



# Newsletter 2001/1



*InFocus Programme on  
Socio-Economic Security*

*Seeking Distributive Justice – Basic Security for All*

## Reviving Security in Indonesia

The political uncertainty in Indonesia is compounding the insecurities of ordinary living, with almost daily marches in the streets of Jakarta and other cities, and threats of violence almost everywhere. Policymakers and international agencies are continuing to search for measures to create stability and economic security in the wake of the crisis of 1997.

We are pleased that we are conducting a major project in the country, with a team of outstanding specialists working on many aspects of the crisis. The comprehensive review is intended to produce recommendations for policy and institutional reform to provide a strategy for “decent work” based on stronger socio-economic security. The program is

committed to assisting the United Nations Structural Facility for Indonesian Recovery (UNSFIR) and UNDP in developing a *white paper* for the Government on social policy reform.

At the time this Newsletter was going to press, fieldwork for our Indonesian Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Survey was nearly completed, with data on employment practices and many other aspects of production already collected from over 1,500 industrial companies. This is looking at the needs of workers and managements as Indonesian firms adapt to restructuring. Fieldwork for the People’s Security Survey, covering 3,000 households, has started, focusing on ordinary people’s perceptions and

concerns, their need for government and other support, and the impact of so-called “social safety net” schemes. Also underway are assessments of the insecurity of women outworkers and workers on transmigration settlements, as well as the role of unions, non-governmental organisations and evolving state institutions supposedly providing social protection for the population.

The project should result in the most comprehensive assessment of poverty and economic insecurity in the country, and should assist donors and the international community in their work with Indonesian government counterparts. It is a pleasure to be working with many Indonesian colleagues in what is an ambitious project.

## The Gujarat Earthquake: New Insecurities

In early 2001, a terrible earthquake struck the Indian state of Gujarat, killing and injuring hundreds of thousands of people, and wiping out a whole city. The tragedy occurred shortly after the conclusion of our survey of the social and economic insecurities facing women workers in Gujarat. The destruction has left some of those working with us with their lives in ruins.

The People’s Security Survey was conducted by the Programme between June and November 2000, and has collected detailed information from 1,200 women workers in Ahmedabad and in surrounding villages. With our colleagues in the Gujarat Institute of Development Research and the Self-Employed Women’s Association (SEWA), we are currently analysing the data, and are also finalising a video examining the insecurities faced by these women. We will obviously take account of the severe difficulties caused by the earthquake.

SEWA is actively involved in helping women who have suffered a loss of relatives, friends, homes and all those networks that make the difference between

survival and penury. Some of the women covered by our project have lost their homes or they have had to help relatives who have done so. Some have lost their

livelihoods. But they have shown courage and determination to build new lives that we can only admire. We wish them the very best in their hour of need.



*The Gujarat PSS - learning from women’s experience*

### In this issue:

- PSS in Bangladesh ..... 2
- Workshop on ‘Carework Security’ ..... 3
- Africa on VoiceNet ..... 3

---

---

# People's Security Survey in Bangladesh

The Bangladesh PSS is being carried out by a national organisation (Centre for Operations, Research and Training, Bangladesh) in collaboration with the IFP/SES. There are rural and urban samples. The rural sample, which covers 1,500 households, is divided equally between areas that are prone to floods and areas that are not.

This is a very important distinction in Bangladesh, since a substantial proportion of rural households live in insecurity in flood prone areas. With global warming and rising sea levels, this insecurity is very likely to increase in the future.

The urban sample, representative of the capital city Dhaka, covering 1,200 households, purposely over-samples slum and poor areas of the city. There will be a separate sample of 1,000 female garment workers, since the garment

industry represents a radical departure in the Bangladesh labour market as it provides less educated women with wage employment opportunities for the first time.

The concept underlying this People's Security Survey - as in other PSS - is to learn from the voices of the people about their security and insecurity in life in general and about their *work* in particular. It includes sections on household characteristics, basic security, labour market security, employment security, occupational security, skills, work security, voice representation security, income security and social justice. For each form of security, information is collected on four aspects: (i) actual situation and experiences, (ii) perceptions of individual and family circumstances, (iii) coping mechanisms, and (iv) normative values on security and social justice.

---

## NO Magazine and Brazilian PSS survey

The Brazilian electronic magazine *NO* is participating in our People's Security Survey being carried out in 4,000 households in Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Recife.

Every week, from March 12 to April 5 2001, *NO* is putting on its website ([www.no.com.br](http://www.no.com.br)) the Latin American version of the questionnaire, and other questionnaires applied in countries like India, Indonesia and Ukraine. Readers

will be invited to respond to the questionnaires. The results will be released regularly and every week experts on labour issues will comment and analyse the results.

It is also intended to compare profiles of demographic groups of respondents in order to identify what makes Internet users different from the others in terms of socio-economic security.

---

## Trade Unionism and the Privatisation of Health Care in Eastern Europe

Privatisation of healthcare in East European countries is a widespread and rapidly growing trend. It is having dramatic consequences for workers' health and their basic security in general, as well as affecting the income and employment security of workers in the health care sector in these economies.

Responding to a request from the Public Services International Trade Secretariat (PSI), whose affiliates in the

region are profoundly affected by this reality, IFP/SES has initiated an intensive examination of the impact of privatisation on the income and employment security of healthcare workers. The project is regional and is intended to examine, jointly with the ILO Bureau for Workers' Activities, the main threats to workers' health and what trade unions can do in trying to defend their members' interests during this period of privatization.

## Coping in Dire Circumstances

The priority theme of the UN's Commission for Social Development for its February 2001 session is "enhancing social protection and reducing vulnerability in a globalising world". The SES Programme director was invited to assist in the preparation of the Report of the Secretary General, and participated in an intensive series of discussions of principles and methods for developing social protection systems for unprotected people in developing countries. The meeting for this was hosted by the Government of South Africa.

## Security via the Web?

As a way of refining our global surveys on people's social and economic insecurity, we plan to launch an experimental scheme on our website, by placing several questions each month for those who log onto the web that will feed into our data bank.

The questions will change each month. This way of acquiring information cannot and is not intended to be *scientific*. Rather it will help in the refinement of the issues we pursue and the way of doing so. We encourage all those making contact with the Programme to assist us in this way, and guarantee complete confidentiality for those who send in answers.

## PSS in Africa

IFP/SES and a team of professionals from Institute of Development Studies, Dar-es-Salaam are working on household sample selection and geographical area to be covered in order to launch the People's Security Survey in Tanzania. Promising negotiations for surveys in Ethiopia, Senegal and Ghana are also in progress.

## Globalisation and Inequality Conference

A three-day conference of a distinguished group of economists took place in Chennai, India just before Christmas. The technical papers highlighted the growth of various forms of inequality and economic insecurity across the world. The Programme director gave a paper on the eight crises of social protection that are threatening people's social and economic security.

---

---

# Care work Security: Key to Dignity

Care work is one of the most important types of work that most of us perform during our lives. We may look after children, elderly frail relatives, people with disabilities, and perhaps those less fortunate than ourselves. Yet this work is not counted as work in labour statistics, in standard measures of national income and, to a large extent, in the design of social protection policies. This systematic neglect during most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century has recently begun to change, and not before time.

What forms of compensation should be provided? Should payments be made to the recipients of care or the providers of care? How can care givers

and care recipients be protected against their respective insecurities? The Programme has been looking at how these and related questions are being answered around the world, and have conducted a series of national studies.

On March 29-30, 2001, a distinguished group of specialists will discuss the results in preparation for an ILO meeting, in which the ILO's Workers' Activities and Employers' Activities bureaux will be invited to reflect on the evolving views of employers and workers on how care work should be legitimised, compensated and represented. For further details, consult the website or the secretariat of the Programme.

---

## Committee for Reform of Social Protection in South Africa

More than six years after the end of apartheid, South Africa is still faced by stubbornly high poverty and a degree of inequality that is among the greatest in the world. The "democratic miracle" needs to be matched by a social one establishing greater social justice. Reflecting this need, the South African Government has established a high-powered Committee on

Social Security to find ways of reducing poverty and inequality. Following its earlier work in the country, the Programme was invited to participate in a three-day review of policy options in Cape Town, and make policy recommendations for enhancing social protection and income security for the vast number of poor in South Africa.

---

## Debt relief linked to minimum income schemes in Africa

A joint initiative by IFP/SES and UNCTAD is underway to explore the possibility of linking debt relief for least developed African countries to the introduction of minimum income schemes directed at women with children of school-going age, as in the *renda minima* scheme in Brazil.

The Brazilian *renda minima* offers a practical way to enhance the status of women, raise their labour market participation, and reduce poverty, child labour and income inequality.

A proposal for practical implementation will be presented jointly by the UNCTAD and the ILO in the third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries (LDC-III) to be held in Brussels in May 2001. If accepted, pilot projects will then be carried out in Tanzania and Mozambique.

We are glad that this initiative has the personal support of Ruben Ricupero, Secretary General of UNCTAD, and the ILO's Director General, Juan Somavia. It could offer many African women and their children a viable way to improve their lives.

## Editorial

The Programme enters its second year in the midst of intensive information gathering activity – intended to give reliable and extensive information on what is happening to workers and enterprises, and to social protection systems, around the world.

We have built up a big network of social scientists and organizations and invite others to join our endeavour to unravel the sources of people's insecurity and to identify the optimum policy and institutional means of enhancing the long-term development of what we call *occupational security*.

## Moldova ELFS

In Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, workers and employers are experiencing chronic insecurity as they come to terms with the new economy. To assess the extent and pattern of insecurity, and so help firms and government to take more effective steps to improve them, we have launched an Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Survey in the country. Fieldwork has been concluded in January 2001 and data from a random sample of 300 factories have been collected. The survey gives special attention to the changing position of women workers threatened by marginalisation and discrimination.

## Vietnam ELFS

The IFP/SES in collaboration with the ILO's Multi-disciplinary team for East and Southeast Asia (EASMAT) will shortly be launching the Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Survey (ELFS) in Vietnam.

## Africa on VoiceNet

Mauritania, Senegal, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Mauritius, Tanzania and Zimbabwe have joined the VoiceNet programme of the IFP/SES, following the first African country to join, South Africa. Correspondents in each of these countries are working on the SES Insecurity Questionnaire. In addition, collaborators in some of these countries have started identifying innovative NGO and union initiatives that relate to insecurity issues.

---

---

# Reconceptualising Work: A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Challenge

How should work be treated in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? The conventional approach of the 20<sup>th</sup> century resulted in many forms of work being ignored or under-valued, particularly informal work, care and community work done mainly by women.

To address the issues, the Programme is collaborating with Women in Informal Employment Globalizing and Organizing

(WIEGO), a network of women's groups from various parts of the world, in a project examining alternative ways of treating work and measuring it. The collaboration began with a seminar in Harvard, and then in December a two day meeting was held in the ILO, culminating in an open seminar attended by WIEGO members and many participants from all

Sectors of the ILO. At the seminar, Guy Standing, IFP/SES Director, presented a paper entitled "*Modes of Control: a labour status approach to decent work*" and Renana Jhabvala (SEWA) presented a paper entitled "*Excluding the Majority: Workers, Producers and Categories of Employment*". We are happy to be undertaking this project with WIEGO.

---

## Workfare Workshop

In September 2001, the IFP/SES will hold a two-day workshop on international trends in welfare-to-work social protection schemes. The global trend in recent years has been to tie the provision of state benefits to the obligation to take jobs or attend training courses.

This raises a host of questions about efficiency, equity and labour market dynamics what are being addressed in a set of technical papers to be discussed in the workshop. Among participants will be experts who have carried out studies in several ILO member countries.

## Forthcoming IFP/SES Seminars

**April 5:** Serge Paugam, Sociologist, Ecole nationale de la statistique et de l'administration économique, France - "The Precariousness of Wage Workers"

**April 19:** Ken Wang, Director, Labor Center, University of California in Los Angeles - "Organizing Migrants and Informal Workers"

**May 10:** Michael Storper, Geographer/Economist, University of California in Los Angeles / Marnes la Vallée, France - "Inequality and Low Wages: The American Case in Comparison to Europe"

## Coming Spring 2001: *Barefoot Research: A Work Security Manual for Workers*

As working conditions and collective voice in the workplace are under threat in many parts of the world, an empowerment-based approach is needed in every workplace to help workers, employers and researchers work together to overcome workplace hazards.

The IFP/SES is responding to this need with an innovative approach linking basic security to health and safety at the workplace. Recognising that more accurate and relevant information comes from workers themselves, this approach uses "barefoot practices", also known as Participatory Action Research.

*Barefoot Research: A Work Security Manual for Workers* will be released by IFP/SES in mid-2001. The manual consists of two sections. The first provides practical steps for workers, trade unions and employers, explaining how to carry out easy workplace-based research aimed at improving conditions at work, focusing on workers' rights, and collective agreements that include work security. It also shows how to use health and safety as an organizing tool. The second section includes case studies that demonstrate how the approach has been used successfully in various countries.

---

## Publications

### *SES Papers*

- ◆ "Combining compensatory and redistributive benefits in Brazil", by Lena Lavinias.
- ◆ "Socio-economic security in the context of pervasive poverty: A case study of India", by K. Seeta Prabhu.
- ◆ "Employment security – conceptual and statistical issues", by Sukti Dasgupta.

- ◆ "Changing employment patterns and the informalization of jobs", by Lourdes Beneria.

### *Journal articles*

- ◆ Richard Anker (2000) "The economics of child labour: A framework for measurement", in International Labour Review, vol. 139, no. 3, pp.257-280.



### *InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security*

Telephone: (+41 22) 799 6455 <http://www.ilo.org/ses>  
799 8893 [ses@ilo.org](mailto:ses@ilo.org)  
799 7326  
Telefax: 799 7123

International Labour Office, Route des Morillons 4, Geneva, CH-1211, Switzerland