlap, interweave and repeat. Part One looks at the vernacular world, depicting a number of societies in the pre-development era. Part Two examines the development paradigm, finding it to be anything from a devaluer of experience to a mode of domination and total disaster. Part Three looks at the principal vehicles of development, such as
the economy (and economists), the state, education and science. Part Four provides selected concrete examples of development in practice focusing on the negative experiences and outcomes of such practice at the micro and macro levels. The final part discusses the ways in which the 'acts of resistance' have been employed by the 'losers' in order to define a more humane future for themselves.

Reading this book I was subject to a variety of emotions. I was sometimes jolted out of complacency. I experienced shame while on occasion felt exhilaration and admiration for ideas and actions. At other times I was irritated. Generalisations are too easily made by some authors, the complexity of societies and global relations downplayed. Successes -- and there are undoubtedly some -- are ignored. History, ever a battleground, is sometimes reconstructed in ways which demand far more supporting evidence and argument. Neo-populist visions of rural communities can be at odds with some realities, and may be urban visions. Also, I am uneasy with simplification categorisations which occur in the book, such as haves versus have-nots, and friends versus savours. Finally, some authors seem to believe in a purposively constructed system of exploitation which is actually under the precise control of demons such as the World Bank and Coca Cola. The demons apparently move the levers knowing exactly what will happen. However, unruly experience suggests that chaos theory rather than technical rationality may be a more useful guide to understanding the workings of 'the system'.

Despite these queries and disagreements with particular authors' representations of social life, the book, or selections from it, should be essential reading for all those involved in development. It should be part of courses on development. Selections from it will certainly become integral components of my teaching. But don't expect a blueprint for the future, and don't expect to agree with everything in the book. Its achievement is to raise critical awareness about the present and past and to enable us to start asking and seeking answers to the questions which could lead to a more humane future.

Mark Turner, School of Administrative Studies, University of Canberra

Elusive development


The late Marshall Wolfe wrote this third edition of Elusive development after 30 years with the United Nations Secretariat, where he was its leading intellectual-administrator in 'social' development thinking. This modest, valuable, relatively unbiographical and un-self-indulgent memoir recollects and analyses ideas and events over his professional lifetime. He conceived, directed, partly wrote and, I believe, wholly edited Social change and social development planning in Latin America (1970). No other region of the world has received anything sociological and policy oriented from the UN as good or comprehensive as this. He also played a key role in the discontinued UN series of reports on the World social situation.

Elusive development is distinguished mainly by its excellent first two chapters: 'Why "elusive" development?' and 'The quest for a unified approach'. Other chapters discuss problems of communication and participation, poverty as a central issue for development theory (another outstanding chapter), and the entry of environmental concerns into the political arena.

The arch-elusiveness of UN writing on development is above all with reference to 'the social', which typically it treats only trivially. Seldom, for example, does even the expression 'social change' make any appearance in official discourse (compared, say, with 'economic change' and the voluntarist 'political will' to change). Instead, official writing distances itself from 'society' in any social and serious sense. It speaks instead just of 'changes in social indicators' -- a practice which would be less deceptive if the social indicators were anywhere near as indicative of social conditions, as economic indicators are of economic conditions.

Deceptive -- sometimes 'elusive' simply is too polite -- development may at the moment like to seize every opportunity to proclaim its recent discovery of 'civil society' as today's non-elusive (and non-problematic) answer to all needs. But are we ever given a description of what such a society actually is? Instead of social analysis, one finds one or two ideal moral values (such as 'trust', 'civility' and so on) named and praised, regarded as characteristic of civil society 'in essence' and at large, but 'hitherto neglected', and then repulsively touted to death.

A social concern with the social is part of what is described in this book as the characteristic state of being:

... unreceptive to questions of exploration of [social] theory ... suppos[ing] that such questions have already been answered satisfactorily, or that answers could wait, or that raising the questions would endanger the international consensus on the meaning of development. In formal terms, through instructions to the Secretariat, factual information and practical prescriptions [are requested], though little use [is made] of either ... An international governmental body might direct the Secretariat to prepare a report for its next meeting on how to satisfy all human needs. Half a dozen functionaries would strain to do so. The result, which might be expected to have a reception equivalent to that of one of the great documentary landmarks of human history, would be tepidly approved or criticised and would disappear without trace into government archives and the storerooms of the issuing organization, rarely remembered even by other functionaries preparing subsequent 'practical' reports.
Some of the most betraying commonplaces of UN development-speak 'among the most venerable and overworked formulas in documents on social [and other development] questions' are uncritical and unqualified, confident, affirmations of 'growing awareness' or 'increasing recognition' about whatever issue or trend has been selected as the panacea this time; use of the first person plural to indicate that the user is at one with either everyone of goodwill or the masses (or both); warnings of catastrophe that only concerted international leadership can avert; and personifications of countries as actors.

Wolfe's justification for returning to the history of the UN's 'integrated approach' is 'typical amnesia about the past' as something similar came around again when preparations for the World Summit on Social Development were getting underway. What, indeed, was the nature of that Summit three years ago, what did it achieve, and what has or has not happened as a result? Alas, there will be no fourth version of Elusive development to help with such an evaluation, which takes a firm history of social ideas perspective, and is committed to incorporating social analysis in future social development policy. That such an evaluation is sorely needed is just one lesson to be learnt from this final version.

Raymond Apthorpe, National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University

Generating power and money: Australia's and Thailand's roles in hydro projects in Laos


Satisfying increasing energy demand in developing countries in ways that are environmentally and socially sustainable is an issue that is receiving increasing interest. This development dossier presents the proceedings of a seminar co-sponsored by ACFOA and the Centre for Asia-Pacific Studies, held at the Victoria University of Technology, on 28–29 October 1996. The objective of the seminar was to facilitate discussion on economic, environmental and social issues relating to proposed hydro-electricity development in developing countries, particularly the Nam Theun 2 Dam in Laos. Speakers at the seminar included representatives from non-government organisations and academia in Australia and the region, as well as those from Australian industry involved in hydro projects in the region.

The proceedings of the seminar raise important questions relating to large-scale hydro development in developing countries, including the roles, responsibilities and long-term commitment of stakeholders; the incentives for involvement in such projects; the development process; and the economic, environmental and social impacts of such development. In the case of Laos, the main incentive for government involvement in hydro projects is to earn foreign exchange through the sale of electricity to other countries, especially to neighbouring Thailand, and over a quarter of Laos' foreign exchange is earned in this way. However, an issue raised in this dossier is Laos' capacity to repay loans required to finance hydro projects, especially given that it is one of the world's poorest and most highly indebted poor countries. The dossier contains a useful discussion on the viability of the chosen methods of financing and economic analysis, whether revenue projections given by contractors and consultants are realistic, and who is responsible if revenue projections are not correct and loan payments cannot be met.

There is also some discussion around whether large-scale hydro development is the best development path for Laos. Contributors generally disagree over whether local communities directly affected by hydro projects will receive any benefit from the development. One of the papers draws a comparison with Tasmania, where as a result of 'hydro-industrialisation', that state has one of the highest unemployment rates in Australia, the highest per capita debt in Australia, the highest power prices, and decreased investment in social expenditures, including health.

The economic, environmental and social impacts for communities who rely on the natural forest and riverine ecosystems for their livelihood are also important issues discussed in the dossier. It is estimated that 5,000 villages will have to relocate as a result of the Nam Theun 2 Dam. Environmental impacts include deforestation, reduced natural river flows, reduced incidence of flooding and biological productivity, reduced fish stocks and changed fish migration patterns. These are compared with the positive environmental aspects of large-scale hydro projects, such as no air pollution or greenhouse gas emissions, as well as the benefits of water storage and flood control.

The proceedings from the seminar also present an interesting overview of differing stakeholder perceptions of how the development process should occur, particularly the incentives for involving local people. While some present the view that community involvement will facilitate commercial success, others note the almost total absence of participation or consultation with the people and communities, and that consultation with the local people is merely a mechanism for getting approval for projects.

The seminar and associated development dossier would be enhanced by a detailed consideration of possible alternatives to large-scale hydro development, such as mini-hydro or village scale micro-hydro projects. Although it is suggested in one paper that small hydropower projects are amenable to community management, maintenance and control, and are more suited to the institutional and financial capacity of the Lao government, little detail is provided on these alternatives. The economic, environmental and social issues relating to such projects could have also been covered. Overall the
dossier is an interesting case study of differing stakeholder perceptions of what development is, how the development process should proceed, and who the development process should be directed to.

Stephen Bygrave, Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, Australian National University

The Oxfam gender training manual

Suzanne Williams with Janet Seed and Adelina Mwau 1995, Oxfam UK and Ireland, Oxford, ISBN 0 853 98267 5, 630pp., £30.00

This excellent manual was first published in 1994 and has been around long enough to have proved its practical worth many times over and to have been reprinted three times. The 630 pages contain everything required to run a gender training programme that will be relevant, fascinating and transforming. It provides step by step training activities that range in subject matter from gender awareness and self-awareness through gender-sensitive appraisal and planning to putting in place strategies for change. The manual is organised in a series of short activities which progressively deepen inquiry and understanding of the issues which impact on male/female relationships and roles. These activities are timed and accompanied by clear instructions about how to prepare for, present and evaluate the activities. Many are accompanied by readings, and all by facilitator’s notes and ideas for materials.

This manual, unlike many training manuals of this kind, is well presented, easy to follow and does not overwhelm with endless quantities of detailed instructions. Having developed training manuals myself I appreciate the thought, work, care and worldwide experience that has gone into the preparation of this publication.

The great value of The Oxfam gender training manual is that it is as relevant for use with a small rural community as it is for introducing gender training in a university setting. It is a valuable resource for government and non-government organisations, for schools, for consultants and contractors – for anyone who is dedicated to providing quality gender training.

The manual is published with support from Swiss Development Cooperation and is available from: Oxfam (UK and Ireland) 274 Banbury Road Oxford OX2 7DZ United Kingdom Tel +44 (0) 1865 3/1311

Pamela Thomas, Director, Australian Development Studies Network, Australian National University

Development studies pack T531/2/3

The Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes MK7 6AA, UK, 1994, £58.18 (incl. postage)

This set of 12 video programmes (24 minutes each), and accompanying booklet of Video Notes (82pp.), provides a broad overview of Third World development issues with case studies from India, Brazil, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Malaysia, and would be appropriate for use in an introductory unit on development studies at university level. The Video Notes are informative, provide background information for each programme, and include activities/discussion topics and suggestions for further reading.

The first programme portrays the survival strategies of three very different households in Uttar Pradesh. While focusing on local level survival strategies, we are reminded of the broader socioeconomic and political contexts that influence the options, risks and vulnerabilities of each household. We also see how more individualised forms of behaviour are emerging as cooperative strategies between households decline, and how the choices for women are more constrained than for men. Many of the themes and issues of later programmes are first raised here.

The second programme compares the work of two Indian NGOs to illustrate the different approaches to development. CECEDECON, a large NGO, is engaged in projects of land and ground water management for the poor. In contrast, the Jawaja project consists of two informal associations of weavers and leather workers, and is presented as an example of development by the poor. Using these two NGOs, the programme compares ‘top-down’ with ‘bottom-up’ approaches to development. However, the issue of scale is neglected: land and ground water management are often catchment-wide projects encompassing diverse and competing local level interests. Unfortunately, the problem of integrating local issues of concern within regional frameworks of cooperation is not addressed.

Four programmes (3, 10, 11 and 12) focus on aspects of gender and development. Programme 3 considers how economy, caste, religion, social reform movements and women’s status have contributed to better health, education and literacy in the Indian state of Kerala. While the matrilineal system of social organisation is in decline in Kerala, its legacy has had a positive influence on women’s status. Literacy rates, age at marriage, life expectancy and access to health care are all higher for women (and men) than in other parts of India. High literacy rates translate into an informed, articulate population that has been successful in organising in various ways to improve living standards.

Programmes 4, 6 and 9 examine the exclusion of people from the development process. Programme 6 considers the impact of the Kariba Dam in Zimbabwe on Tonga villagers. Their relocation away from the dam site is undermining their way of
life: the new land is poorer; women are affected adversely by changes in social organisation; villagers have lost from the commercialisation of fishing; and government-managed wildlife tourism (big game hunting) provides little benefit for villagers. In the three programmes we are aware of the difficult circumstances caused by government policies, war, historical factors and, more recently, policies of structural adjustment.

Finally, programmes 5, 7 and 8 examine issues of representation and culture from a variety of perspectives. Programme 5 reveals the importance of cultural and religious traditions amongst rural migrants in São Paulo for maintaining social identity, and hence a basis for social action. Programme 8, while considering the relationships between famine, hunger, poverty and development, shows how the media misrepresents famine. The media and 'personalities' report from the worst affected areas, where 'white' relief workers are seen ministering to the 'helpless', thus reinforcing images in the West of helpless, passive and childlike victims unable to help themselves. As the programme reveals, the resilience and resourcefulness of people in pursuing survival strategies tends to be overlooked, along with the political, economic and environmental constraints that keep people in a state of vulnerability and often chronic hunger. Programme 7 considers the documentaries on the Mursi of southern Ethiopia produced for Granada's Disappearing World series. The issue of representation is reflected in the debate between film-maker and anthropologist over whether their audience needs assistance (commentary) with interpreting the 'facts', or whether the Mursi should speak for themselves.

Whilst the programmes tackle a broad range of topics, more emphasis on environmental issues such as sustainability would have strengthened the package. This omission is unfortunate given the increasing importance of environmental issues in the development debate. Also, for teachers/lecturers in this part of the world, the lack of material on the South Pacific and Southeast Asia (Malaysia features in one programme) may lessen the value of the package, but the programmes' issues and themes have wider relevance and would provide useful comparative material.

From the perspective of a university lecturer, the value of the package lies in its potential use as a resource for tutorial and workshop discussions. The programmes illustrate the complexity of development issues, that is, there are no simple solutions, and change of any kind usually means winners and losers. Also, some of the simplistic notions that students sometimes bring to development studies are challenged effectively (for example, multinationals are the bad guys, NGOs are the good guys, and all Third World people are victims). In most of the programmes Third World people speak for themselves, and the audience gains a sense of the resourcefulness, resilience and adaptability of people in conditions of sometimes extreme privation. In conclusion, the package provides useful material for an introductory unit in development studies.

George Curry, Social Sciences, Curtin University

January 1998
New books

Southeast Asia: The human landscape of modernization and development

This book charts the development of Southeast Asia, examining the economies of Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma alongside the established Asian market economies. Drawing on case studies from across the region, the author assesses poverty and ways in which the poor are identified and viewed. Giving prominence to indigenous notions of development, based on Buddhism, Islam and the 'Asian Way', the author assesses the conceptual foundations of development, ideas of post-developmentalism and the 'miracle' thesis. The book emphasises the process of modernisation within wider debates of development and challenges the notion that development has been a Mirage for many and a tragedy for some.

Which way to grow? Poverty and development in Southeast Asia

This study of poverty and prosperity in Southeast Asia considers the impact of economic growth and industrial development on lower-income Southeast Asians. The authors find that the dramatic levels of growth experienced by Thailand and Malaysia eventually succeed in reducing poverty. But where the public sector and society ignore the concerns of lower-income communities, the quality of poverty alleviation is dubious, its pace slower, and the sustainability of economic progress thrown into doubt. Public or social intervention are shown to be practical and possible in humanising capitalist development.

Economy and ecology: Empowering neighbourhoods in the global village

The authors of this book analyse poverty and pollution in the context of the capitalist, interest bearing money structure. The demand for profits and the threat of stagnation in circulation dominate all political decisions. The money flow from poor to rich creates a lack of circulation. Simultaneously, accumulation and concentration of money leads to growth compulsion in the rich world. Both these developments destroy local cultures. In an attempt to stop the flow of money from the poor to the rich, the authors describe various innovations such as the LET system, interest free banking, Credit Unions, the ancient Egyptian Grain-GiroA and non-capitalist free money.

Gender and organizational change: Bridging the gap between policy and practice

The need to address gender inequalities in development work is well established. Poverty and marginalisation are now seen as gendered phenomena. This book reflects a recent trend in which Northern donor agencies are ready to practice what they preach - to bring the issue of gender equality back home. Northern donors and development organisations in the South have to be accountable to the needs and interests of women if real change is to occur. The authors examine the organisational gender learning processes that are taking place within Northern donor agencies as well as the broader field of gender and development.

War in the blood: Sex, politics and AIDS in Southeast Asia

This book investigates the way that the HIV epidemic has taken its course in seven countries of Southeast Asia, from Thailand's open debate about and readiness to deal with its HIV problem to the relationship between the Burmese regime and the drug trade. Arguing that the cultural and political landscapes have affected the progress of the disease, the way that the epidemic has spread is seen as being vitally linked to the general conditions of human rights in the societies, while being specifically mediated by sexual behaviour, drug use and the state of health care.

Getting government to listen
Bill Barker 1997, Australian Youth Foundation, ISBN 0 938 64761 5, 172pp., A$20.00

This is a guide to the international human rights and legal systems for indigenous Australians. It focuses on the United Nations and other international human rights mechanisms to promote positive change. The guide provides information to indigenous Australians on how to apply existing international human rights mechanisms to promote positive change. The guide provides information to indigenous Australians on how to apply existing international human rights mechanisms to promote positive change.

Vietnam: Anatomy of a peace

This book examines the main economic phases that the Communist Party has embarked on since 1986, and outlines the country's transition to capitalism. Market reforms are producing serious social and economic difficulties; inequality is creating a class-ridden society; and industrial
workers are among the most exploited in the world. The author outlines the contradictions between daily realities and the original idealistic aims of the communists. The book also explores Vietnam's relations with its neighbours and the US in the light of social and psychological national features.

**Sites of desire, economies of pleasure: Sexualities in Asia and the Pacific**

*Lenore Manderson and Margaret Jolly (eds) 1997, University of Chicago Press, ISBN 0 226 50304 6, xii + 367pp., £15.95*

This book explores how sexual practices and sexual meanings have been constructed across cultural borders in Thailand, the Philippines, Myanmar, Japan, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Polynesian islands. Considering sexuality as embedded in a complex social and political world structured by gender, race and class relations, these scholars challenge the categories with which sex and gender have been named and studied. They examine specific historic and cultural circumstances, from the first explorations of Europeans, through the epoch of colonial power, to the contemporary issues of sexual tourism, prostitution, and the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

**The state and ethnic politics in Southeast Asia**


Ethnic tensions in Southeast Asia represent a clear threat to the future stability of the region. This study outlines the patterns of ethnic politics in Burma, Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. It considers the influence of the state on the formation of ethnic groups and investigates why some countries are more successful in managing their ethnic politics than others.

**Third World political ecology: An introduction**


This book is an introduction to the new research field of the political economy of environmental change in the Third World. The authors review the historical development of the field, explain what is distinctive about Third World political ecology, and suggest areas for future development. The authors explore the role of various actors - states, multilateral institutions, businesses, environmental nongovernmental organisations, and poverty-stricken farmers - in the development of the Third World's politicised environment.

**World in crisis: Populations in danger at the end of the 20th century**


The tragedies of war, famine, disease and poverty dominate our headlines. The politics, ethics and economies of humanitarian aid are becoming more complex. The role of relief agencies, the political will of the West, the responsibilities of the international community for war crimes and human rights are issues at the heart of contemporary humanitarian aid. *World in crisis* describes the plight of refugees and civilians in war zones, the homeless, gypsies, and HIV/AIDS groups.

**The rise of East Asia: Critical visions of the Pacific century**

*Mark Berger and Douglas Borer (eds) 1997, Routledge, ISBN 0 415 16168 1, 320pp., A$35.95*

In the context of the rise of East Asia and the transition from the Cold War to the post-Cold War era in the Asia-Pacific, there are competing visions of what is going on in the Asia-Pacific today and what the future holds. These ideas and expectations are critically analysed with studies of China, Japan, South Korea, Vietnam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Russia and Australia.

**Lessons from rural Africa for feminist theory and development practice**


This book aims to increase awareness of the importance of women agricultural producers to African material development and to expose the Western biases that have traditionally pervaded the study of rural African women. It questions the effectiveness of Western-aid agency intervention in Africa; considers what African women can do to manage the AIDS crisis; and examines whether Western feminist theory can be applied to the rural African context. It critically analyses conventional research methodology and key 'women and development' debates over the last 30 years.

**South Africa: Limits to change? Transforming a divided society**


The sense of hope generated by South Africa's democratic transition is already giving way to the realities of how little has changed for the mass of the population. When looking at jobs, income inequality, housing or access to land, the analysis in this book draws on, and develops, the structural and political understandings developed by radical South African intellectuals in the 1980s. It explains why the African National Congress has resisted calls for more radical options and has instead pursued conservative economic management policies.
Ecofeminism as politics: Nature, Marx and the postmodern


The author argues that ecofeminism reaches beyond contemporary social movements, being a synthesis of four revolutions in one – ecology is feminism is socialism is post-colonial struggle. Opening with a short history of ecofeminism, the book then goes on to establish the basis for its epistemological challenge and provides ecofeminist deconstructions of deep ecology, social ecology, eco-socialism and postmodern feminism. Finally, the author suggests that commonalities can be found between ecofeminist and indigenous struggles.

Private health providers in developing countries: Serving the public interest?


Much academic research in development studies has focused on the effects of privatisation on the industrial sector in countries in the South. However, the World Bank and other international organisations have also encouraged the development of the role of private providers in the social service sector. Although these policies continue, there has as yet been no comprehensive assessment of their effectiveness. This book investigates the role of private health care in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Women, population and global crisis: A political-economic analysis


This book questions the widely assumed wisdom that over-population is one of the root causes of global crisis. It gives a historical overview of the population question and places the population-poverty-environment-security debate within a broad theoretical perspective. The book looks at conventional ideologies of population control, develops an alternative analysis of 'over-population', and shows how population control acts as another dimension to the world order.

Indonesia assessment: Population and human resources

Gavin W. Jones and Terence H. Hull (eds) 1997, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies and Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University, ISBN 9 813 05561 8, 373pp., A$30.00

This book provides an overview of Indonesia's current political and economic situation, and reviews recent trends in population and human resources. As well as assessing recent trends in fertility, mortality, migration, urbanisation, education and health, incorporating early results from the 1995 Intercesal Survey (SOPAS), the final section of the book looks ahead at prospects for the next few decades and beyond.

Sickness and the state: Health and illness in colonial Malaya, 1870–1940


This book is a history of health, disease and government policy in colonial Malaya. It explores the relationship between biology, environment, population and the structures and requirements of the state. The author notes that this period was marked by dramatic economic expansion, rapid population growth and changes in patterns of infection. The book emphasises the role of medicine in legitimating the colonial presence, reinforcing colonial hierarchies and providing a moral logic for imperialism. It integrates social and material history, historical epidemiology and demography, as well as theories of political economy, feminism and post-colonialism.

Illegal cities: Law and urban change in developing countries


Several studies have revealed that a large number of the urban population of the main cities in developing countries are living in illegal conditions. This book discusses the role played by law in the process of urban change. The contributors compare and analyse the evolution of urban legislation in 13 countries from the viewpoint of the relationship between their often elitist legal-institutional apparatuses and the existing processes of land use and access to housing, including those resulting in the informal occupation of the urban space.
Newsletters and journals

Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography

This new biannual journal is published for the Department of Geography, National University of Singapore. It provides a forum for the discussion of problems and issues in the tropical world; and it includes theoretical and empirical articles about physical and human environments and development issues from geographical and interrelated disciplinary viewpoints. The journal welcomes contributions from geographers as well as scholars from the humanities, social sciences and environmental sciences with an interest in tropical research.

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Women's Health Project

A newsletter on women's health is produced by the Women's Health Project, a South African NGO based in Johannesburg. It addresses not only female health issues, but also violence, gender, equity, development, rights, sexuality and employment. It includes networking addresses and anecdotes from the field.

For more information contact:
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Dispatches: News from UNFPA

Dispatches is a monthly bulletin dedicated to the activities of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). UNFPA’s three main areas of work are to help ensure universal access to reproductive health by 2015; to support population and development strategies that enable capacity-building in population programming; and to promote awareness of population and development issues. Published in English, French and Spanish, Dispatches is available free of charge from UNFPA offices worldwide. It outlines UNFPA-assisted programmes and projects, accounts of lessons learned from past and ongoing work, and anecdotes from the field.

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CRDA News

CRDA News is produced monthly by the Christian Relief and Development Association. CRDA is an association of 135 member churches and NGOs operating throughout Ethiopia. The aim of the newsletter is to share information about CRDA and its members, and to inform readers of current trends and developments. Recent topics have included information about an HIV/AIDS/STD databank, dates and venues of training courses, and reports of water borehole projects.

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Social Marketing Matters

This newsletter is published quarterly by BASICS (Basic Support for Institutionalising Child Survival), a five-year international health project funded by the US Agency for International Development. BASICS provides technical leadership and practical field programmes for reducing infant and childhood illness and death worldwide, and operates programmes in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the New Independent States. Social Marketing Matters seeks to stimulate discussion about how theories on social marketing and behaviour change can be applied in the real world. It acts as a vehicle for sharing ideas and discussing market place questions and challenges.

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Geoforum

Geoforum is an international multidisciplinary journal for the rapid publication of research results and critical review articles in the physical, human and regional geosciences. It is concerned with all aspects of the management of the human environment which, broadly defined, encompasses urban and regional planning, industrial development, resource allocation and the management of physical environmental systems.

International Journal of Educational Development

The main function of this journal is to report on key developments in national systems of education wherever they are to be found. In particular, the journal focuses on issues of interest to planners, practitioners and researchers in Third World countries.
Food Policy

Food Policy deals with the economics, planning and politics of food, agriculture and nutrition. Articles provide information on the many factors influencing the formulation and implementation of food policy. Issues examined have included the role of food in international trade, agricultural marketing, food security, food aid, famine, nutrition planning, food control, food science and agricultural research. As well as major research and policy papers, each issue carries reviews of recent important publications and conferences.

World Development

World Development is a multidisciplinary monthly journal of development studies. It seeks to explore ways of improving standards of living, and the human condition generally, by examining potential solutions to problems such as poverty, unemployment, malnutrition, disease, lack of shelter, environmental degradation, inadequate scientific and technological resources, trade and payments imbalances, gender and ethnic discrimination, militarism and civil conflict, and lack of popular participation in economic and political life. World Development recognises 'development' as a process of change involving nations, economies, political alliances, institutions, groups and individuals.

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International Journal of Disability, Development and Education

A multidisciplinary journal with an international focus, the International Journal of Disability, Development and Education provides information on the education and development of persons with disabilities. It aims to publish research and review articles concerned with all aspects of education, human development, special education and rehabilitation. Various orientations are represented, including education and special education, psychology, allied health, social work and psychiatry.

Space and Polity

Space and Polity is a new, biannual international journal devoted to the theoretical and empirical understanding of the changing relationships between the state, and regional and local forms of governance. The journal aims to provide a forum for bringing together social scientists currently working in a variety of disciplines, including geography, political science, sociology, economics, anthropology and development studies, and who have a common interest in the relationships between space, place and politics in less developed as well as the developed economies. Issues of particular interest include decentralisation; regionalism; nationalism; the politics of urban and rural restructuring; globalisation and local political change; and boundary regions in emergent supra-states.

Prometheus

Prometheus aims to cover national and international policy debates relating to issues in technological change, innovation, information economics and telecommunications and science policy. It seeks to act as a bridge between disciplines, as well as between scholarly work and the policy process.

Subjects covered are as diverse as job creation in high technology industries and road transport informatics. A series of special country reports have covered the Japanese innovation system, Korean industrial policy, science and technology in China, telework in New Zealand and the transfer of industrial technology to the Western Pacific.

Australian Geographer

The Australian Geographer is a general geographical journal which focuses primarily on two areas of research: Australia and its region, including developments, issues and policies in Australia, the Western Pacific, South, Southeast and East Asia, the Indian Ocean and Antarctica; and environmental studies, particularly the biophysical environment and human interaction with it. Papers addressing theoretical and philosophical issues in geography are also published from time to time.

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Monographs and reports

Wamma: Empowerment in practice

Julie Jarman and Catherine Johnson 1997, Water Aid

This report assesses the development of a collaborative partnership between the Tanzanian government and Water Aid. Implications emerge that are relevant for both the water and sanitation sector and the wider development community. The key conclusions of the report are: government and NGOs can be effective partners; empowerment of field workers makes them dynamic agents for change; motivated and empowered communities manage their own projects well; participatory approaches need to work within existing systems and structures; and the approach used is not a blueprint, but is replicable with certain preconditions.

To order a copy contact:
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Prince Consort House
27–29 Albert Embankment
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Australian demographic trends 1997

Australian Bureau of Statistics 1997, ISBN 0 642 20755 0, 170pp., A$32.00

This report provides an overview of Australia's population trends throughout this century, especially in the past 10–20 years. It covers population growth and distribution, age and sex composition, fertility, mortality, international and internal migration. In addition, time series from the turn of the century for the main demographic indicators are presented.

Emphasis behaviours in maternal and child health: Focus on caretakers behaviour to develop maternal and child health programs in communities


This publication contains a list of 16 emphasis behaviours that, if practiced by caretakers, would improve maternal and child health in communities. Developed by a multidisciplinary team of medical and behavioural specialists, the criteria for identifying the emphasis behaviours included their impact on multiple disease areas, demonstrated relationship with morbidity and mortality impact on the important public health problems in developing countries, measurability, and their feasibility and cost-effectiveness. The emphasis behaviours fall under five categories: reproductive health practices; infant and child-feeding practices; immunisation practices; home health practices; and care-seeking practices. It is suggested that health managers choose which emphasis behaviours to focus on in their programmes by reviewing existing community-based data. Following this selection process, they can develop and implement strategies appropriate for the local context, as well as monitor and evaluate results.

Gender bias in health care among children 0–5 years: Opportunities for child survival programs


In the developing world, young boys receive better health care than girls. The authors of this report point out that focusing on possible gender bias among very young girls can help ensure that girls benefit from health care practices as much as boys do. The authors examined data from national-level statistical reports, journal articles and the more traditional literature search on morbidity and mortality patterns in young girls as well as patterns of illness, treatment and psychosocial development. The study indicates that gender differences in health and nutrition exist in every geographic region, and is often reflected more in smaller studies than in national-level statistics. Bias against girls was seen consistently for health care utilisation, feeding patterns and attention from health care providers.

The above publications are available free of charge from:
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Reproductive rights and reproductive health: A concise report


The report provides a summary of recent information on selected aspects of reproductive rights and reproductive health. It covers topics such as entry into reproductive life; reproductive behaviour; contraception; abortion; maternal mortality and morbidity; sexually transmitted diseases including HIV/AIDS; reproductive rights; and population information, education and communication with respect to reproductive rights and reproductive health.

Available from:
Population Division
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USA
This new seven-volume set of in-depth reports looks at the key sectoral issues and challenges China must face over the next two decades. The first volume in the set, China 2020: Development challenges in the new century, provides an overview of the country's strengths and weaknesses as well as its obstacles and options. The report argues that China can meet these challenges and sustain rapid growth, mainly because of its strengths: relative stability, a remarkably high savings rate, a strong record of pragmatic reforms, a disciplined and literate labour force, a supportive Chinese diaspora, and growing administrative capacity. To nurture these strengths and use them effectively, however, reforms must develop in three related areas: the spread of market forces must be encouraged; the government must begin serving markets (by building the legal, social, physical and institutional infrastructure); and integration with the world economy must be deepened.

The six other volumes in the series examine these challenges in detail. Clear water, blue skies: China's environment in the new century explores the relationship between economic growth and the environment. Chapters review the harmful effects of all forms of pollution and discuss ways of securing higher environmental living standards. Particular attention is given to urban areas and the impact of pollution on health conditions.

At China's table: Food security options focuses on how China will avoid national chronic food insecurity. The report evaluates solutions such as food storage and other alternatives for addressing the problems of transitory food insecurity from drought or other seasonal calamity. It discusses national food security constraints and the investments required to maintain total factor productivity of one per cent per year. The study also models and projects food supply and demand for 2020.

Financing health care: Issues and options for China assesses the state of health care in China and addresses the problems facing the sector in terms of financial access to health care, efficiency and total cost. Although the health sector is in relatively good condition today, this study asserts the need to promptly make policy changes to ensure universal health care coverage by either the public or the private sector over the next two decades.

Sharing rising incomes: Disparities in China analyses the growing gap between the haves and the have-nots. A major challenge during China's transition to a market economy is to extend the benefits of growth to all of society and to protect the poor and the vulnerable. This report presents findings on the levels and trends in income inequality in China over the past 15 years, analysing the interaction between growth, poverty and inequality during this period.

Old age security: Pension reform in China highlights two severe difficulties with China's current pension system: the urgent and immediate problem of the pension burden placed on state-owned enterprises, and the longer-term predicament arising from a rapidly aging population. State enterprises inherited heavy pension obligations from the central planning era. With the transition to a market economy, employment in the state enterprise sector is declining, while the number of pensioners is rising rapidly. The study recommends a unified pension system that includes both mandatory funded individual accounts and a social insurance scheme. It also endorses a sustainable contribution rate that attaches considerable importance to long-term financial viability (more than 60 years) and examines the risks associated with low compliance rates and low interest rates.

China engaged: Integration with the global economy recognises China's growing importance as a key player in the global economy. Its share in world trade will more than triple by 2020; China is expected to become the second-largest trading nation, after the United States. The report warns, however, that to realise such benefits, China and its major trading partners will need to mount efforts to further liberalise their trade and investment relationships within the context of a rules-based multilateral system, including China's accession to the World Trade Organisation.

Australian social trends 1997

Information in this publication has been organised by major areas of social concern including population, family, health, education, work, income and expenditure, and housing. The health section comprises a number of reviews including Health of the population, which broadly examines the general health of Australians using data from the 1995 National Health Survey. The impact on health of current patterns of infectious diseases in Australia is examined from a historical perspective. The AIDS review looks at trends in the number of HIV cases diagnosed and the number of AIDS-related deaths. It also provides a profile of people infected with HIV, and discusses the major transmission modes of the virus. The publication also includes summary tables for each area of social concern, illustrating the changes that have taken place over the last decade as well as international comparisons.

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Confronting AIDS: Public priorities in a global epidemic


Two decades after the appearance of the HIV virus, an estimated 30 million people have contracted the virus and six million have died of AIDS. About 90 per cent of infections occur in developing countries, where the disease has already reduced life expectancy, in some cases by more than a decade. Low-income countries face a multitude of pressing human needs. Given the limited public resources, which measures for confronting the epidemic should be public priorities? In answering this question, the publication draws on three bodies of knowledge: the epidemiology of HIV; public health insights into disease control; and especially public economics, which focuses on assessing trade-offs in the allocation of scarce public resources.

This report is unique in that it addresses the epidemic from the perspective of decision makers outside the health sector who shape and finance national efforts to combat the disease. Although HIV is transmitted primarily by private sexual and drug injecting behaviour, governments can and should confront the epidemic by preventing new infections and by mitigating the impact of infections that occur. The report provides a framework that helps distinguish among activities that can be undertaken by households and the private sector (including NGOs), those that should be initiated by developing country governments, and those that should be most strongly supported by the international development community.

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Taking the initiative: Approaches to change in Africa

World Vision Australia 1997, Bridge Series No. 12, 33pp., A$8.00 (plus A$2.00 p&h)

In this latest publication from World Vision Australia, people involved with the organisation’s programmes in Kenya and Zimbabwe share their stories. The challenges and rewards of change, both for individuals and communities, is a common theme running through the stories. The publication addresses questions like: what motivates people to change? How do cultural factors influence the change process? How does the World Vision approach change in ways that respect people and their life situations? How can community development workers encourage change in culturally sensitive ways? What happens if change processes take time and people become impatient? How can change bring about new hope for individuals and communities? The monograph will be of interest to development workers, students and others interested in Third World issues.

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Race matters: Indigenous Australians and ‘our’ society


Race matters because racism remains. While Aboriginal people live in an unprecedented time of formal equality, their conditions of life are still starkly different from those of most other Australians. Prejudice and social marginalisation are still everyday experiences, despite official multicultural policies. Recognition of the rights of Australia’s indigenous people is still not forthcoming. The diverse range of articles explore the double burden of racial discrimination and the denial of indigenous rights that Australian Aboriginal people continue to carry.

Sending workers abroad: A manual for low- and middle-income countries


Workers are crossing borders in increasing numbers – an estimated 60–65 million people – drawn by higher wages in regions of higher productivity. This manual examines institutional and policy implications of alternative assumptions about the role of ‘sending states’ and the private sector in organising labour migration. Drawing on international experiences, it provides an in-depth account of the main issues in this area of socioeconomic policy as more and more countries become sources of migrant labour.
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Community Aid Abroad
Briefing Papers
No. 16 Sweating for Nike: Labour conditions in the sport shoe

No. 17 Debt relief and poverty: New hope for Uganda

No. 18 A new agenda for East Timor

No. 19 The Commonwealth's attack on the Native Title Act

For more information contact:
Community Aid Abroad
156 George Street
Fitzroy, VIC 3065
Australia
Tel +61 (0)3 9289 9444
Fax +61 (0)3 9419 5895
E-mail renatas@caa.peg.apc.org.au
Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Nutrition

Immunisation programme evaluation

This short course will provide immunisation programme managers with the skills and tools for evaluating immunisation programmes. This is a practical course and includes two field surveys. Included will be coverage surveys, missed opportunities for immunisation surveys, cold chain evaluation, injection safety, and other evaluation methods. This short course was highly rated by its 1997 participants for skill development and the opportunity to develop unique insights into the management and operation of immunisation programmes and programme evaluation. This two-week short course will be held from 17 to 28 August 1998.

For more information contact:
Allan Bass
ACITHN Tropical Health Program
UQ Medical School
Herston Road
Herston, QLD 4006
Australia
Tel +61 (0)7 3365 5585
Fax +61 (0)7 3365 5599
E-mail A.Bass@mailbox.uq.edu.au

East-West Center Program on Population

The 29th Summer Seminar on Population is scheduled to run from 28 May to 27 June 1998. The seminar includes four weeks of formal instructions and two weeks of field visits to Taipei. The summer seminar has four main workshop themes:

- Researching sensitive issues in sexuality and reproductive health
- Getting the most out of the 2000 round census results
- Communicating population and health research to policy makers
- Health-care financing

For more information contact:
29th Summer Seminar on Population
East-West Center Program on Population
1601 East-West Road
Honolulu, HI 96848-1601
USA
Tel +1 (808) 944 7762
Fax +1 (808) 944 7490
E-mail sumsem98@ewc.hawaii.edu
Web http://www.ewc.hawaii.edu
Australian National University

Graduate Studies in Development Administration

'Complex emergencies' and humanitarian aid policy evaluation

'Complex humanitarian emergencies' have long been viewed by development advocates as an aberration from the linear process of underdevelopment to development. Famine, large population displacements, epidemics and significant excess mortality have, however, become characteristic of a variety of seemingly intractable conflicts throughout the world, and an increasing percentage of donor money is being diverted from development activities to emergency relief. There is a strong need for training on the specifics of humanitarian aid policy and its management, analysis and evaluation. Key course components will be the international and national contexts in which humanitarian policy evolved and emergency relief aid is situated: the history and philosophy of humanitarian aid; the international legal framework; types of complex emergency; refugees, the UN and other multilateral and bilateral actors; emergency relief aid priorities; NGOs and CBOs; and the monitoring and evaluation of relief policy and programmes.

The course is scheduled for 2–28 March 1998.

For more information contact:
Short Courses Coordinator
National Centre for Development Studies
Australian National University
Canberra, ACT 0200
Australia
Tel +61 (0)2 6249 4351
Fax +61 (0)2 6248 8805
E-mail meera.nair@anu.edu.au

Graduate Studies in Demography

The Graduate Studies in Demography programme is offering the following short courses in 1998:

• Survey data analysis (mid June/July)
• Population perspectives on HIV/AIDS (mid-October/November 1998)
• Qualitative data (July/August 1998)

University of New England

The Development Studies Program of the University of New England is offering a number of short courses in 1998 which would be of interest to development practitioners.

Planning for sustainable rural development

This seven-week course is scheduled for 12 October to 27 November 1998. It is designed to cover a broad range of issues; in development, including the following: development issues; introduction to the planning process; project planning; project appraisal; environmental aspects of development both from the economic and ecological perspective; role of NGOs in development; computer workshops; and train-the-trainer sessions.

Community health management

This course is aimed at community health care workers from developing countries. Based on the primary health care approach and other WHO health development models, the course will explore the issues and strategies involved in effectively planning for the health of the communities. Topics covered by the course include: structural determinants of health; community participation and community development; planning and management of health projects; contemporary health issues such as malnutrition, family planning, HIV/AIDS; health care systems and health policy; and gender issues. The course will be offered from 12 October to 13 November 1998.

The management of tropical rainforest biodiversity

The management of biodiversity in tropical rainforests is of paramount importance because of its great economic value to countries that still contain substantial areas. This course will allow participants to gain experience and learn from cutting edge research in, and management of, the Australian rainforest. Some of the themes to be covered by the course include: tropical rainforest reforestation and rehabilitation; assessing and managing biodiversity in tropical rainforests; rainforest eco-tourism; and community participation, gender and economic issues. This six-week course is scheduled for 6 July to 14 August 1998.

For more information contact:
Executive Officer
Development Studies Program
PO Box U298
University of New England
Armidale, NSW 2351
Australia
Tel +61 (0)67 733 248
Fax +61 (0)67 733 799
E-mail dsp@une.edu.au

January 1998
The Australian Association of Adult and Community Education Inc. (AAACE) is the national peak organisation in the field of adult and community education, with branches in every State and Territory and a permanent national office in Canberra. Membership to the organisation is open to all individuals who either work in, or have an interest in, the field of adult education. The policy objectives of AAACE are:

- To promote the development of an open, informed, tolerant, democratic and creative society, in which decisions at all levels are increasingly guided by access to relevant information, knowledge and understanding: a democratic society.

- To increase opportunities, through learning, for all adults to experience growth and development towards their full potential – in work, education, family and community life: a nurturing society.

- To support the growth of a productive culture and a high quality of working life through effective vocational and professional continuing education and other measures of skill formation: a productive society.

- By extending the learning opportunities available to adults, to enhance the role of home life in support of the educational objectives of the school system and the learning activities of our children: a learning society.

For more information contact:
Dr Alastair Crombie, Executive Director
AAACE
PO Box 308
Jamison Centre
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Tel +61 (0)2 6251 7933
Fax +61 (0)2 6251 7935
E-mail a.crombie@aaace.asn.au
Web http://www.aaace.asn.au
Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education

The Asian South Pacific Bureau of Adult Education (ASPBAE) was established in 1964 with the fundamental purpose of advancing and defending the right of adults throughout the Asia-Pacific region to learn and continue learning throughout their lives in order to gain control over their own destiny. ASPBAE is a non-government organisation in operational relations with UNESCO and ECOSOC, and a regional affiliate of the International Council of Adult Education. It has four recognised geographic areas of operation: South Asia, East Asia, Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. It has a membership of more than 150 member organisations and 100 individuals in and around 30 countries of the region. Membership is open to all organisations and individuals who are involved or interested in various forms of adult and non-formal education.

ASPBAE has five priority programme areas: education for women's empowerment; environmental education for sustainable development; literacy, post-literacy and universalisation of education; workers' education for social development; and education for peace and human rights.

For further information contact: Rajesh Tandon or Maria Almazan-Khan
ASPBAE Secretariat
PRIA Building
42 Tughlakabad Institutional Area
New Delhi 110062
India
Tel +91 (11) 698 1908
Fax +91 (11) 698 5819
E-mail pria@sdalt.emet.in

International Union for Health Promotion and Education

The International Union for Health Promotion and Education (IUHPE) is a global association of people and organisations working in the fields of health promotion and health education. Established in 1951, the IUHPE has members in more than 80 countries and operates mainly through decentralised regional offices. It is committed to the promotion of world health through education, community action and the development of healthy public policies. By bringing together people from many sectors to address policy, programme and practice issues, the IUHPE provides an interdisciplinary forum for members from around the world to share knowledge, experience and views. Although the IUHPE is a non-government organisation, it cooperates closely with official organisations such as WHO, UNESCO and UNICEF. It also collaborates with government and non-government organisations in developing and improving the theoretical aspects of health promotion and health education.

For more information contact:
IUHPE/South-West Pacific
National Centre for Health Promotion
Department of Public Health and
Community Medicine A27
University of Sydney
Sydney, NSW 2006
Australia
Tel +61 (0)2 9351 5129
Fax +61(0)2 9351 5205
E-mail healthpromotion@pub.health.sy.oz.au

The Seeds Savers' Network

The Seeds Savers' Network is an Australian non-profit organisation. It is the public component of The Seed Savers' Trust for projects in Australia and The Seed Aid Trust for projects overseas. The organisation was founded in 1986 with the principal aim of preserving agricultural biodiversity in collaboration with individual farmers, gardeners and community groups. Over recent years, The Seed Aid Trust has fostered similar networks in the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Cuba and is presently negotiating with other developing countries.

The organisation's major activities include:

- establishing national, regional and community-based seed networks for useful plants in Australia and developing countries;
- establishing seed banks and field banks for non-hybrid locally adapted varieties;
- gathering and recording data on the varieties in the networks and seed banks for easy public access, for research and exchange between parties;
- education and training in all aspects of seed saving, banking and networking for community development projects, both domestic and overseas;
- promoting the need to conserve useful plants through electronic and print media; and
- providing technical assistance to community development projects.

For more information contact:
Michel and Jude Fanton
The Seed Savers' Network
Box 975
Byron Bay, NSW 2481
Australia
Tel +61(0)2 6685 6624
Fax +61(0)2 6685 6634
E-mail seedsave@om.com.au
Materials

PopMap

PopMap is a computer software package that contains geographic database information. It contains maps, population-level statistics by key indicators such as health, school enrolment ratios and urban-rural distribution. In addition, it allows mapping of reproductive health and family planning resources in relation to their spatial context and existing population and socioeconomic indicators. Developed for geographic information management and decision support for population activities, PopMap combines many components into one package: tools for creating, editing and maintaining geographic databases; capabilities for retrieving and processing data in a worksheet environment; and capabilities for analysing and interpreting data using maps. PopMap for Windows takes full advantage of the Windows environment, with menus, status bars, icons and tool bars, and multiple work processes in various windows. UNFPA-supported programmes, government agencies and academic institutions can obtain a copy free of charge.

For more information contact:
Statistics Division
United Nations
2 United Nations Plaza
New York, NY 10017
USA
Fax +1 (212) 963 4116
E-mail vu@un.org

Studying APEC on CD-ROM: A new resource for schools

The APEC Centre has developed a CD-ROM teaching and research resource on APEC for years 11 and 12 students. The kit explains APEC, the importance to Australia of economic integration with Asian-Pacific nations, and the importance of maintaining harmonious relations with our Asian neighbours. The research library includes key APEC and government declarations, reports and documents, statistics on every APEC country, a large selection of academic articles as well as articles from The Economist, research material on aid, the environment, Australia’s relations with Asia and the texts of trade agreements, and the most comprehensive bibliography on APEC research produced to date.

For more information contact:
Australian APEC Study Centre
Level 6, 30 Collins Street
Melbourne, VIC 3000
Australia
Tel +61 (0)3 9903 8757
Fax +61 (0)3 9903 8813
E-mail apec@arts.monash.edu.au

Focus group research

An excellent package on focus group research has been produced by BASICS. It includes a skill-building guide for making focus group work; a training video for moderating focus groups and a handbook for excellence in focus group research. The package is available in English, French and Spanish, in NTSC, PAL and SECAM forms.

For more information contact:
BASICS
1600 Wilson Boulevard
Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22209
USA
Fax +1 (703) 312 6900
E-mail infoctr@basics.org

Born under the red flag

This two-part series tells the story of China’s remarkable transformation after the death of Mao Zedong. Using archival footage and personal interviews, this compelling and often tragic story reveals how the Chinese coped with the failed ideals, a brutal, outmoded communism, and a harsh new capitalism. Part 1, Surviving Mao, traces the developments in China under the leadership of Deng Xiaoping from 1976, when Mao died, to 1984 when the Communist Party celebrated its 35th year in power. Part 2, The New Generation, traces the development of China’s student movement which culminated in the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989. The programme also examines the growing demand for Western culture, China’s one-child policy and the social and economic problems which continue to exist under communist rule.

Indigenous Australians: An Aboriginal community focus

This is an interactive multimedia CD-ROM which provides students with an understanding of the diversity of Aboriginal experience and the range of Aboriginal contributions in Australia today. It provides students with the opportunity to meet members of an Aboriginal community and learn from them within a cultural context.

The above materials are available from:
Video Education Australasia
111A Mitchell Street
Bendigo, VIC 3550
Australia
Tel +61 (0)54 422 433 or 1800 034 282
Fax +61 (0)54 411 148
E-mail vea@vea.com.au
World Bank electronic media products and services

World Bank audiovisual products

Since the Bank's first loan of US$250 million in 1947 to help reconstruct post-war France, billions of dollars have been provided to developing countries around the world for such diverse needs as biogas production in India, vocational training in Korea, and tree farming in Costa Rica. For many of these projects, photographers and videographers were assigned to document progress, resulting in a unique pictorial record now accessible by picture users everywhere. More than 70 countries are included in the World Bank multimedia archives, which are available for editorial use. If you are a publisher, journalist, film-maker or multimedia producer, you are invited to resource the World Bank multimedia archives.

The film and video archive

The World Bank has produced more than 50 informational films and documentaries since 1980, including an archive of over 1,100 Betacam SP originals of footage shot in either PAL or NTSC. The tapes are easily converted and duplicated in the Bank's in-house production facility. Many of the original 1 inch and 16mm film shot earlier are also available. In addition, the Bank's Film and Video Unit houses some 60 prepared Betacam SP B-roll packages on various topics which are ready for quick distribution. An online catalogue of documentary and informational videos and a list of prepared B-roll are available on request. Bank staff can also research your footage needs by searching their customised database. All materials and services are available to the public for a nominal administrative fee.

For more information contact:
Craig Hobbs
Tel +1 (202) 473 2149
Fax +1 (202) 522 2632
E-mail chobbs1@worldbank.org

International Development Abstracts

International Development Abstracts was founded in response to the need for a reference journal covering the growing literature on issues relating to developing countries, and is the leading bibliographical reference source in the field. Over 500 core journals are regularly abstracted, with additional material from books, monographs, theses, proceedings, reports and newsletters. Several thousand journals in the fields of earth sciences and human geography are also scanned for material of interest. Papers are divided into 40 main headings, including sections on agriculture and rural development; environment and development; industrial policy; social policies such as health, housing and education; health; demography; gender and culture; aid, international relations and politics. International Development Abstracts are available online as part of GEObASE through ORBIT, DIALOG, ESA-IRS and OCLC First Search. A CD-ROM version is also available through Silver Platter.

For more information contact:
Elsevier Science
PO Box 242
Northbridge, NSW 2063
Australia
Tel +61 (0)2 9958 4429
Fax +61 (0)2 9967 2126
Web http://www.elsevier.nl/locate/idevabs

Facilitating innovation for development: A RAAKS resource box

RAAKS is a participatory action-research methodology that can help diverse stakeholders work and learn together, enhancing communication and information exchange and planning for action that will support innovation.

The RAAKS resource box contains:
- a book, The social organization of innovation
- a manual, Networking for innovation
- a set of cards, Windows and Tools

This resource box can be used by decision makers, facilitators, team members and others who want to become familiar with the methodology or to acquire a deeper understanding of its foundations. It also provides a field-tested methodology for building a team and starting to work. The book details RAAKS' theoretical background, while the manual addresses the method itself. Windows helps to 'open up' new perspectives on the analysis; tools helps in gathering and processing information.

For more information contact:
KIT Press
Mauritskade 63
PO Box 95001
1090 HA Amsterdam
The Netherlands
Tel +31 (0)20 5688 711
Fax +31 (0)20 5688 286
E-mail kitpress@kit.nl

January 1998
Electronic fora

Decentralisation Forum (DECENTR)

This forum has been set up by the Management Sciences for Health to provide an avenue for exchanging experiences, opinions and research findings of health sector decentralisation. It aims to deepen the understanding of decentralisation as a mechanism for improving the performance of the health sector. This is done by encouraging discussion and debate, and through the sharing of real-life experiences with decentralisation. Suggested topics for discussion include: decentralisation’s impact on health services at local and international levels; specific causes for such impact; difficulties encountered in health sector decentralisation; requirements of successful decentralisation; and definitions of decentralisation.

To subscribe send an e-mail to:
majordomo@mail.msh.org
Leave the subject line blank and enter the message text:
subscribe decentr

APEC EduNET

APEC EduNet is the electronic network of the International Consortium of APEC Study Centres. It contains information and links to APEC Centres throughout the region and is developing into a tool for collaborative projects.

For more information contact:
Web http://www.apec.org

MENS_REPRO_HEALTH

AVSC International recently established this new forum, which is open to family planning service providers, NGOs and information professionals working in reproductive health and related fields. Participants may discuss various topics and disseminate information as well as announce training opportunities relating to men’s reproductive health. The forum also encourages participants to share lessons learned, meeting announcements and research findings in the field.

Readers who wish to subscribe should send an e-mail message to:
listserv@avsc-nt.avsc.org
In the body of the e-mail type:
SUBscribeMENS_REPRO_HEALTH followed by your full name.

Note: Don’t include your e-mail address; messages will automatically be sent to the address from which you send the ‘subscribe’ command.

Environmental News Network (ENN) Online

ENN Online, provided by the Environmental News Network Inc., offers a number of different services which deliver environmental information and resources. One such service is Planet ENN, a free online magazine published weekly. Other services include: Factoids, This Week in History, Web Site of the Week and Cyber Hiker – Stories from the Web.

For more information contact:
Web http://www.enn.com

INTERWATER

The International Water and Sanitation Centre (IRC) has developed INTERWATER, a gateway to water and sanitation information on the Internet. The IRC homepage also allows subscription to the electronic version of the Water Newsletter through their list server.

To subscribe send an e-mail message to:
majordomo@list.bart.nl
In the body of the message type only the following:
subscribe water-newsletter

Note: Do not include any other text or signature.

The Urban Geography Study Group

The Urban Geography Study Group aims to foster research and scholarship in all spheres of urban geography. The group is concerned with three main fields: urban theory, urban policy and various specialist subthemes such as retailing, urban conservation and urban crime.

For more information contact:
mark.boyle@strath.ac.uk
Web http:// glacier.gg.rhbnc.ac.uk/UGSG.html
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Style

Quotation marks should be single; double within single.
Spelling: English (OED with 'ise' endings).

Notes

(a) Simple references without accompanying comments to be inserted in brackets at appropriate place in text, e.g. (Yung 1989).
(b) References with comments should be kept to a minimum and appear as endnotes, indicated consecutively through the article by numerals in superscript.

Reference list

If references are used, a reference list should appear at the end of the text. It should contain all the works referred to, listed alphabetically by author's surname (or name of sponsoring body where there is no identifiable author). Authors should make sure that there is a strict correspondence between the names and years in the text and those on the reference list. Book titles and names of journals should be italicised or underlined; titles of articles should be in single inverted commas. Style should follow: author's surname, forename and/or initials, date, title of publication, publisher and place of publication. Journal references should include volume, number (in brackets), date and page numbers. Examples:


Publication/resource listings

An important function of the Network is to keep members up-to-date with the latest literature and other resources dealing with development-related topics. To make it as easy as possible for readers to obtain the publications listed, please include price information (including postage) and the source from which materials can be obtained.