

## Gareth Wall

### Reflecting local priorities through multidimensional indicators of development

Lead supervisor [Dr. Phil Amis \(/schools/government-society/departments/international-development/staff/profiles/amis-philip.aspx\)](http://schools/government-society/departments/international-development/staff/profiles/amis-philip.aspx), Second supervisor Professor Achin Chakrovarty ([www.idsk.edu.in/faculty.php?id=2](http://www.idsk.edu.in/faculty.php?id=2) (<http://www.idsk.edu.in/faculty.php?id=2>))

#### Summary of doctoral research

'What we measure affects what we do. If we have the wrong measures, we will strive for the wrong things.' Joseph Stiglitz, September, 2009 at the release of the Sarkozy Commission Report

#### Introduction

This doctoral research focuses on the perceived discrepancy between aggregate multidimensional measurements of development at the local level, and often competing priorities for development within such communities. Despite wide recognition of the need for such measurements to be informed through public participation, debate and scrutiny (Sen 1999, Alkire 2002, Ravallion 2011) there is little divergence from the somewhat rigid non-participatory model developed for the supranational level.

#### Study objectives, questions and methodology

##### Central hypothesis of the research

There is a significant mismatch between the portrayal of a community through conventional multidimensional measurements and the expressed perceptions of, and priorities for development by citizens.

##### Specific research questions:

- To what degree do sub-national Human Development Reports include more locally specific issues as the reference populations becomes more localised?
- To what degree was the community involved with informing the direction and focus of a Human Development Report when created for the panchayat level?

#### Research setting and method

The first sub-national HDR was produced in India in 1995 with sub-state HDRs being introduced in 2005. These include district (Rajasthan, Karnataka, Kerala and West Bengal), Municipalities (Delhi and Mumbai) and sub-district - Panchayat – reports (Kerala). The first of two research phases will be a comparative analysis of the multiple levels of human development reports: from the national, through state and district to the panchayat (village) identifying the conformities and deviations from the parent report(s) as the reference population become more localised. A comparative analysis will be undertaken of the six district HDRs produced over the last 10 years in West Bengal with seven district HDRs from Ghana, produced over the same period. This will be followed by a three tiered analysis of Kerala's state, district and panchayat HDRs.

The second phase will be to undertake a more detailed panchayat level analysis of the key actors involved with producing one of the two panchayat HDRs in Kerala. This will involve semi-structured interviews with the authors and commissioning concerns and priorities of the community. The basic unit of analysis will be the individual and the primary research method will be individual semi-structured interviews and priority ranking of issues, however analysis of collective action of households and civil society organisation will also be undertaken. A stratified random sample consisting of 150 electorally registered households, 50 from one panchayat in each of the three focus states will be selected. Following Esposito (2010), a participatory priority weighting method will be used to determine how each respondent weighs and prioritise their concerns to get a measurement of relative importance (see also Chambers 2005).

#### Profile

Gareth has returned to IDD where obtained his MSc, after completing a two year taught MPhil in Applied Economics from JNU, Delhi ([www.jnu.ac.in](http://www.jnu.ac.in)) through the Centre for Development Studies, Kerala ([www.cds.edu](http://www.cds.edu)) .

His research work focuses on questions of development knowledge including papers on the role of social capital in the sectoral system of innovation amongst pineapple farmers in South India, a comparative study of Development Studies programmes in India and the UK and his current research focuses on how multidimensional indicators of development can be used to best reflect the conflicting priorities within a local region.

Other research includes profiling the local government systems of the 53 counties of the Commonwealth ([www.clgf.org.uk/Country-profiles](http://www.clgf.org.uk/Country-profiles)) as well as reports on Education and Rural Development in the 11th Five year plan of Jharkhand for the Planning Commission of India/ Institute for Human Development ([www.ihdindia.org](http://www.ihdindia.org)) and the Employability of Social Science Doctoral Researchers here at Birmingham.

He is active in the Development Studies Association, as Research Student Representative [www.devstud.org.uk](http://www.devstud.org.uk), and as Membership Secretary for the International Association for Ladakh Studies [www.ladakhstudies.org](http://www.ladakhstudies.org). For many years, he directed the University Choirs at the Universities of Liverpool and Bath and still enjoys a good sing whenever possible.

#### Qualifications

- BA (Liv)
- MSc (Bham)
- MPhil (JNU/ CDS)

#### Research interests

- Multidimensional measurements of human development
- Participatory local governance
- Development knowledge
- Development Studies

#### Professional memberships

- Member of the Council for the Development Studies Association [www.devstud.org.uk](http://www.devstud.org.uk)
- Member of Executive Committee for the International Association for Ladakh Studies [www.ladakhstudies.org](http://www.ladakhstudies.org)

## Conference papers

The role of Social capital in the Sectoral System of Innovation, the Case of Vazakkulam Pineapple, Kerala, South India Eldis Research seminar series University of Bradford, 2010 Indhira Gandhi Institute for Development Research, Mumbai 2009

Continued (Re)-Feminisation in Indian Manufacturing Industries: Exploitation and Empowerment, for 'Rethinking culture& development: feminist crossings', School of Women's Studies, Jadavpur Uni, 2009

Agglomeration of Knowledge-Intensive Industries in South India – CDS, Kerala, 2009

Youth Participation and Development – U8 Research papers compendium 2009

A comparative study of Development Studies Departments in India and the UK, 3rd International Conference on Public Policy, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore 2008

## Publications

Commonwealth Local Government Handbook 2011/2012, CLGF, London

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