

CROP newsletter

Comparative Research Programme On Poverty

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POVERTY IN THE NORDIC COUNTRIES

The Nordic Council and The Nordic Council of Ministers decided in 1994 to initiate and finance a comparative study to understand better the structure and development of poverty and low income in the 5 Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden), writes Björn Gustafsson, Göteborg University, Sweden.

Repeated statistical surveys on income and expenditures on the individual and household level have been carried out for many years in the Nordic countries, supplied with standardized interviews on living conditions and indicators on quality of life, including health, work, leisure and participation in public life. The national central bureaus of statistics are responsible for the major part of the data collection. National research units and independent research institutions have developed a tradition for following up with studies of deprived groups and the effects of intervention. The 5 national studies in the Nordic report are based on official statistics, and supplemented with research from other sources.

The main question posed is how the number of people living with low income has changed over time, and what characterizes such households?

Since no official poverty line has been defined in the Nordic countries, the comparative study examines a set of different definitions of poverty and analyses the

change in poverty rates and poverty composition in light of those different definitions. The economic definitions dominate, and poverty is made synonymous with low income.

The major results can be summed up as follows:

- Transfer payments from the public sector are largely responsible for the fact that, from an international point of view, relatively few people suffer from poverty in the Nordic countries, i.e. the welfare state works,

- Poverty among the elderly has fallen drastically since the mid-1970s (except for Iceland which has a more limited system of transfers to the elderly), i.e. the pension systems which were introduced earlier have now started taking effect,

- Poverty is increasing among the younger population, i.e. the welfare state has not developed a system to provide for youth who do not have the skills to enter the labor market,

- Single parents with small children are a group at risk,

- For many, living in poverty is a short term condition. But having been poor during an earlier term increases the risk of returning to poverty,

- What is called "the current economic climate" affects the extent of poverty, i.e. the recent cutbacks (*continues on page 2*)

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in some of the social provisions and a previous increase in unemployment rates, are reflected in increased poverty,

·So far the Nordic countries have been relatively homogenous, for historical reasons and due to the welfare state arrangements. But inequality is on the increase.

·The Nordic welfare states have some basic principles in common, but there is a sizeable variation in the way transfers in cash and kind are arranged. Since an extensive part of the statistics presented differ in content in the 5 countries, it is not possible to compare directly the effects of welfare state arrangements.

This study has renewed the public discussion on poverty and the effects of different welfare state arrangements. It will be used as a base for a report to the next meeting of the Nordic Ministers of Social Affairs. To outsiders it may be considered a luxury that so much attention be given to a relatively marginal phenomenon such as poverty in the Nordic countries. One reason may be that within the ideology of a welfare state it is not accepted that even small groups become too marginalized.

Source: Den nordiska fattigdomens utveckling och struktur, Annika Puide (ed.), Nordiska Ministerråd, TemaNord 1996:583.

LAW AND POVERTY II

From May 22 to 23, the second CROP/IISL workshop on "Law and Poverty" took place in Oñati, Spain.

The workshop was opened by CROP Coordinator Hans Egil Offerdal, and the host, professor Dr. Johannes Feest from the International Institute for the Sociology of Law, greeted the participants on behalf of the IISL. The workshop was chaired by professor Asbjørn Kjørstad, University of Oslo, Norway and professor Peter Robson, University of Strathclyde, Scotland. The workshop was made possible due to a generous grant from the International Institute for the Sociology of Law in Oñati.

The following papers were presented:

"Rule of Law and Poverty Reduction: Some Issues", by Hélène Grandvoininnet, France, "Substantive Justice and Procedural Fairness in Social Security", by Michael Adler, Scotland, "The Theories of the Communicative Norms and Institutions as Next Steps for the Inclusion of the Poor People", by Fernando Galindo, Spain, "Poverty in the

Courtroom", by Peter Robson, Scotland, "An Army of Ideas: Marginalization, Indigenous Rights, and Civil Society in the Zapatista Rebellion of Mexico", by Camilo Perez-Bustillo, Mexico, "Poverty and Public Support - Institutional Policies for Situations of Need in Italy", by Yuri Kazepov, Italy, (represented by Alessia Damonte), "Disability and Poverty", by Nicola Loughran and Peter Robson, Scotland, "The Development of the Notion of Poverty and the Equal Protection Clause: A Comparative Analysis Italy - United States", by Antonella Mameli, Italy, "Strategies for

Police Accountability and Community Empowerment", by J. Ross Hastings and R.P Saunders, Canada, "The Impact of Selected Legal Measures to Eliminate Caste Disability on Poverty and Related Social Exclusion in South Asia", by Ajith Hettihewage and Kalinga Tudor Silva, Sri Lanka. At the end of the workshop it was agreed that a publication of the papers presented should be prepared.

The participants also asked that the work of the group be followed up with a third workshop on the relationship between law and poverty.

CALL FOR PAPERS

CROP AND INSTITUT NATIONAL DE STATISTIQUE ET D'ÉCONOMIE APPLIQUÉE
CONVENE A WORKSHOP ON:

POVERTY ALLEVIATION AS A STRATEGY FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA

RABAT, MOROCCO, FEBRUARY 27 - 28, 1998

In co-operation with INSEA (Institut National de Statistique et d'Économie Appliquée), CROP is convening a workshop on "Poverty Alleviation as a Strategy for Social Development in the Mediterranean Area". The workshop will be held at INSEA, Rabat, Morocco. 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 categories:

- How different measures of poverty alleviation can be linked to strategies of social development
- Analysis of institutions (international, state, regional, and local institutions and NGOs) concerned with poverty alleviation in Mediterranean countries
- Financial and/or social consequences of poverty alleviation measures implemented by government and/or civil society

The workshop will be limited to 25 participants and preference will be given to scholars from the Mediterranean area and Northern Africa. All participants will be expected to take part in the proceedings (in English), either presenting or discussing papers. Participants bear the responsibility for their own funding. However, a limited number of travel grants are available. The grants will be awarded from the CROP Secretariat, according to geography (CROP's policy is to prioritize researchers from "the third world"), and the relevance, quality and originality of the abstract/paper. Please indicate if you need a travel grant, enclose a budget, and state the amount you are able to cover from other sources. As a rule, accommodation will be covered for all participants during the workshop. If you wish to present a paper, please send an abstract to the CROP Secretariat.

THE DEADLINE IS SEPTEMBER 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 October 20th 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 January 2nd, 1998).

All enquiries about the workshop should be addressed to:

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

editorial

CROP needs a publishing strategy which promotes low cost, high quality publications and makes them internationally accessible. This is the ideal. The real world of publishing looks different. Publishers have a vested interest in selling high cost books to a limited audience, rather than selling low cost books to an international audience where comprehensive marketing is needed to create buyers.

CROP is experimenting with several strategies. So far CROP publications have found an outlet through 6 kinds of publishers, each with a different profile and targeting different audiences.

This month 2 new publications have appeared. One is Poverty and Participation in Civil Society which contains the papers from the UNESCO/CROP Roundtable at the UN World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen. It is published jointly with UNESCO and Abhinav, an Indian publishing house. The choice of an Asian publisher is rooted in the belief that distribution has to move closer to the developing countries. However, this choice may limit distribution in Latin America and Africa even more than a publication from a European publisher.

The other publication is Law, Power and Poverty. This is the first self-made CROP publication, i.e. a publication where CROP has been responsible for all the steps in the production of the book, from selecting and editing the papers from one of our workshops, putting them into a homogenous format, checking the references, designing the lay-out and cover, and finally delivering the ready-to-print diskette. The process has been laborious, as are all first time investments. Next step forward is to implement a successful strategy of distribution.

Besides all the material on poverty research coming forward through CROP activities, there is a tremendous amount of high quality poverty research which never gets past a very limited distribution. It may be that CROP

NEW PUBLICATIONS

"Law, Power and Poverty", edited by Asbjørn Kjønstad and John H. Veit-Wilson, CROP Publications: Bergen, 1997. The book demonstrates both the beneficial and the detrimental powers of legislation in creating and sustaining poverty. It is written by a group of social scientists and experts in legal theory who met for the first time in 1995 at a workshop arranged by CROP and the International Institute for the Sociology of Law, Oñati, Spain. Price: Norway: NOK 150 +p&p, Europe, USA and Japan: USD 18 (p&p incl.), all other countries: USD 15 (p&p incl.).

"Poverty and Participation in Civil Society", edited by Yogesh Atal and Else Øyen, UNESCO and Abhinav Publications: Paris and New Delhi, 1997. This book is based on the papers from the Round Table organised by CROP and UNESCO which took place during the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark, 1995. Price: Norway: NOK 150 +p&p, Europe, USA and Japan: USD 18 (p&p incl.), all other countries: USD 15 (p&p incl.).

SPECIAL OFFER: Buy both books: **"Law, Power and Poverty", edited by Asbjørn Kjønstad and John H. Veit-Wilson, CROP Publications: Bergen, 1997** and **"Poverty and Participation in Civil Society", edited by Yogesh Atal and Else Øyen, UNESCO and Abhinav Publications: Paris and New Delhi, 1997,** Price: Norway: NOK 200 +p&p, Europe, USA and Japan: USD 30 (p&p incl.), all other countries: USD 25 (p&p incl.).

ORDER FORM (send to CROP Secretariat, Fosswinckels gt. 7, N-5007 Bergen, Norway, fax: +47 55 58 97 45) PLEASE USE CAPITAL LETTERS

No. Law, Power and Poverty Price:

No. Poverty and Participation in Civil Society Price:

No. Special offer Law, Power and Poverty/Poverty and Particip. Price:

SUM:

Name: Please charge my credit card the

Address: total sum of

• Visa • Eurocard/Mastercard

• Diners • American Express

Card No.: Valid thru:

Signature:

should make an effort to become a midwife also for publishing non-CROP initiated material.

We need your advice on these matters. Please give us feed-back on strategies on how to promote publications on

poverty research, in your region, through your networks, with regional publishers, on paper or electronically, so as to reach the audiences where new knowledge about poverty will make an impact. *Else Øyen, Chair of CROP*

POPULATION POLICY AND POVERTY ISSUES

A conference on "Population Policy and Poverty Issues" will take place in Beijing, China, 11 - 17 October 1997. For more information about the conference please contact Dr. Stan D'Souza by email, (dsouza@ipc.knooppunt.be) or fax +32-2-3490469.

CROP GUIDELINES

New Guidelines for CROP was approved by the ISSC General Assembly in December 1996. They are located at the CROP www pages (<http://www.svf.uib.no/helsos/crop/>) or (<http://www.crop.org>). Alternatively you can write to the CROP Secretariat for a "hard copy".

DIALOGUE: A University Scholarship Program for Women in Developing Countries

The International Institute of Sociology (IIS) has established a programme under the slogan "Educated women means educating the future". The income gap between the North and the South is growing, and many girls in the developing world are denied access to education. At the same time, there is a strong relationship between education and socio-economic development. Of the one billion illiterate people in the world today, almost 2/3 are women. The IIS established the DIALOGUE University in 1995 to help women in developing countries to education. The goal is to generate a core of professionally trained women who will return to their countries to act as role models and further the education of other women and girls.

For further information about the DIALOGUE programme, please contact the Director of the IIS DIALOGUE Council, R. Alan Hedley, IIS DIALOGUE Council, Department of Sociology, University of Victoria, P.O. Box 3050, Victoria, BC V8W 3P5, Canada. Tel: +1 250 721 7571, fax: +1 250 721 6217, email: rahedley@uvic.ca

SOCIAL COST OF POVERTY

A local workshop on the CROP project "Social Costs of Poverty", organised by professor Dayo Akeredolu-Ale, was held in Nigeria in November. The workshop also led to the establishment of a Nigerian Poverty Research Network. Nigerian researchers interested in joining the network can contact the CROP Secretariat.

LIST OF CROP EVENTS

1997 - 1998

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

February98:

27-28: "Poverty Alleviation as a Strategy for Social Development in the Mediterranean Area", CROP/INSEA Workshop in Rabat, Morocco.

WORKSHOPS UNDER PREPARATION

"The Role of the State in Poverty Alleviation", two workshops to be held in Africa in 1998 as part of the CROP project on the same topic.

"Social Costs of Poverty II"

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

IF YOU NO LONGER LOVE US, PLEASE LEAVE US!

CROP is saving on everything, including paper and stamps. If you no longer read the CROP newsletter, just return it marked "not interested", and we shall delete you from our mailing list. Thank you.

CROP ADDITIONAL WEB ADDRESS

If you find it difficult to remember the www address of CROP, our pages are now available also at:

<http://www.crop.org>

In order to view this mirror site you need Netscape 2.02 or an equivalent browser. In the future it will be possible to register for the CROP database and submitting abstracts electronically via this site. More information to come.

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/> or <http://www.crop.org> The pages hold 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

"Law is like a snake. It only bites you if you are barefoot."

Peasant saying
from El Salvador