

# CROP newsletter

Comparative Research Programme On Poverty

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### Botswana Poverty Study: 1996

During 1996 a major study of Poverty and Poverty Alleviation was carried out in Botswana, resulting from an initiative by the Government of Botswana, the UNDP, and UNICEF. The study was carried out by the newly-established Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), and constituted part of the preparations for Botswana's Eighth National Development Plan, 1997-2003 (NDP8), writes Keith Jefferis from the Bank of Botswana.

The overall objective of the study was to assist the government in its efforts to effectively address the problem of poverty, within the context of the overall national development objectives of sustained development, rapid economic growth, economic independence and social justice. In view of the tight timetable for preparing NDP8, and the importance attached to obtaining inputs from the study to assist in formulation of NDP8, it was decided to conduct the study in two phases. The objectives of Phase One were to establish an updated factual basis for understanding poverty in Botswana, to review the effectiveness of existing policies and programmes for reducing poverty, and, on this basis, to propose improvements in the overall framework of policies and programmes for reducing poverty. Phase One of the study consisted of the following main components:

(i) **Literature review.** This included review of existing studies and data on poverty in

Botswana; literature searches to obtain information on international good practices in poverty assessment; collection of information on poverty in other countries for the purposes of comparison with Botswana.

(ii) **Quantitative analysis of the nature, extent and causes of poverty.** This used data from two Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES), carried out by Botswana's Central Statistics Office (CSO) in 1985/86 and 1993/94. The basic approach was to compare household incomes with two different Poverty Datum Lines (PDLs). One was a conventional PDL, measuring the income required to meet the basic needs of a family in Botswana, covering food (the minimum necessary to maintain physical health); clothing (to meet minimum standards of legality, decency, practicality and warmth); personal items; household goods; shelter; and miscellaneous items. A household with income (whether in cash or in kind) below this line was considered to be in poverty. The second PDL was set at the level required to meet food needs only; a household with income below this level was considered to be very poor, or in severe poverty. Based on these two standards, different PDLs were calculated for different household types and sizes, different parts of the country (as prices vary between urban and rural areas), and for the two time periods in which the HIES surveys were carried out. Besides using this data to calculate basic measures of poverty such as headcount ratios, the study also analysed the characteristics of those households falling below the (continues on page 2)

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poverty line, in terms of gender of household headship, location, household size, age of household members, dependency ratios, income sources, etc.

**(iii) Rapid poverty profile.** A participatory survey of community perceptions about poverty and the existing poverty alleviation policies and programmes. This was essentially a qualitative survey, carried out in six different localities across Botswana, and provided one element of the grass-roots input into the overall study. It provided valuable insight into perceptions of what exactly was meant by living in poverty, of causes of poverty, coping strategies, as well as possible routes out of poverty, by those directly affected.

**(iv) Review of six existing poverty alleviation policies and programmes,** to determine the effectiveness of existing support for poverty alleviation. This included assessment of the extent that the poor benefit from such policies and programmes; identification of key constraints relating to the situation of the poor and their ability to participate; identification of weaknesses in the design and institutional arrangements for policies and programmes that limit their effectiveness in assisting the poor; and formulation of proposals for improving the framework of policies and programmes for poverty alleviation. The six programmes reviewed fell into three different categories: direct poverty alleviation programmes (the destitutes policy, and drought relief/labour based public works programmes); human capacity enhancing programmes (basic education and preventive health); and programmes supporting income generation (Financial Assistance Policy, and the Arable Lands Development Programme).

**(v) Preparation of overall poverty assessment** - a report summarising the findings and recommendations of the study, together with preparation of supporting technical volumes covering each of the main aspects of the study. The study team was comprised of consultants, academics and public officials based in Botswana, together with an international adviser, and the study was overseen by an inter-ministerial reference group, chaired by the Rural Development Co-ordinator in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning. During the study an extensive interview programme was conducted with officials of central government. Furthermore, field visits to discuss poverty and poverty alleviation

policies were conducted in various parts of the country. These included enumerator-based interviews and focus group meetings with implementers at grass-roots level, poor people, and community representatives and traditional leaders. District level workshops were held, jointly with the respective district councils, to discuss the preliminary findings of the study. These were attended by council officials, councillors, representatives of the district administration, traditional leaders, Village Development Committees, and NGOs and community organisations concerned with poverty. These provided

valuable feedback on the study findings, as well as on preliminary proposals for policy reforms to address poverty alleviation needs. Phase One was completed in November 1996. It is envisaged that Phase Two will take place in 1997, and will focus on detailed design and operationalisation of an improved poverty alleviation framework, together with establishing the necessary institutional arrangements, poverty alleviation instruments, monitoring capacity and improved approaches to encouraging community participation in poverty alleviation activities.

## CALL FOR PAPERS

CROP, UNIVERSITY OF BOTSWANA AND BIDPA  
CONVENE A WORKSHOP ON:

### THE ROLE OF THE STATE IN POVERTY ALLEVIATION

GABORONE, BOTSWANA, OCTOBER 8 - 11, 1997

In co-operation with the University of Botswana and Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA), CROP is convening a workshop on "The Role of the State in Poverty Alleviation". The workshop will be followed by a 1-day open meeting for policymakers and the media. You are cordially invited to present a paper (in English) for the workshop. Papers presented at the workshop must fall in one of the following categories:

- The different roles a state can take in poverty alleviation
- The potential different types of states have for taking a role in poverty alleviation
- The links between the state and its citizens under different kinds of poverty alleviation
- A concrete presentation of an African state and its performance in poverty alleviation

The workshop will be limited to 25 participants, and preference will be given to African scholars. All participants will be expected to take part in the proceedings, either by presenting papers or discussing papers. Funding will be sought to support travel expenses of those participants whose papers are accepted. However, if CROP is not successful in its search for funding, participants must bear the responsibility for their own funding. If you wish to present a paper, please send an abstract to the CROP Secretariat.

#### THE DEADLINE IS APRIL 30TH, 1997

The abstract should include: Personal name, title, full postal (and e-mail) address, TELEPHONE and FAX numbers; the title of the proposed paper and a summary of the main theme or argument. The summary should include: Theory, methods and findings. Do not exceed ONE PAGE (A4). Include also a list of your recent publications.

Participants will be notified by May 31st, whether their proposals for papers have been accepted, and will then be given details of the format in which the papers should be prepared (**the deadline for submission of the paper will be July 31st, 1997**).

*All enquiries about the seminar should be addressed to:*

CROP Co-ordinator: Hans Egil Offerdal, CROP Secretariat, Fosswinkelsgate 7, N-5007 Bergen, Norway, Tel: +47 55 58 97 39, Fax: +47 55 58 97 45, e-mail: crop@uib.no

## editorial

A truly international arena for poverty researchers should be open to all established and budding poverty researchers from every corner of the world. The issue can be argued definitionally, i.e. internationalism means literally including researchers from all nations, whatever the state of the nation, developmentally, politically or culturally. The issue can also be argued ethically, i.e. out of fairness no qualified researcher should be excluded, and extra efforts should be made to include researchers from countries which can not provide financially for the participation of their own people. The issue can be argued academically as well. Comparative studies open up for new insights. This may be particularly true in an under-researched field such as poverty where every new angle into the understanding of the phenomenon is needed if poverty research is to advance further.

In practice there are major barriers to genuine internationalisation. It is costly, both in terms of money and time to organise international studies, in particular with colleagues from third world countries and the former East European countries. Often, their infra-structure is weak, so communication becomes cumbersome, travel arrangements costly, and access to library, data collection and research facilities difficult. But it is also necessary to be aware of the fact that Western social science has for a long time dominated in non-Western countries. By some, this development has been termed neo-colonialism. A "qualified" non-Western researcher means for many Western social scientists, a scholar who is educated within a Western social science tradition and is familiar with ruling theories and methodologies in a specific discipline. Regional theorising, endogenous knowledge, and a more all-round social science university education which is less discipline-oriented and more problem-oriented, as is offered in many of the developing countries, is less acknowledged as "proper" science. Therefore, poverty in developing countries has for a long time been measured and described in terms of Western perceptions of poverty, and poverty studies have often ignored characteristic features of the region. The shortcomings of such studies is one of the reasons why development aid and poverty alleviation programs have not been successful.

It is a challenge for all of us to create a meaningful arena for poverty research where non-Western researchers with a weak infrastructure and a broad social science approach can participate on an equal footing with Western researchers with a strong infrastructure and dominant paradigms. *Else Øyen, Chair of CROP*

## CALL FOR PAPERS

CROP AND ALOP

CONVENE A WORKSHOP ON:

### HUMAN RIGHTS AS AN INSTRUMENT FOR THE ERADICATION OF EXTREME POVERTY

SANTIAGO, CHILE, SEPTEMBER 24 - 27, 1997

In co-operation with The Latin American Association of Promotional Organizations, (ALOP), CROP is convening a workshop on «Human rights as an instrument for the eradication of extreme poverty». The workshop will be held at the Center of Social Studies, SUR, Santiago, Chile, and will include a 1-day open meeting for policy makers and the media. You are cordially invited to offer a paper (in English) for the workshop. A background paper for the conference is available, upon request, from the CROP Secretariat. Papers presented at the workshop must fall in one of the following four categories:

- In what way do the different treaty monitoring committees contribute to poverty alleviation/eradication, and how are the major International Treaties (i.e., Civil and Political Rights; Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; Racial Discrimination; Elimination of Discrimination against Women; Rights of the Child) used to combat extreme poverty.
- The interaction between the states and the international agencies with regard to the use of human rights in policies directed at alleviation of extreme poverty.
- Non-Treaty based human rights mechanisms and their possible contribution to poverty alleviation/eradication.
- The role of regional human rights organisations and their relevance for poverty alleviation/eradication.

The workshop will be limited to 25 participants and preference will be given to Latin-American scholars. All participants will be expected to take part in the proceedings (in English), either by presenting or by discussing papers. Funding to support travel expenses of those participants whose papers are accepted, will be sought. However, if CROP is not successful in its search for funding, participants must bear the responsibility for their own funding.

Keynote speakers will be: **Dr. Asbjørn Eide**, director of the Norwegian Institute for Human Rights and Member of the UN Sub Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities; **professor José Bengoa**, co-ordinator of the ALOP Network and Member of the UN Sub Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities; **professor Willem van Genugten**, professor of International Law at Tilburg University, professor of Human Rights at Nijmegen University and Member of the Advisory Committee on Human Rights and Foreign Policy, The Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs; and **professor Else Øyen**, president of the International Social Science Council and Chair of CROP. If you wish to present a paper, please send an abstract to the CROP Secretariat.

#### THE DEADLINE IS MAY 5TH, 1997

The abstract should include: Personal name, title, full postal (and e-mail) address, telephone and fax numbers; the title of the proposed paper and a summary of the main theme or argument. The summary should include: Theory, methods and findings. Do not exceed ONE PAGE (A4). Include also a list of your recent publications.

Participants will be notified by June 5th, whether their proposals for papers have been accepted, and will then be given details of the format in which the papers should be prepared (**the deadline for submission of the paper will be July 28th, 1997**).

*All enquiries about the seminar should be addressed to:*

CROP Co-ordinator: Hans Egil Offerdal, CROP Secretariat, Fosswinkelsgate 7, N-5007 Bergen, Norway, Tel: +47 55 58 97 39, Fax: +47 55 58 97 45, e-mail: [crop@uib.no](mailto:crop@uib.no)

## THE NEW CROP SCIENTIFIC COMMITTEE

The CROP Scientific Committee 1997-98 has been appointed by the ISSC General Assembly, and now has the following members:

Prof. Abdel Ghaffar M. Ahmed,  
ETHIOPIA

Prof. Anthony B. Atkinson,  
GREAT BRITAIN

Prof. José Bengoa,  
CHILE

Dr. Ponciano L. Bennagen,  
THE PHILIPPINES

Prof. Julio Boltvinik,  
MEXICO

Dr. Kevin P. Clements,  
USA

Prof. Alfredo Bruto da Costa,  
PORTUGAL

Prof. Takashi Fujii,  
JAPAN

Prof. Nicolai Genov,  
BULGARIA

Dr. Brian Gosschalk,  
GREAT BRITAIN

Prof. Quicheng Jing,  
CHINA

Prof. Cigdem Kagitcibasi,  
TURKEY

Prof. Stephan Leibfried,  
GERMANY

Prof. Thandika Mkandawire,  
SENEGAL

Prof. Paul Nichoji Nkwi,  
CAMEROON

Prof. Else Øyen,  
NORWAY

Prof. Natalia Rimashevskaya,  
RUSSIA

Prof. Amartya Sen,  
USA

Prof. Durganand Sinha,  
INDIA

Prof. Francis Wilson,  
SOUTH AFRICA

We welcome them on board and look forward to working with them, on the many issues confronting poverty research.

## NEW ISSC PRESIDENT

At the XXist General Assembly of the International Social Science Council in Paris in December 1996 professor Else Øyen, Chair of CROP, was elected president 1997-98.

## LIST OF CROP EVENTS

1997 - 1998

May97:

22-23: "Law and Poverty II", CROP/IISL Workshop in Oñati, Spain

September97:

24-27: "Human Rights as an Instrument for the Eradication of Poverty, CROP/ALOP Workshop in Santiago, Chile

October97:

8-11: "The Role of the State in Poverty Alleviation", CROP/University of Botswana/BIDPA Workshop in Gaborone, Botswana

## WORKSHOPS UNDER PREPARATION:

"Poverty and Social Exclusion in the Mediterranean Area II"

"The Role of the State in Poverty Alleviation", in Addis Ababa, in co-operation with the UN Economic Council for Africa, and UNESCO.

"Social Costs of Poverty II"

"Poverty in the Pacific", Project planning workshop in Suva, Fiji

## ELITE PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY AND THE POOR

The CROP research group on "Elite Perceptions of Poverty and the Poor" had a project meeting in London in January. The first countries for the comparative study have been selected, and an open interview guide developed. Responsible for the project are: professor James Manor, UK, professor Elisa P. Reis, Brazil, professor Abram de Swaan, The Netherlands and professor Else Øyen, Norway.

## CROP WEB SITE UPDATE

If you are on the Internet you can visit the CROP WWW-pages at:

<http://www.svf.uib.no/helsos/crop>

The pages have recently been updated to offer easier access. In order to view the new pages you need Netscape 2.02 or an equivalent browser. The "old" pages are maintained to secure that also those of you who do not have the latest browsers for the Internet can read our information.

## CROP IN BRIEF

CROP is a world-wide network of researchers and experts on poverty. The aim of CROP is to establish an arena for interdisciplinary and comparative research on poverty in developed and developing countries. CROP organises regional workshops, symposia and international conferences, promotes joint research projects and publications, links poverty researchers and disseminates information about poverty research. CROP is developing an international database on poverty researchers, and documentation of ongoing research. CROP is chaired by professor Else Øyen, University of Bergen, Norway.

If you wish to have your name listed in CROPnet, you are welcome to write the CROP Secretariat and request a copy of the CROP Questionnaire. For further information please contact the CROP Secretariat

## WEB PAGE FOR CROP

Those who have an Internet connection and a WWW browser programme installed, find the CROP web page at <http://www.svf.uib.no/helsos/crop/> The page holds general information about CROP, news about past and ongoing activities, as well as the latest CROP newsletter.

Please note: We can no longer answer the increased demand for copies of single papers presented at CROP conferences and workshops. However, if you have the patience, most of the papers become available through the publications that follow the conferences and will be duly announced. We still supply the authors addresses, phone & fax numbers.

## AT THE CROP SECRETARIAT

you will meet:

Else Øyen, Chair of CROP

Hans Egil Offerdal, CROP Co-ordinator

Inge Erling Tesdal, CROP Assistant

## THE QUOTE

*"Power is an impersonal monster; those who do the taking understand only its technique and not its end."*

Charles Wright Mills  
American Sociologist