



Newsletter 2000/1



*InFocus Programme on
Socio-Economic Security*

Seeking Distributive Justice – Basic Security for All

Promoting Economic Security – The Challenge

Although socio-economic insecurity has long been a reality for many millions, particularly in developing countries, globalisation, more flexible labour markets, informalisation of economic activities and more rapid technological change seem to be making it more pervasive. Why? What forms does it take? And what can be done?

The ILO's new InFocus Programme (IFP-SES) is dedicated to the principle that *basic security for all* should be a fundamental part of a strategy to promote "Decent Work". We define this elsewhere, and will not try to do so here. The challenge is a global one, and it concerns almost all groups, in different ways. We believe that basic economic security should be a fundamental human right, and that for this to be achieved there is a need to ensure not just basic income security but strong 'voice representation' security – the existence of organizations and mechanisms that enable all groups to bargain and be heard effectively, since otherwise all other forms of security will be jeopardized.

Yet security must not be seen just as a defensive issue. The essence of decent work is the opportunity and the capacity to pursue one's sense of occupation. The long term objective should be to ensure that more and more people can have dignified, satisfying and creative work – that is occupational security.

Established at the outset of 2000, the IFP-SES is giving a strong emphasis to *information* in its initial work. This is essential since we intend to monitor aspects of socio-economic security internationally, at national level and in firms and local communities, and to assist others in doing so. For these, the IFP-SES is conducting a series of Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Surveys (ELFS) and a matching series of People's Security Survey (PSS) in ILO member countries

where there is interest and capacity to carry them out. It will also identify policies and institutional initiatives that are enhancing people's economic security, considering whether they can be replicated elsewhere, particularly to provide socio-economic protection for the poor and disadvantaged in developing countries.

This Newsletter, to be issued quarterly free of charge to those who indicate that they would like to be kept informed about its work, will have the modest objective of providing information on recent, ongoing and planned activities for those working with the Programme, and those interested in it.

In this inaugural issue, there are descriptions of some of the initial activities. More detailed material could be obtained from the IFP directly. In future issues, there will be scope for correspondence and debates.

For the core team, the first part of 2000 has been a period of intensive work. We are building a network of like-minded colleagues and institutions in various parts of the world; we have set up an International Advisory Board; we are linking up with other parts of the ILO; and we are learning. We hope that others will join us in what should be not just a programme, but a campaign.



The International Advisory Board (IAB), see page 2

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- Debate with World Bank on unemployment benefits

Worker Insecurity in Ukraine

The population in Ukraine has declined due mainly to a sharp rise in adult mortality. Economic insecurity is everywhere. Yet this huge country has great potential and needs to be integrated into Europe.

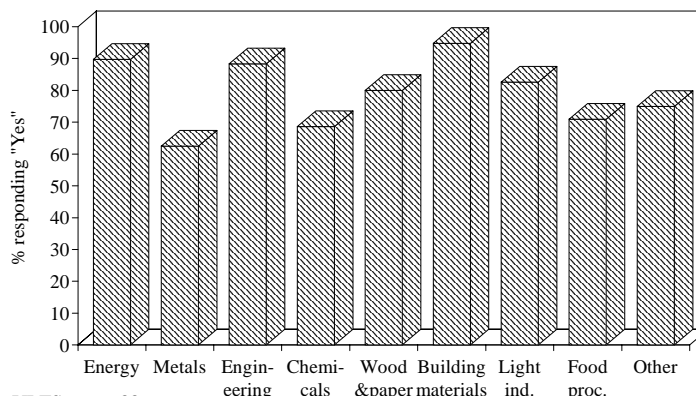
Assisted by the UNDP - and encouraged by the Ukrainian Government - workers and employers, we have launched a major project mapping the severe economic and labour insecurities of workers through two surveys and reviewing existing policies and institutions that affect worker security. The IFP has developed its Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Survey (ELFS) methodology, and has applied it in Ukraine. A national establishment survey (ULFS6) has been carried out covering over half a million workers, and in mid 2000 a further round of that survey, coupled with a People's Security Survey covering about 10,000 individuals, was launched. The full results will be presented at a tripartite conference in Ukraine in early 2001, when policy recommendations will be made.

A first report on the 1999 survey of industrial firms has been published, and has received international media coverage. It highlighted the extraordinary extent of worker insecurity - with nearly one in five workers on prolonged unpaid leave and four out of five firms admitting that they had not paid the wages owed to

workers. It is essential that firms be pressured to pay wage arrears.

The project in Ukraine is being funded in part by UNDP in Kiev, whose director and colleagues have been very supportive. The statistical work is being done in collaboration with the Statistics Department of the Government of Ukraine.

Difficulty in Paying Wages, by Industry, 1999, All Regions



Source: ULFS6, n = 688

Minimum Income Programs in Latin America

Minimum income programs have multiplied rapidly in Latin America. Beyond Brazil, with almost 1500 decentralized experiments, managed by municipalities in all its regions, Mexico has widened the coverage of Progresa, Ecuador intends to launch a national program this year, and Argentina is discussing a similar program. Such experiments have adopted a method which associates combating poverty in the short-run through income transfers to poor families, with a long-term vision

based on reducing the schooling gap of poor children. The benefit takes the form of a school grant, which has as its counterpart the obligation to attend school regularly. Such programs, however, are far from a more general and effective policy of widening equality of opportunity for unassisted segments of the population and sometimes fall prey to preferred-client practices which, instead of generating autonomy, reinforce domination and maintain inequalities.

The IFP-SES is carrying out a thorough evaluation of these programs identifying their rationale and impacts, and intending to initiate new evaluations in countries such as Italy and Spain, where there is decentralization in the formulation and design of program as well as in their implementation. The Portuguese experiment is to be followed up as well. The idea is to create a worldwide framework for reinforcing basic income programmes as a keystone of citizenship.

International Advisory Board meets in Bellagio

The IFP has established an International Advisory Board (IAB) of distinguished social scientists from around the world, and a first meeting was held in the wonderful location of Bellagio, thanks to the financial support and kind hospitality of the Rockefeller Foundation. Most IAB members were able to attend, and a set of technical papers were discussed over three days. These covered such topics as the philosophical foundations of security, the impact of globalisation, gender dimensions of insecurity, voluntary work, care work, workfare, means of providing minimal income security, links between inequality and insecurity, and the changing social

policy orientations of international organizations. Several of the papers will be published by the IFP during the course of 2000.

The IAB will meet twice a year, and members will also be consulted on topics according to their expertise. They will also provide *ad hoc* advice on issues and policies, and help ensure the quality and topicality of the IFP's technical work. Currently, the IAB consists of Tony Atkinson (University of Oxford), Lourdes Beneria (Cornell), Sam Bowles (Massachusetts), Robert Boyer (Paris), Tatyana Chetvernina (Moscow), Bob Deacon (GLSP, Finland), Mary Daly (Dublin), Julian Disney (Internation

al Council for Social Welfare), Zsuzsa Ferge (Budapest), Bill Jordan (Exeter), Dalmar Hoskins (ISSA), Renana Jhabvala (Self-Employed Women's Association, India), Katherine McFate (Rockefeller Foundation), Claus Offe (Berlin), Philippe van Parijs (Louvain-la-Neuve), Ashwani Saith (Institute of Social Studies, The Hague), Ajit Singh (Cambridge), and Eduardo Suplicy (Sao Paulo). Since Bellagio, we are delighted that Victor Tokman has also joined the Board, and particularly as we seek to insure geographical balance, several others will be joining in the near future.

Care Work

For too long, policymakers, statisticians and labour analysts have ignored the work of caring for others, be they one's children or elderly, infirm relatives or others in the community. It is *work* and it does have value, economically and socially. Such work should be legitimized, and greater effort should be made to identify the most effective means of providing those involved with basic income security and "voice" to protect their needs and aspirations.

The IFP has launched an international project to assess patterns of care work in

developing, 'transition' and industrialized countries, and to consider the means of legitimizing, compensating and protecting those involved. The work is being coordinated by Professor Mary Daly, of the University of Dublin, in collaboration with several other distinguished social scientists, including Professor Jane Lewis of Oxford University. First results were presented at the Bellagio meeting of the Advisory Board, and a two-day technical meeting will be convened at the end of 2000 to present the draft report.

China, Pakistan join VoiceNet

The IFP-SES is pleased to announce the inclusion of the Institute of Social Insurance Studies, Ministry of Labour and Social Security, People's Republic of China in *VoiceNet*. Dr. Ge Man, Associate Professor at the Institute, has consented to act as national correspondent for China in the global network. We also welcome

the Pakistan Institute of Labour Education and Research (PILER), based in Karachi/Pakistan, into the network.

The two centers will initially contribute to the development of the database on SES indicators. Future activities entail a lead role in conducting the ELFS and PSS surveys in their respective countries.

Launching the People's Security Survey in India

The People's Security Survey (PSS) is one of the most important activities for the InFocus Programme on Socio-Economic Security. The purpose of the PSS is to find out what people in different communities and different social groups perceive as the extent and cause of their insecurities.

The first People's Security Survey was launched in Gujarat, India in April 2000. The PSS in India is being done in collaboration with the Gujarat Institute of Development Research (GIDR) and Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA). This survey aims to study insecurity issues faced by low-income women workers.

The PSS in Gujarat has three main elements:

1. A survey of 1000 workers, to find out the nature of their insecurities, their perceptions of their insecurities, what factors they believe cause their insecurities, and how they feel that governments and other institutions can help them in facing or overcoming these insecurities. The sample is divided equally between urban and rural workers, and men comprise one sixth of each urban and rural sample. The sample cuts across different occupational groups; in urban areas the sample includes self-employed workers, piece rate workers, casual labourers and regular salaried workers. In rural areas it

covers self-employed non-agricultural workers, cultivators, casual labour (both agricultural and non agricultural) and salaried workers. This survey is being done in collaboration with GIDR, Ahmedabad.

2. In-depth case studies of 20 low-income women workers in different occupations or trades, by SEWA. These long case studies will trace the lives of these women from their early childhood, their work, their families, and the changes therein. The study will highlight the nature of their insecurities, where and how insecurities appear in their lives, and how they have coped or lived with these insecurities. An important aspect of these studies is to examine the role of organisation, or voice representation in helping them overcome their work and employment related insecurities. These in depth case studies aim to provide life stories of low-income women workers from the perspective of socio economic security.

3. A video on socio-economic security of low-income women workers, aimed mainly at policy makers, to be prepared by the SEWA.

The first two elements of the study are to be completed by March 2001. The published results will be discussed in a National Workshop, to be held in India, in March-April 2001.

VoiceNet

The IFP-SES has launched a global network "VoiceNet" to generate, collect and collate information on aspects of socio-economic security and labour responses from around the world, to be made available to the international academic and policymaking community, and to trades unions and employer organizations. Work has already started on the network, which will operate through regional and national correspondents, who are experienced labour specialists in prominent institutions, in different parts of the world. The tasks of these correspondents would be to collect and channel information to VoiceNet. By bringing together labour researchers and labour research institutes from across the world, VoiceNet would promote the exchange of thinking and knowledge, and contribute to help create a world community of researchers on socio-economic security and worker initiatives aimed at improving working lives.

More specifically, the major objectives of VoiceNet are to: (i) identify and chronicle innovative forms of 'voice representation'; (ii) collate comprehensive statistics on trends in socio-economic security around the world; (iii) contribute to the development of the monitoring tools (security indicators and indexes) developed within the ILO's Programme, and be the means of advocacy; (iv) contribute to the extension of the research programme; and (v) contribute to the upgrading in research and advocacy capacity of labour research institutes worldwide.

The Programme wishes to acknowledge the generous support of the Ford Foundation in this endeavour.

Philippines ELFS Survey Launched

Financially supported by the Asian Development Bank, and handled jointly with our colleagues in the SEAPAT, a survey of forms of worker insecurities in over 1,200 firms in the Philippines has been launched. The Government's Department of Labour and Employment and the Institute of Labour Studies are collaborating in this work, and the survey should be valuable in helping the government, employers and workers in their evaluation of regulation and social protection policies.

Latin America PSS networking launched

CIEPP (Centro Interdisciplinario para El Estudio de las Políticas Publicas), in Buenos Aires, and the Institute of Economics at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro have concluded an agreement to carry out the Enterprise Labor Flexibility and the People's Security Surveys in both Argentina and Brazil. Technical discussions took place in May to refine the questionnaires and the survey and sample design, and to support national agencies (public and private) with expertise in household surveys and enterprise data.

The Latin American team and its programme will be finalized by June. Chile will be the third Latin American country to join this regional initiative. We appreciate the involvement and support of the ILO's Brazilian office and the Regional Office for Latin America.

Publications

Books:

- Guy Standing, *Global Labour Flexibility: Seeking Distributive Justice*, 1999: Basingstoke, Macmillan.

SES Papers

- "Worker insecurities in Ukrainian industry", by Guy Standing and Laszlo Zsoldos.
- "Psychological approaches to work insecurity", by Rosamund Stock.
- "Renda minima schemes in Brazil", by Lena Lavinas.

Journal articles

- "Social dumping", *Journal of European Social Policy*, Special Issue, March 2000.

Workshop on SES Indicators, December 1999

The IFP intends to develop a global information system to monitor socio-economic security (SES), and in particular the seven forms of labour-related security identified in the workplan. To help in the design of the various instruments, a two-day workshop was organized in December, 1999, in which over 60 social scientists and statisticians participated.

tists and statisticians participated.

They reviewed four background papers – on the national system of SES statistical and institutional indicators, on the Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Surveys, on the People's Security Survey questionnaires and on the concept and measurement of *Social Income*.

Geneva 2000: Debate with World Bank on Unemployment Benefits

The unemployed have usually suffered from severe income insecurity. Unemployment insurance benefits were meant to overcome that. For various reasons, they have not done so. With high or rising unemployment in most countries, finding the most appropriate systems of providing income security for the unemployed is or should be a high priority.

On June 27, as part of the Geneva 2000 (the follow-up of the Global Social Summit), a public event will be held in Salle II of the ILO to discuss the issues and options, organised by the Programme and the

Social Protection Division of the World Bank. The respective directors will be the two opening speakers, and comments will be provided by nominees of the ILO's Workers' and Employers' Activities Branches. The session will examine such questions as: What have been the trends in unemployment benefit systems around the world? Should they be reformed, and if so how? Should they be extended to developing and middle-income countries?

The workshop will be an open, public debate in which anybody attending Geneva 2000 will be able to participate.

SES Indicators in southern Africa

The Programme has established a regional co-ordination unit for southern Africa to monitor socio-economic security, led by SALDRU in Cape Town and the ILO's multi-disciplinary team in Harare. It is planned that several projects will be launched later in 2000, and the IFP is also working with a team to assess the possibilities of providing basic income security in South Africa.

IFP-SES Web Site

The IFP-SES is pleased to announce the launching of its web site at:

<http://www.ilo.org/ses>.

The site informs about programme goals, its activities, its collaborating institutions, and circulates news on developments in socio-economic security. It also provides a calendar of events.



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