



Newsletter 2002/1



*InFocus Programme on
Socio-Economic Security*

Seeking Distributive Justice – Basic Security for All

First People’s Security Survey Conference

Too often, social policies are based on presumptions. For efficient and equitable interventions, reliable facts are required. This is the justification for the People’s Security Surveys, which the Programme has launched around the world. Each examines the nature of social and economic insecurity experienced by all sorts of people, the causes of the insecurity, the impact of government policies and the effectiveness of institutions and organisations in enhancing security and facilitating decent work.

The initial results, derived from detailed interviews with over 30,000 families in 12 ILO member countries, were presented at an inaugural PSS conference, held in the ILO on November 28-30. There were over 100 participants from 18 countries, including worker and employer representatives. Opened by Assane Diop, Executive Director of the Social Protection Sector, and by representatives of the Dutch Government and the Rockefeller Foundation, which had largely funded the work, the conference heard presentations from economists and other social scientists on all the main issues covered by the surveys. The final results will be made available through a series of publications during 2002 and on the website.



The Director General, Juan Somovia, at the final session of the PSS conference

The first session covered aspects of basic security, including access to healthcare, food, housing and education. Subsequent sessions examined patterns of labour market security around the world, then employment security, work security, job security, income security and voice representation security. There was also a lengthy session on methodological aspects of survey design. The last day was devoted to the section of the PSS probing into attitudes on distributive justice, focusing on what people think about government policies ostensibly intended to en-

hance their social and economic security, and on what they think should be principles of justice guiding government policy.

Prototype Decent Work Index

At the end of the PSS conference, a Decent Work Index was presented. Could it evolve into a means of monitoring and evaluating individual experience? See inside for details.

Social Justice: PSS Findings

- 8 out of 10 people in Hungary and over 7 out of ten in Ukraine believe everybody should have a guaranteed income floor to enable them to survive;
- 8 out of 10 people in Argentina, Brazil and Chile believe that the government should provide the poor with a minimum income;
- Two thirds of people in Indonesia believe the disabled should have the same work opportunities as other people.

East European Healthcare: Workers face insecure lives

The grim economic situation in central and eastern Europe (CEE) is taking a toll on state-run health services, creating a “crisis in care” and contributing to the fall in life expectancy in countries such as Russia and Ukraine. HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and chronic diseases have been

worsened by poor public health services, lack of training and de-skilling of healthcare professionals.

IFP/SES and Public Services International (PSI), which represents healthcare workers, have shown that many healthcare

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Decent Work Index – A Prototype Unveiled

The Programme presented a prototype Decent Work Index (DWI) at the end of the inaugural PSS conference. We have argued since the ‘decent work’ concept was launched that the ILO must give it empirical meaning, if policymakers and commentators are to take it seriously and use it to guide and monitor policymaking.

The Programme is developing three DWIs – a macro-level index, a meso-level measure (for firms, or workplaces) and a micro-level measure. The prototype presented was the micro-level index, and drew on the Indonesian PSS. It was based on indicators of six forms of work-related security, giving high scores if, say, the person had a high degree of income security, and a low or no score if their work involved severe income insecurity.

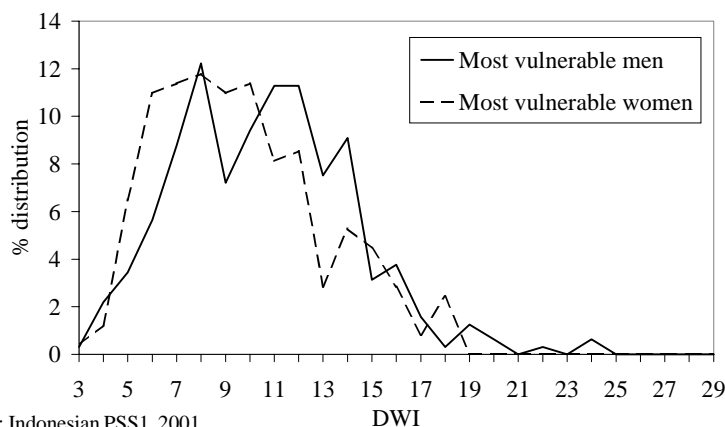
The DWI as estimated has a range of values from 0 to 33. The distribution of scores for women and for men in Indonesia, shown in the graph, indicates that while the modal value is low in both cases,

the distribution for women is to the left of those for men, indicating that women have a lower probability of having a decent work situation. Intriguingly, it is women in ‘less vulnerable’ households who suffer relative to the men in such households, whereas there is not much difference between men and women in the

poorer, more vulnerable households.

We recognise that no index is ideal, and that early efforts to create one that could be applied to all types of society and all types of worker are bound to be subject to criticism. However, only by making a concept transparent and measurable will it remain respectable.

Decent Work Security Index, by Vulnerability, by Sex of Respondent



Source: Indonesian PSS1, 2001

East European Healthcare

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workers experience abysmal working conditions and salaries at or below the minimum wage - if and when paid. We conducted two surveys, one of healthcare workers in the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania and Ukraine, and one of unions representing healthcare workers in all CEE countries. Results were presented in a workshop of trade unionists and specialists in Geneva in December.

The ILO's People's Security Surveys found 88% of families in Ukraine and 82% in Hungary could not afford basic health care. Meanwhile, 78% of Ukraine's healthcare workers had wages lower than the average for all workers. In Moldova, the poorest country in Europe, the health service is near collapse and workers are paid months late, if at all. In the Czech Republic and Lithuania, healthcare workers said conditions and pay had worsened in the past five years. In Poland, 1 in every 20 hospitals have closed in the last three years.

Cuts and decentralisation of public funding making matters worse. Local authorities often lack resources or the capacity to function. Doctors are obliged to demand illegal payments from patients to survive. In Russia, such “under the table” arrangements represent 40% of health care expenditure. Widespread “adminis-

trative leave” further degrades the situation, with hospitals and clinics encouraging workers to stay away from work, for lack of funds to pay them. Short-time working is widespread, as is “presenteeism” - whereby workers who are ill remain on the job for fear of losing their posts or payments from patients.

Health workers fear employment insecurity due to unclear plans to restructure the sector, in which they are rarely consulted. Poor pay, insecurity and excessive overtime have increased work-related stress, while little is done to assist the sufferers.

Collective bargaining has had no effect, according to union reports. Croatian unionists complained that bargaining and consultation are minimal, and Lithuanian unions said consultations with national partners were rarely helpful. Union membership in the sector has declined across the region: in Lithuania it plunged from 100% in 1990 to 20% in 2001; membership in Poland has halved, to about 20%; in the Czech Republic unionisation has fallen from about 93% in 1990 to 32%.

Unions are worried about their ability to bargain and lobby. The study shows that privatisation offers them little reason for optimism, since there is more resistance to unions in the private sector.

The PSS/ELFS Research Fund

A special Research Fund has been established to promote analysis of data from our People's Security Surveys and Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Surveys. Social scientists wishing to use data from one or more of the surveys to analyse aspects of economic, social and labour security will be able to do so, and receive a small honorarium to assist with costs.

Those interested should have an advanced university degree in a recognised social science. Selection will depend on applications and preparation of a short (c.100 word) abstract, and will be chosen by an independent panel.

Priority will be given to applicants from developing countries or from eastern Europe, and in particular those from countries in which the surveys have been conducted. The Programme reserves the right for first refusal for publication of technical papers. For details, contact the Secretariat and the website.

End of Biennium Editorial

The ILO operates on a two-year cycle. The Socio-Economic Security Programme was launched formally in January 2000, although most of its core staff joined somewhat later. After the end of the first phase, it is useful to take stock.

First of all, we wish to thank all those who have worked with us across the world, and those bodies that have helped finance our work. We hope that our efforts have merited their support. Over 400 people have worked with us on one or more projects – some more than once!

We committed ourselves to making the first biennium primarily one in which we would establish the necessary information base on which to conduct analysis of policies and on which to make credible policy recommendations. To do this, we had to develop the methodology and build a network of diligent social scientists who could help us. It is for others to judge (and our International Advisory Board in the first instance) whether or not this has been successful so far. The global network, which we have called VoiceNet, has resulted in a data bank covering over 100 member countries. We think we have also established a methodology for gathering data on patterns of workplace insecurities through the Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Surveys, by which we have gathered data from thousands of firms across the world. And

the methodology for examining the extent and causes of insecurity among workers and their families has been developed through the People's Security Surveys. Both have also proved to be vehicles for assessing the experience of decent work.

Outputs and policy analysis have not been neglected in this first phase. At the time of writing, the Programme has just published its first book, appropriately on care work. It is appropriate because it deals with a subject of acute concern for women. We believe fervently that care work should be treated like any other work, and that those performing it deserve the same securities as others.

Evaluations of unemployment benefit systems have proceeded, as have evaluative work on minimum income schemes around the world. At the beginning of the new biennium we are hoping to oversee the launch of pilot schemes for MISA (Minimum Income with School Attendance) in Mozambique. And there are other advisory and technical assistance projects under way.

However, at this juncture, in the wake of the September 11 events and the armed conflict that ensued, it is attendant on us to reflect on the longer-term objective of setting out to promote social and economic security. The position we take is that freedom requires basic security, that this must be the principle of universalism, and that policies and institutions should

First Dolcelina Folador Prize

The inaugural Dolcelina Folador Prize, for work in the spirit of the person after whom the prize is named, is awarded jointly to *Rosamund Stock*, whose review of psychological aspects of socio-economic security was so useful in the development of the SES Programme, and *Seeta Prabhu*, for her assessment of Indian social protection policies.

be assessed by whether or not they promote basic security and reduce the insecurities of the most vulnerable and insecure groups in society.

An agenda of "decent work" cannot be built without respect for that position. We recognise that some insecurity is required, and that excessive economic and social security could inhibit efficiency and entrepreneurial dynamism. But no society will breed civility, fraternity and democracy unless its citizens have basic security in which to build their lives and go about their work.

Moving on: Richard Anker

Thanks, Richard for your enthusiasm, wisdom and hard work in the Programme's setup phase. We wish you success.

Kerala: Decentralisation for Security

For some time, the Indian state of Kerala has been a zone of social experimentation, potentially with positive lessons for governments all over the developing world. As part of its desire to monitor local developments, the Programme organised a seminar on the *People's Plan Campaign*, given by Thomas Isaac, one of its architects.

He brought out the critical conditions for the Campaign's success, in-

cluding a reversal of the conventional sequencing of decentralisation, in which powers were decentralised *prior* to the development of institutional capacity and in which substantial efforts were made to mobilise local participation. The mass mobilisation helped prevent the government from backtracking, and in those circumstances the decentralisation led to improved protective and promotional security.

Archbishop backs SA income grant

Describing it as "the only way forward if we want to tackle poverty and inequality", the Archbishop of Cape Town, Njongonkulu Ndungane, gave his unequivocal support to the Programme's proposal to provide income security for all South Africans. He was speaking at a workshop organised by the Programme, following presentation of two papers examining the

feasibility of a universal solidarity grant.

The meeting was attended by leaders of the Council of Churches, trade unionists, Members of Parliament, SANGOCO, human rights activists, women's groups, representatives of the disabled, academics and others. There was a strong feeling that chronic economic insecurity in the country required a courageous policy.

The Addis Initiative

In the least-developed or poorest countries of Africa, small defiant indigenous organisations have been trying to improve the social and economic security of diverse groups and communities. Often, these "NGOs" have taken unorthodox approaches, and in championing the interests of their members have become a nuisance. There is no ideal model.

The Programme, in collaboration with the Lebrét Centre, brought together leaders of such civil society organisations from 19 countries for an exchange of experience, and to begin a process by which they could establish a stronger and more mutually supportive network, to enable them to pass on lessons on organisation, lobbying and pressurising authorities to give greater emphasis to the security needs of their communities.

Social Security in the SES databank

Drawing on ISSA's "Social Security Programs Throughout the World" the team has built a database on the 8 major branches of social security for over 100 countries from all regions of the world for 1999. For each branch (old age pensions, unemployment benefits, sickness, work injury, etc.), about 20 statistical variables have been created and entered in an electronic file. These cover both institutional aspects such as laws, programme type, and operational ones, such as ex-

penditure, benefit and contribution rates, and eligibility rules.

The database will soon be available to the public. The data will allow us to assess social security coverage and expenditure and to identify clusters of countries applying similar social protection models.

The SES is extending the database to other years, adding outcome variables and measures of effectiveness, and deriving indicators of various dimensions of social security provision.

IFP/SES Web site and Newsletter now trilingual

The IFP/SES Web site (<http://www.ilo.org/ses>) is now available in English, French and Spanish.

Our Newsletter is produced in French and Spanish too (downloadable from the IFP/SES site).

For further information, please contact the Programme secretariat.

Publications

SES Papers

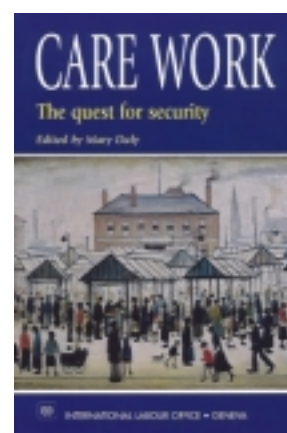
- "Participatory/Problem-based Methods and Techniques for Training in Health and Safety", by Ellen Rosskam in *New Solutions*, January/February 2002
- "Modes of Control: A Labour Status Approach to Decent Work", by Guy Standing
- "Socio-Economic Security in the Context of Pervasive Poverty: A Case Study of India", by Seeta Prabhu
- "Does Informal Credit Provide Security? Rural Banking Policy in India", by V.K.Ramachandran and Madhura Swaminathan

Books

- Mary Daly (ed.), *Care Work: The Quest for Security* (Geneva, ILO, 2002)
- Margaret Keith, James Brophy, Peter Kirby and Ellen Rosskam, *Barefoot Research: A Workers Manual for Organising On Work Security* (Geneva, ILO, 2002)

Video

- SES-SEWA: This poignant film looks at how women in India deal with economic insecurity and SEWA's role in enhancing women's basic security.



Now Available!





9TH INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS
12th-14th September 2002
International Labour Office, Geneva, Switzerland

**INCOME SECURITY
AS A RIGHT**

Deadline for submitting abstracts is **31st March, 2002**; for full papers, 31st July, 2002. For further information, go to <http://www.basicincome.org>.

IFP/SES Seminars

- January 24:** Dr. T.M. Thomas Isaac, "Decentralised Planning and People's Security: The Kerala experience", 24 January 2002.
- March 20:** Peter Kirby, Ellen Rosskam, Fiona Murie, "Enabling Work Security: The relevance of the barefoot research manual", 20 March 2002
- April:** Dr. Maureen Mackintosh, "Towards an Effective Health Policy; Reforming health services provisioning in Africa"

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