

## SPRC Newsletter - December 2000

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## REFLECTIONS ON 'PARTNERSHIP'

BY SOL ENCEL

A growing interest in partnerships reflects a rising public concern with the role of business as a supporter of welfare services. Corporate philanthropy is increasingly seen as an investment linked to the profitability and public image of a company. The concept of partnership is relatively new and readily confused with other forms of corporate giving like sponsorship and *ad hoc* donations to charitable causes. However, an increasing number of companies are developing a more focused and strategic approach to corporate philanthropy. It appears that the trend is towards an increase in partnership arrangements. However, it is evident that significant sections of the business community consider that maximising returns to shareholders is more important than community involvement.

Paradoxically, rising demand for welfare services has coincided with pressure on governments to balance their budgets, which usually entails cutting services. One important consequence has been a steady rise of emphasis on the role of the non-government sector in sharing the provision of services. This has led to a varied menu of developments in the

relation between government and non-government provision of services, including tax incentives, funder-provider arrangements, contracting out, competitive tendering, and encouraging volunteering.

Describing the relationship between government and non-government sectors as a partnership is comparatively new. A 1998 British Green Paper, *A New Contract for Welfare*, noted that inequality and deprivation were worsening despite increased spending on social security, and declared that it was essential that 'public and private sectors should work in partnership to ensure that, wherever possible, people are insured against foreseeable risks'.

Prime Minister Howard used similar phraseology to stress the need for greater community involvement by the business sector. In November 1997, he foreshadowed moves to encourage greater participation by non-government bodies in the provision of welfare services, and in March 1998 he invited a range of business and community bodies to participate in a 'Round Table' which would develop initiatives for business and community partnerships. One outcome has been the introduction of tax

incentives for private giving, and another is the establishment of the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships.

The Oxford Dictionary defines a 'partner' as an associate, a colleague, or a sharer. Business firms are in fact associated with non-government bodies through regular annual donations; staff donation schemes; assistance in kind; fundraising; cause-related marketing; and sponsorships. There are significant differences between these forms of association. In particular, the term 'partnership' implies sharing responsibility, which involves more than financial support.

The dictionary definition of sponsorship clearly distinguishes it from partnership. Dictionaries appear to agree that it means something in the nature of a guarantee or a payment for a specific purpose. Dictionaries, however, are not always in step with common usage, and a number of instances commonly referred to as 'partnerships' could equally be described as sponsorships, and vice versa. Perhaps the most important point is that both terms denote

*"The term 'partnership' implies sharing responsibility, which involves more than financial support."*

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## FEATURE

Sol Encel writes on 'partnership' in social welfare. The article is based on his recent presentation in the Mission Australia/Smith Family/SPRC seminar series.

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The Social Policy Research Centre was established in January 1980 (originally as the Social Welfare Research Centre) under an agreement between the University of New South Wales and the Commonwealth Government.

The Centre operates as an independent unit of the University. The Director receives assistance in formulating the research agenda from a Board of Management and also through periodic consultation with the community. The Director is responsible to the Vice-Chancellor for the operation of the Centre.

The SPRC undertakes and sponsors research on important aspects of social policy and social welfare; it arranges seminars and conferences, publishes the results of its research in reports, journal articles and books, and provides opportunities for postgraduate studies in social policy.

The Centre's current research agenda covers social policy issues associated with changes in employment, income support and the labour market; changes in households and families; poverty, needs and economic inequality; and the restructuring of forms of social support.

*The views expressed in this Newsletter, as in any of the Centre's publications, do not represent any official position of the Centre. The SPRC Newsletter and all other SPRC publications present the views and research findings of the individual authors, with the aim of promoting the development of ideas and discussion about major concerns in social policy and social welfare.*

## STAFF AND VISITORS UPDATE

We are very pleased to announce that SHEILA SHAVER, Acting Director of the SPRC, has been promoted to Professor.

We would also like to congratulate ARIADNE VROMEN, former holder of the SPRC PhD Scholarship, who has recently been awarded a doctorate for her thesis 'Politicising Community: Gender and Participatory Citizenship in Sydney and Toronto'.

PROFESSOR TERRY CARNEY is currently visiting the Centre, during sabbatical leave from his post as Professor of Law at the University of Sydney.

GERRY REDMOND has been invited to join the Unicef Innocenti Research Centre in Florence for a one-year secondment, to undertake research on child poverty as part of the Monitoring in Central and Eastern Europe (MONEE) Project.

JULIA PERRY finished her period of secondment from the Department of Family and Community Services in November. She is planning to take some time to pursue other research interests before returning to FaCS and we wish her well for the future.

A number of other staff are also leaving the Centre at or shortly after the end of this year. We would like to thank them all for their great contributions to the Centre's work over the years and for their excellent company as colleagues. We wish them all the best for their future careers or their well-earned retirement.

JENNY DOYLE has been a Research Officer at the Centre for 14 years, specialising in quantitative data analysis. During this time she has made an important contribution to a large number of studies in social security and, more recently, community services.

DIANA ENCEL is retiring, after working at the Centre since 1982 as an editor of many of our publications and author of research resource bibliographies.

LYNDA PAWLEY has been a secretary in the Centre since 1988 and has had the main responsibility for preparing our Reports and Discussion Papers for publication.

LYNN SITSKY is also retiring, having worked as Librarian for the Centre since April 1984. As well as maintaining the Library, she has contributed to the Research Resource series and provided excellent research support for a range of projects.

GILBERTE SZREDNICKI has been providing reception and administrative support for the Centre since 1996.

SUZANNE VAUGHAN has been Administrator of the SPRC since January 1989. She will be undertaking retraining as a teacher of English as a second language at the University of Technology, Sydney.

CERI EVANS leaves the Centre at the end of January 2001 to return to the UK. Ceri has been a Research Officer in the Centre from April – July 1999 and again since February 2000, between periods of travel. During this time she made a substantial contribution to projects including the SPRC Survey of Attitudes to Economic and Social Change.

CHRISTINE GIBSON and JULIE RUSSELL joined the Centre in July and August 2000 respectively, to work on a short-term project evaluating the implementation of the Children and Young Persons' (Care and Protection) Act 1998. We thank them for their hard work over this period.

JO HEALY-NORTH has worked part-time as Publications Officer since March 2000. In addition to her work on this Newsletter and other publications, Jo has helped prepare the Centre's new internet-based publication strategy for 2001 and beyond.

# FROM THE DIRECTOR

BY SHEILA SHAVER



Readers of this column and friends of the SPRC will know that the Centre has been facing a serious funding crisis. Happily, the future of the Centre is now assured, in at least the medium term, and it is a promising one.

As Peter Saunders reported in the May issue of the *SPRC Newsletter*, this arose when the Department of Family and Community Studies (FaCS) decided to end the core funding of the SPRC as a national centre dedicated to social policy research. In lieu of a single funded centre, the Department decided to fund 'the provision of research services', the suppliers of which have been chosen by competitive tender. The SPRC is now one of three groups funded to conduct social policy research on behalf of FaCS, and it is not the largest of these. From 2001, it will receive just over 40 per cent of the funding it previously received from the Department. Another, equally important, consequence is that this funding is to be applied only to the conduct of research projects of interest to the Department. With core funding at an end, the Government will no longer fund the SPRC to conduct research of broader interest and/or academic purpose. It will no longer underwrite the organisation of seminars and conferences, including the National Social Policy Conference, the dissemination of research findings including through this *Newsletter*, or the education and training of specialist social policy researchers under programs such as the SPRC Postgraduate Scholarship.

Much of the year since March has been taken up with the re-establishment of the Centre and its ways of operating. Inevitably, funding issues have given the starting point for much of the re-thinking, but every area of the life and work of the SPRC has come under scrutiny. While some important issues remain unresolved, the general outlines of the Centre's future operation are becoming clear.

During this year the SPRC has built a new and more diversified funding base for its research

activity. The Centre is undertaking several large, multi-year research projects for a variety of Commonwealth and State departments, and with funding from the Australian Research Council (ARC). All bring together interdisciplinary teams of researchers, some including colleagues from outside our own staff, for periods of two to five years. Some continue well-developed lines of SPRC inquiry in areas such as income inequality, income support, welfare state studies, and community support services to older people. Others are taking SPRC into new areas, including community support in early childhood and the evaluation of policy innovation in the treatment of drug offences. A new agenda of research for FaCS, still under negotiation, will take its place among these new initiatives. Overall, the SPRC's program for the next three to five years assures us opportunities to do research that is both intrinsically interesting and socially worthwhile. It is to be hoped that a more diversified and contractually defined funding base will ensure the Centre's researchers a measure of academic freedom and research independence.

This program depends entirely, however, on project funding won in commercial and academic competition. The University of New South Wales has been generous in its support to SPRC, and University funds will help to finance some of the things SPRC must achieve if it is to be more than just another expert consultancy. A funding gap remains, along with the long-term issue of how to sustain and replenish the Centre's fund of theoretical and methodological expertise while largely dependent on a marketplace where the purchasers of research services expect to pay only the marginal costs of their particular projects. The other side of this contradiction is that while the SPRC's collective fortunes depend on competition for tendered research contracts, the aspirations and career paths of its staff are critically linked to performance in academic modes such as journal publication. A key task of the coming year will be to

find ways to give staff 'time out' to think and write beyond the immediate demands of funded projects.

Meanwhile, we are seeking to preserve as many of the developments of the last twenty years as possible. Although funds for the SPRC Postgraduate Scholarship are no longer available, PhD study in the Centre will continue with student support from other scholarship programs. We expect several new students to join us next year, and are keen to hear from others who might like to do so. SPRC will continue to make the findings of its research available to the public. Although the details are not yet worked out, we plan to continue the publication of this *Newsletter*, and *SPRC Discussion Papers*. We plan to make more use of the internet, and will upgrade the Centre's website in the near future. The National Social Policy Conference is to be held as usual, in July 2001, and the Call for Papers is published elsewhere in these pages. This time we cannot subsidise it from our core funds, so it will be more expensive than in past years. It will continue to offer value for money in comparison with other conferences of comparable size and quality.

The future of the SPRC's specialist social policy library is as yet unresolved. We are seeking philanthropic support to sustain it for a three-year period, by which time we plan to absorb its costs in our ongoing budget. Regretfully, we must close it to the public and other University users for what we hope will only be a temporary period.

The successful negotiation of the past twelve months has not been without hardship and pain. The Centre's success in winning new research funding reflects the enthusiasm, hustle and very hard work of its staff. This has come on top of the extra effort required to complete a backlog of research commitments, and been undertaken amidst uncertainty about the future of all positions in the SPRC. The staff deserve to be

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*continuing* relationships, which differ in detail from case to case.

A report written by Melissa Conley-Tyler for Mission Australia makes the following comment: 'A corporate community partnership is any relationship where a corporation and non-profit organisation share resources for mutual benefit and the benefit of the community.'

Corporate community partnerships offer a range of benefits to both parties. Companies increase legitimacy and various marketing and operating benefits. Community organisations gain access to additional resources, equipment, publicity, staff skills, networks, loans, intellectual capital and markets for products and services. The potential contribution of corporate partnerships is huge. Just 15 per cent of the current market would translate to \$15 million per year of support. This will continue to grow as more companies become aware of the benefits involved.' (Quoted by permission).

## BUSINESS INTERESTS

A similarly optimistic view is to be found in *Corporate Community Involvement*, produced by the Allen Consulting Group, which surveyed 115 large Australian companies, and provides 65 case studies of partnership or sponsorship arrangements between business firms and community organisations. Three-quarters of the respondents agreed that corporate community involvement is related to their long-term business interests. They identified four main benefits: reputation enhancement, improved relationship with communities, increased employee morale, and symbol of corporate ethos.

The largest single group of cases involved sport, followed by sponsorship of cultural activities. These do not, on the whole, fit the model of 'sharing' described above. The smallest group of cases related to 'social development'.

A long-time observer of the charitable sector and its relations with business and government

# REFLECTIONS ON 'PARTNERSHIP'

takes a sceptical view. In a recent paper (1998), Mark Lyons remarks that Australian business is moving from a model that viewed support of nonprofit organisations as philanthropy to one of support as a business transaction. Shareholders take the view that it should advance the positioning of the business in a consumer market; a move from an 'altruistic' to a 'shareholder' position increasingly criticised by NGOs such as Greenpeace and Amnesty International.

A similar situation appears to be developing in the UK, according to the latest report by *Corporate Citizen* magazine, which carries out an annual review of company giving for charitable and philanthropic purposes. Despite a substantial increase in total donations by the 100 largest corporate donors (from £275 million in 1999 to £310 million in 2000), there has been a major shift from cash gifts to investment in cash and kind. An example is one of the largest donors, British Telecom. In 1999-2000, its total giving was £15 million, but only £4 million was given in charitable donations. The rest was classified as investment, for which the company expects returns. The magazine also quotes the case of United Biscuits, which cut its charitable contributions by 80 per cent following a change of management. According to United Biscuits' director of community affairs, the company has reduced its giving in those areas where it sees no direct business benefit.

The editor of *Corporate Citizen* comments: 'The new focus, like a number of companies, puts the onus on employees to donate to charity. In business speak, this approach "empowers" staff to raise money, or volunteer, for the cause they support and in turn feel motivated about the company they work for'.

There are, of course, a number of existing relationships between business and the community sector that can properly be described as partnerships because they embody the principle of sharing responsibility. An old-established one is that between Lend-Lease Corporation and the ACTU, which set up the ACTU-Lend Lease

Foundation in 1981 to develop job skills for young people. Perhaps the best publicised is the case of the Body Shop, which is the subject of a detailed analysis in the recently published volume, *Social Capital and Public Policy in Australia*. The authors argue that by developing strategic partnerships and acting as an exemplar of good corporate citizenship, the Body Shop is helping to create social capital.

## A GENUINE CASE

Successful candidates for the Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Community Business Partnerships also indicate a wide spectrum of relationships, not all of which would qualify under the definitions used in the present analysis. However, the winner of the second round of awards, in 2000, represents a genuine case of sharing; between the New England Institute of TAFE and an Aboriginal co-operative, Toomelah Ltd. The partnership resulted in the establishment of a paper mill in Boggabilla, in the north west of NSW. The mill employs nine senior women from the Gamilaraay community to produce high quality paper from waste cotton rags and other natural fibres.

Another finalist in the 2000 awards which qualifies unambiguously as a partnership is the case of Foodbank Victoria, a branch of Foodbank Australia, which was established in the early 1990s by a group of businessmen in Sydney, following an American example. It is an incorporated charity, registered under ACT company law, with branches in New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland and Western Australia. It collects unsaleable items from major food retailers and processors, acting as an intermediary between the food industry and the charitable sector. The Australian Food Council, the peak body for the food and beverage industry, entered into a formal alliance with Foodbank in 1997, and the Grocery Manufacturers of Australia did the same in 1999. The Prime Minister's award finalist was a

## CONTINUED

partnership between Foodbank Victoria and SPC Ltd, one of the oldest established food processors in Australia, based in the Goulburn Valley district of Victoria.

A rather different case is that of Procter and Gamble, well-known producer of food and cosmetics (which applied for a Prime Minister's award, but was unplaced). In the past, the Australian firm has followed the practice of its parent company in donating surplus products such as cosmetics, food and personal hygiene items. A new program, entitled 'A Better Start', represents a shift of policy towards the partnership model, in collaboration with the Save the Children Fund. Its focus is on the indigenous community, whose children are seen as particularly vulnerable, and the aim is to raise \$1 million per annum for three to five years, to fund health and education programs.

Another local subsidiary of an international corporation that has refocused its activities towards the partnership model is the BT Financial Group. The group is now partly owned by the US financial group, Principal Inc. BT has a long history of philanthropic activity, donating regularly to the Spastic Centre, the Leukaemia Foundation, and the Smith Family.

With the foundation of the new BT Financial Group, management initiated new policies, and consulted extensively with staff to select a short list of causes. Six welfare agencies were selected, including the Smith Family and the Multiple Sclerosis Society. The others are comparatively obscure, reflecting an intention not to confine support to well-established agencies but to choose a wider range of lesser-known causes. Staff are involved in each program through a payroll deduction scheme (up to an annual maximum of \$10,000), and through organising one fundraising event per year for each of the designated partners.

A final example illustrates the potential role of community action in replacing governmental

support. The medical school at the University of Newcastle lost Commonwealth funding for its research program in 1998, which included research into cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, neuroscience, and Aboriginal health.

The Newcastle Permanent Building Society took the initiative and committed itself to support a research fellow at \$50,000 a year for three years. Since then, over 100 local firms have followed suit, providing support for nine research fellowships and awards, and enabling the creation of the Hunter Medical Research Institute. Advertisements calling for support were produced by a local advertising agency and the Newcastle TV studios of the ABC, and the Newcastle Knights Football Club provided players who took part in the advertisements. Account and legal firms provided other pro bono services.

The example of the Hunter Medical Research Institute draws attention to the wider problems of shortfalls in government research funding, emphasised recently in a report by the Commonwealth Government's chief scientific adviser, Dr Batterham. As a result, universities and research institutes have increasingly sought support from private sources. The Co-operative Research Centres program (CRCs), launched in 1985, signals a major form of partnership between universities, CSIRO and other government research bodies, and the business sector.

### PARTNERSHIP IN SOCIAL POLICY

Social policy is another important area where government support has been significantly reduced or redirected. The partnership model has considerable relevance in this situation and could take the form of CRCs, with or without government support. Other possibilities could include scholarships and fellowships, internships, research undertaken under contract, joint projects, and a continuing process of intellectual exchange.

The above examples indicate

that partnerships can play a significant part in the area of social policy. However, their role must be kept in perspective. Even in the US, where private donations to philanthropic causes flow at three times the Australian rate per head of population, corporate giving amounts to no more than five per cent of Federal government non-defence expenditure. A British study of American philanthropy describes this, somewhat derisively, as 'icing on the cake'. In Britain, a report by the National Council for Voluntary Organisations estimates that, in 1999, the corporate sector provided no more than 4.5 per cent of the income of voluntary organisations. The 1995 report of the Industry Commission on 'Charitable Organisations' indicates a similar situation in Australia.

The contribution of the private sector, through partnerships or other means, may be more significant in a qualitative rather than quantitative sense. Mark Lyons observes that 'philanthropy is a small but significant part of the non-profit economy; it can be used for new initiatives and innovations that would benefit society, and better understanding of the issues could impact positively in increasing philanthropy'.

A similar point is made in the 1996 annual report of the Stegley Foundation, a private charitable trust based in Melbourne, which has conducted several reviews of the issues facing philanthropic foundations. The review concludes that private philanthropy should make a point of supporting innovative projects which would otherwise not get off the ground, and the Stegley Foundation's report outlines various commitments in this direction. Its example could be more widely followed.

*"The contribution of the private sector, through partnerships or other means, may be more significant in a qualitative rather than quantitative sense."*



# FROM THE PROJECTS

## AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH COUNCIL GRANTS

SPRC has been awarded two Australian Research Council Strategic Partnerships with Industry (Research and Training) (SPIRT) grants.

*The Household Income, Living Standards and Economic Inequality Project* has been granted \$195,860 over 2001-03. It will be undertaken with industry partner the Australian Bureau of Statistics, which is also providing substantial financial and in-kind support. It will be conducted by Professor Peter Saunders, Dr Bruce Bradbury and Michael Bittman.

The first stage of the research will involve the SPRC/ABS team investigating trends in living standards, poverty and income distribution over the 1980s and 1990s. Household-level data will provide the basis of the research, after being adjusted to minimise the impact of changes in definition and survey methodology. The second stage will extend the conventional income measure to explore the impact of home production, employment benefits and the social wage, nationally and regionally. It is anticipated that this collaboration will produce a definitive account of changes in economic inequality at the end of the century and lead to new research questions and data requirements.

Peter Saunders

A further SPIRT grant has also been awarded to the *Children's Services as a Strategy in Child Protection Project*, which will begin in 2001 and will have the Office of Childcare within the NSW Department of Community Services (DoCS) as industry partner. This project will involve Professor Peter Saunders, Dr Judy Cashmore and Ms Karen Fisher, and Ms Kathy Gray from the DoCS Office of Childcare, and Dr Elizabeth Fernandez from the School of Social Work, UNSW.

There is little evidence to indicate whether the use of

children's services prevents children at risk of harm from moving further into the child protection system. The aim of the project is to determine the effectiveness of using children's services as a preventive child protection strategy. The first component of the study will involve analysing quantitative administrative data on the use of children's services by children at risk. The second will follow, over three years, a cohort of children at risk. The project will identify the factors leading to successful outcomes for children within different service types.

Cathy Thomson

## RENT ASSISTANCE: ADEQUACY AND INCENTIVES FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

The real value of rent assistance has more than doubled over the 1990s while the real value of other forms of Commonwealth and State housing assistance has diminished: rent assistance now accounts for more than half of all Commonwealth and State spending on housing. This project is funded through the Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute. It will explore issues of adequacy and incentives in rent assistance for families with children.

ABS Census and income survey data and tax-benefit micro-simulation techniques will be used to examine the extent of eligibility to rent assistance and after-housing cost incomes among families with children in different States and regions of Australia. In particular, the project will seek to examine whether the impact of rent assistance on families' incomes and incentives to work varies greatly across States and regions, and evaluate (in terms of incomes and incentives) different proposals for reforming the scheme.

Gerry Redmond

## VETERANS HOME CARE EVALUATION

A UNSW Evaluation Consortium, consisting of SPRC and the Centre for General Practice Integration Studies (CGPIS), has been contracted by the Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) to evaluate the new Veterans' Home Care Program (VHC). This project will be led by Professor Peter Saunders.

The evaluation will monitor the implementation and progress of the program, and assess its cost effectiveness, efficiency, and appropriateness, including veteran satisfaction and wellbeing.

Veterans and war widows/ers are currently provided with community nursing, respite care, allied health services and transport for health care services by DVA. From January 2001, the VHC will extend the range of services available to veterans who have Gold and White Repatriation health cards and who need assistance to live independently.

New services will include domestic assistance, personal care, in-home and emergency respite care, and home and garden maintenance. The aim of the program is to assist those who are eligible to remain independent for as long as possible.

Justin McNab

## EVALUATION OF THE YOUTH HEALTH PROJECT

Northern Sydney Area Health Service (NSAHS) was funded by the New South Wales Health Community Health Innovation Program to develop a pilot project to encourage youth health partnerships. Northern Sydney Health Promotion, at Royal North Shore Hospital, developed the Youth Health Project where youth consultants participated in youth health forums and initiatives and visited local service providers to determine their 'youth friendliness'. The SPRC was commissioned to evaluate the project.

The evaluation identified several critical success factors. These included appointing a project officer with highly developed networking and youth worker skills; high level managerial support, particularly in the project's initial stages; employment and payment of youth consultants to



## FROM THE PROJECTS

acknowledge the value of their work; and the project's philosophy of youth-friendly work practices. These factors ensured high retention rates and participation by the youth consultants. And as a result, young people were incorporated into the structure of NSAHS in a 'youth friendly' and meaningful way.

*Justin McNab*

### EVALUATION OF THE NSW YOUTH DRUG COURT PROGRAM

In July 2000, a Youth Drug Court (YDC) pilot program began operating in two Children's Courts in Western Sydney. SPRC has won a contract from the NSW Attorney-General's Department to lead an interdisciplinary team of prominent UNSW researchers to evaluate the program.

The YDC, which will initially run for two years, is one of the 1999 NSW Drug Summit outcomes. The program aims to reduce the level of criminal activity and other behaviour associated with the misuse of drugs and alcohol. It combines intensive judicial supervision and case management of young offenders charged with criminal offences. Participants are provided with comprehensive assessment, support and cross-departmental services from Juvenile Justice, Health, Community Services, Housing, and Education and Training.

The evaluation will extend to the end of 2003. It will involve interviews and follow-up with program participants; statistical monitoring, including data on the progress of a comparison group; interviews with representatives from the departments and agencies involved; a cost analysis; and a review of legal issues. Fieldwork will begin early in 2001.

Professor Peter Saunders and Dr Tony Eardley will lead the evaluation. Other consortium members include Associate Professor Janet Chan, School of Social Science and Policy and Dr Lisa Maher, from the School of Community Medicine.

*Mardi Flick*

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

### CHILD POVERTY DYNAMICS IN SEVEN NATIONS

*Bruce Bradbury, Stephen Jenkins and John Micklewright*

SPRC Discussion Paper No. 108

This paper, which is based on a chapter of a forthcoming book from the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, compares child poverty dynamics cross-nationally using panel data from seven nations: the USA, Britain, Germany, Ireland, Spain, Hungary and Russia. As well as using standard relative poverty definitions, the paper examines flows into and out of the poorest fifth of the children's income distribution. It finds significant (but not total) uniformity in patterns of income mobility and poverty dynamics across the seven countries. The key exception is Russia, where the economic transition has led to a much higher degree of mobility. Interestingly, the USA, which has the highest level of relative poverty among the rich nations, has a mobility rate which, if anything, is less than that of the other nations.

### IS THE JOB NETWORK BENEFITING DISADVANTAGED JOB SEEKERS? PRELIMINARY EVIDENCE FROM A STUDY OF NON-PROFIT EMPLOYMENT SERVICES

*Tony Eardley, David Abello and Helen MacDonald*

SPRC Discussion Paper No. 111

This paper is the first report from a joint study with the Brotherhood of St Laurence, funded under the ARC SPIRT program and in partnership with *JOB futures*, a consortium of non-profit employment services agencies in the Job Network. The first part provides an overview of developments in employment services in recent years and reviews the available data on how well the Job Network is

performing. The second part presents initial results of research fieldwork with a sample of 10 *JOB futures* agencies and their job seeker clients during the first round of Job Network contracts. It looks at job seeker access to and experiences of the Job Network, and at agency and employer practices developing within the employment services market.

### TIME USE AND OVERLAPPING ACTIVITIES: EVIDENCE FROM AUSTRALIA

*Maria Sagrario Floro and Marjorie Miles*

SPRC Discussion Paper No. 112

The overlapping of activities is an important dimension of time use that has previously received little attention in economic analysis. Most time use studies have looked only at *primary* activities, ignoring the fact that individuals often perform two or more activities simultaneously. Using a two-adult household subsample from the 1992 National Australian Time Use Survey, this paper examines the incidence and determinants of overlapping activities among 3,966 adult male and female household members. The need to perform domestic work and childcare as overlapping activities is influenced by a host of demographic, economic and social factors. Household lifecycle and composition, gender and cultural norms, as well as individual characteristics such as sex, age, education and income earnings, all influence the extent to which people cope with increased demands on their time by overlapping activities. Employment status and characteristics as well as certain household-specific circumstances also play a role in a person's decision to overlap. The first part of the paper measures the effect of overlapping activities on time use data. An analytical model is developed and Tobit models are estimated to examine the effects of these factors on the incidence of *overlapping* work activity in the second part. Conclusions are drawn in the final section of the paper.



# FROM THE DIRECTOR

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proud of their achievements, and as Acting Director I wish to acknowledge the debt the Centre owes them.

The Centre has been unable to take its entire staff into its new future. The transition from core funding to near total dependence on research contracts and academic grants has required a reduction in the number of funded staff and a restructuring of support staff positions. As a result, SPRC is losing the services of experienced and valued staff, and it will be the poorer for their loss. I can mention here only some small part of the contribution they have made to the work of the Centre and the public recognition it has had.

Jenny Doyle has been with the Centre for fourteen years. Highly talented in data analysis, Jenny has worked in disability, social security and evaluation studies, and is co-author of some classic research writing in these fields.

Readers will be less familiar with Lynda Pawley by name, but they will know her work. A secretary in the Centre since 1988, Lynda has borne the main responsibility for expert presentation of its written word in research reports, *Discussion Papers*, and *Reports & Proceedings*. The Centre's receptionist for the last four years, *Gilberte Szrednicki* has been helpful beyond her official role to many readers of this column, as well as to all those of us inside the Centre. *Suzanne Vaughan* came to SPRC more than a decade ago as the Centre's first administrator. She has managed the Centre's business within and without the University, and been the silent author of its annual reports.

Finally, two members of staff are retiring at the end of 2000. *Diana Enzel* has worked in the Centre since 1982. She has done many things in that time, but readers will know best her series of annotated bibliographies in areas

of social policy. Centre librarian since 1984, *Lynn Sitsky* has developed the SPRC library to become highly respected nationally and internationally, and made it a powerful resource in keeping its researchers abreast of the literature in their fields. She has taken the library into the electronic age, and joined in the research itself with the production of literature reviews and expert bibliographies.

On behalf of the SPRC, I want to express our appreciation of the contributions that all these members of staff have made to the Centre and its work. I wish them well in the activities they next undertake.

*Sheila Shaver is Acting Director of the Social Policy Research Centre. Peter Saunders is on leave from his position as Director of the Centre until July 2001.*

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