Beyond Development: Local Visions of Global Poverty

Pathways to Impact

This proposal will create a global network with local nodes across five ODA recipient regions (Bangladesh, Brazil, the Indian Ocean World with an event in South Africa, Mexico, and Eastern Europe with an event in Slovenia). The over-arching objective is to understand and interrogate the pluralities of perceptions, experiences, narratives, histories and customs regarding poverty around the developing world, and the different approaches to poverty and its alleviation. The Network therefore overtly establishes a dialogue between different localities, across different academic disciplines (with a clear emphasis on the humanities and social sciences), and between academic researchers and non-academic actors and practitioners. Most importantly of all, the network seeks to include and empower poor people themselves, who have conventionally been perceived only as the objects of pre-existing discourses. Consequently, there are a wide range of potential pathways to impact, which are discussed below.

Crossing Boundaries

Through a series of events in five ODA recipient nations, the Poverty Research Network will overtly connect academic researchers with non-academic civil society actors, including activists, aid practitioners, political campaigners, artists, religious leaders and journalists. In doing so, we will create a transnational and interdisciplinary forum for people who have been the object of poverty to express their empowerment and share their experiences, histories, traditions, and ideas of solutions to social injustice.

Online presence

A website will be established and regularly updated, to provide information on the project and research findings. Articles will be written for online blogs at regular intervals, which will assist in disseminating the network objectives and findings to interested non-specialists. A social media presence will also be maintained through the duration of the action, including a dedicated social media platform for the project. Stories will be collected in the ‘Archive of Alternate Futures’ (see below), while a blog space will provide a forum for global discussion.

Project Website, and the ‘archive for alternative futures’:

The website will act as a forum for exchanging experiences and ideas about poverty and its solutions. The ‘archive for alternate futures’ will provide a window onto the experiences and ideas of people on the frontline of poverty politics around the world. The website will carry reports of the projects in each of the localities, but it will also host a blog space where people can discuss and debate.

Local practitioners and policymakers

In the five specific ODA recipient nations in which events are being held, local narratives of poverty and poverty reduction will be captured, synthesised and co-produced through workshop discussions and the online forum. These research findings will thus be disseminated back to local academics, practitioners and policymakers, impacting on how development policy and poverty reduction strategies are conceptualised and implemented in these regions.

International Development policy and practice

A central objective of this Network is to disseminate research findings to international development policymakers and practitioners, within the specified ODA recipient nations (as described above), and also within the United Kingdom itself. The objective in doing so is to problematize and promote alternative visions of current development policy as set out in the UN 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), by articulating alternative narratives and experiences of poverty. Officials from the UK governmental Department for International Development (DFID) will participate in the major conference at the University of Warwick which concludes the network grant period, building on pre-existing links between the two institutions. Research findings will be disseminated to UK civil servants and policymakers through the conference discussions, the production of a set of policy recommendations, and the co-production of a policy paper with DFID.

https://www.gla.ac.uk/schools/humanities/research/historyresearch/historyresearchcentres/poverty/ahrcprojectbeyonddevelopmentlocalvisionsofglobalpoverty/
Findings will also be disseminated through these same channels to representatives from prominent UK-based international development NGOs, such as Oxfam and Save the Children, who will participate in the concluding conference (which also builds on pre-existing links with key network personnel).

**Public Exhibitions**
Where possible across the poverty research network, exhibitions will be organised share the local stories that have been gathered from activists, NGOs, academics, and the people within communities that have been the traditional object of poverty discourses. Smaller versions of these will be gathered for an exhibition on global poverty politics, which will be held at the University of Warwick in conjunction with the concluding conference. This will be a blend of images and text that tells the story of the different experiences of poverty globally and different visions of solutions.

**Providing an outlet for academics to engage with activism, and reflect on their approaches**
Social justice issues often feature in our work as academics but there is often a disconnect between theory and practice as the context of our working life removes us from a more challenging interface with the themes with which we engage. This project not only creates the possibility global dialogues across socio-economic groups, it also creates a way to articulate the politics of poverty, which is itself a form of resistance.

**Publications**
Findings will be disseminated to other scholars and researchers through the production of a special edition of the peer-reviewed journal Social History. A provisional commitment to publish this special edition has already been obtained.