

together

against poverty



Enhancing Knowledge for Renewed Policies against Poverty



Pictures © IRD

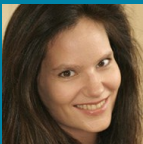
NOPOOR Newsletter N. 7

April 2017

*Special Focus:
Employment*

Find this letter online at www.nopoor.eu/newsletters_list

Foreword



Kirsten
Sehnbruch,

University of Chile

There has been significant progress in development thinking and policy making, recognising the importance of the quality of employment. Both the ILO, through its concept of *decent work*, and the Sustainable Development Goals, by including the objective of *promoting sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all* as Goal 8 in their agenda, have contributed significantly to the process. This implies a broad definition which entails specific problems: one is that there are no internationally comparable data; particularly so, in developing countries, data on labour markets tend to be scarce. A second problem is that even if we had internationally comparable data, defining decent work based on a plethora of individual indicators is not practical; governments would find themselves with a large dashboard of indicators without knowing how to prioritise them, or being able to compare their own performance with that of other countries. Furthermore, it becomes impossible to formulate public policies with the specific objective of improving the quality of employment when there is no practical indicator that measures the concept.

As a result of this lack of measurement, governments continue to focus on the unemployment rate, which, in the case of developed countries, is an extremely poor indicator of labour market performance due to the fact that many low income families simply cannot afford to be unemployed and work in the informal sector. We recommend that agencies and institutions focus resources and policy attention on producing reliable and internationally comparable data on employment conditions; the European Working Conditions Survey has made a significant progress in producing such statistics and can be rolled out to include other middle income countries and an adapted version for less developed countries. Once the data are produced, a simple indicator of the quality of employment should be produced including dimensions such as earnings, job security, social security, and basic working conditions. This indicator should combine different dimensions in a composite indicator, be comparable among countries, and use a simple methodology.

Kirsten Sehnbruch, Director and Co-founder of the Center for New Development Thinking, University of Chile

You can find in this issue:

- Foreword by Kirsten Sehnbruch
- Research Flash on Incentives and Challenges for Women Engaging in Local Economies: Nopoor Research in Mexico
- Nopoor Policy Brief on an Analysis of Earnings Inequality of Paid Workers in Rural India
- NEW Nopoor Policy Briefs
- Nopoor Results spreading: Past and Upcoming events
- Nopoor Moving Images
- Nopoor Booklet



This project is funded by
the European Union

Heidi Dumreicher, Bettina Kolb - OIKODROM - The Vienna Institute for Urban Sustainability

Mujeres Ecologistas de la Huizachera is a women's group from the Colonia la Huizachera, supported by the Instituto Mexicano para el Desarrollo Comunitario IMDEC Guadalajara. IMDEC aims at establishing participatory education for underprivileged people, protection of the territory and strengthening democratic development. Founded in 2011, the *Mujeres Ecologistas* created a *Jardin de la Esperanza comunitario* - a garden of common hope. The women managed to get a small agricultural land and turned it into a place for clean food production with infrastructure such as *banos secos*, *filtros de agua grises*, *cisternas*, *fogones*.

Respecting a systemic sustainability approach to their work, the group sees their activity as a contribution to their own life quality, while at the same time starting a small community business where they will sell healthy vegetables. In the capacity building trainings, they also learn to process their own food with *autoconstruccion*: *mujeres ecologista know to construct their own horno*.

What is the role of money? The women's intentions go far beyond financial outcome: The region, with its heavily polluted land (*tierra*), needs ecological interventions for the production of healthy food and the distribution of this knowledge. As a practical example the group also builds up a school for their neighbourhood. At a personal level, the money earned guarantees social status and stands for a special well-being. However, the women's main concern is to establish a decent, healthy life within the community. Being able to help neighbours, to be respected and asked for help, to do something practical that the community respects and earn their own money are the main drivers for the organisation. In the NOPOOR project, we studied women's groups in Asia, Africa and Latin America, and in all cases, women had the intention to have an impact on working conditions. Empowerment and capacity building settings supported this aim so that women become agents, not as victims and integrate themselves with their self-organisation in local networks. Find further information [here](#).



«Before we lived here, we had to buy the fruit, now we are planting them by ourselves [...] in a healthy way, without using chemicals. Not only we do not have to buy it anymore, we now sell them if we have enough»

OIKODROM © 2014

NOPOOR Policy Brief: Earnings Inequality of Paid Workers in Rural India

Agriculture in India employs the largest share of the Indian workforce. However, its contribution to Gross Value Added (GVA) is much smaller. In 2011, the employment shares of agriculture, industry, and services were 49, 24 and 27 percent respectively, whereas their shares in GVA were 19, 33, and 48 percent respectively. In addition, between 2004/05 and 2011/12, real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in these sectors grew at 4.2, 8.5 and 9.6 percent per annum, respectively, making agriculture the slowest growing sector of the economy. Given these figures, the concern about whether high overall GDP growth has benefitted those at the bottom, and to what extent they have benefitted compared to those at the top, is extremely pertinent for rural India. As recent events in many industrialized countries show, periods of economic growth that do not lead to gains in living standards for all segments of the population might lead to growing dissatisfaction among citizens and thus, might jeopardize social cohesion. To inform discussions on these issues, Nopoor focused on rural India and examines how real earnings of paid workers (wage earners) evolved over the seven-year period between 2004/05 and 2011/12. Find the [Analysis of Earning Inequality of Paid Workers in Rural India](#) and all other Nopoor and European policy briefs [here](#).

NEW Nopoor Policy Briefs

New Nopoor Policy Briefs are available now!

- NOPOOR Policy Brief No. 13: [Conditional Cash Transfers: PROs and CONs](#). By Lena Levinas
- NOPOOR Policy Brief No. 14: [Activation of Food Market and Food Security](#). By Jeremie Gross, Catherine Guirkinger and Jean-Philippe Platteau
- NOPOOR Policy Brief No. 15: [Why Emerging Donors Give Foreign Aid and what this Implies for the Global Aid System](#). By Finn Ole Semrau and Reiner Thiele
- NOPOOR Policy Brief No. 16: [The Impact of Lengthening the Instructional Time on Inequality: the Case of Vietnam](#). By Tran Ngo Thi Minh Tam and Laure Pasquier-Doumer
- NOPOOR Policy Brief No. 17: An [Analysis of Earnings Inequality of Paid Workers in Rural India](#). By Shantanu Khanna, Deepti Goel and René Morissette
- NOPOOR Policy Brief No. 18: [Strategies and Performance of New Donors](#). By Joaquim Morales-Belpaire and Elena Serfilippi

