



ESRC End of Award Report

For awards ending on or after 1 November 2009

This End of Award Report should be completed and submitted using the **grant reference** as the email subject, to reportsofficer@esrc.ac.uk on or before the due date.

The final instalment of the grant will not be paid until an End of Award Report is completed in full and accepted by ESRC.

Grant holders whose End of Award Report is overdue or incomplete will not be eligible for further ESRC funding until the Report is accepted. We reserve the right to recover a sum of the expenditure incurred on the grant if the End of Award Report is overdue. (Please see the ESRC Research Funding Guide for details.)

Please refer to the Guidance notes when completing this End of Award Report.

Grant Reference	RES-062-23-1025		
Grant Title	Internationalising Institutional and Professional Practices: Community Partnership Models of Change in Post-Tsunami Sri Lanka		
Grant Start Date	26 Jan 2009	Total Amount Expended:	£560,906.86 (100%)
Grant End Date	30 Apr 2013		
Grant holding Institution	Durham University		
Grant Holder	Professor Lena Dominelli		
Grant Holder's Contact Details	Address	Email	
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Co-Investigators (as per project application):		Institution	
Professor Joy Palmer-Cooper		Durham University	

1. Non-technical summary

Please provide below a project summary written in non-technical language. The summary may be used by us to publicise your work and should explain the aims and findings of the project. [Max 250 words]

This project explored whether humanitarian aid is exploitative by researching responses to the 2004 Sri Lankan tsunami and assessing whether internationalising institutions and professional practices in disaster interventions can be empowering. It examined humanitarian models claiming to be non-exploitative - Institutional Model (IM) and Professional Practice Model (PPM). Both models proved ground-breaking and empowering by promoting partnerships with local organisations, institutions and residents; being locality specific and culturally relevant; meeting locally defined needs and staying for the long-term.

The Project followed an ethnographic approach by appointing 3 local researchers who spent time becoming acquainted with villages that became research sites prior to conducting in-depth interviews. The ensuing findings were triangulated with those from an on-line survey and mapping exercise of NGOs delivering aid following this tsunami.

Some NGOs delivered inappropriate aid by disregarding local residents' wishes and specific needs; not including local partners as equals; and neglecting long-term reconstruction. Residents comparing these NGOs with the IM and PPM, found the latter two generally empowering. These insights are relevant to civil society organisations, INGOs, governments, OCHA and relief workers. This research developed new theories and paradigms for practice, encapsulated in *Green Social Work* (Dominelli, 2012), toolkit and forthcoming publications. Green social work practice brought notions of social justice, empowerment, sustainable development and interdisciplinarity into disaster interventions and is being adopted in South Africa, Denmark and Caribbean. The toolkit was used during the 2013 Lushan earthquake and floods in Uttarakhand and China, demonstrating the transferability of findings and their international relevance.

2. Project overview

a) Objectives

Please state the aims and objectives of your project as outlined in your proposal to us. [Max 200 words]

The proposed research aimed to: identify best practice in internationalising institutions and professional practices; develop new theories, knowledge, skills and paradigms of practice by examining two ground-breaking original models of disaster interventions that engaged in long-term reconstruction of affected communities through empowering partnerships that linked institutions, organisations, professionals and local people in non-exploitative relationships that crossed national borders, cultural traditions and everyday life routines - the Institutional Model (IM); and Professional Practice Model (renamed to maintain confidentiality). Both work in partnership with local actors to develop empowering interventions and take charge of reconstructing their communities after the tsunami. It proposed to:

- Investigate and evaluate partnership working in long-term reconstruction and capacity-building in Sri Lankan disaster-affected communities;
- Compare and contrast two models of intervention in long-term reconstruction and sustainable development of communities;
- Identify local community empowerment processes and grass-roots participation in community post-disaster reconstruction;
- Make an original contribution to literature on internationalising universities and civil society organisations (CSOs) during/following disasters;
- Identify transferable outcomes benefitting internationalising institutions of higher education and CSOs;

-Identify obstacles and positive mechanisms for sustainable community development;
 -Contribute to theory development and paradigm shifts in professional practice in disaster interventions; and
 -Contribute to ESRC's international research agenda.

b) Project Changes

Please describe any changes made to the original aims and objectives, and confirm that these were agreed with us. Please also detail any changes to the grant holder's institutional affiliation, project staffing or funding. *[Max 200 words]*

The project's overall aims, objectives, methodology and key outputs have been delivered, despite constant changes in staffing agreed with ESRC. Also, the commitment to reflecting changes on the ground resulted in more qualitative data being collected than anticipated: 12 villages, not 6, 368 in-depth interviews, not 120; 35 sets of field-notes; and 12 focus groups not 2.

Quantitatively, of 600 NGOS surveyed following the mapping exercise, only 45 returned questionnaires after several reminders.

Staffing changes (notified to ESRC) eventually hindered full exploitation of findings. Scarcity of suitably qualified staff delayed the start. Short-term contracts for the research associate, project secretary and local researchers introduced discontinuities. Researchers Powell, (26/01/2009-04/01/2011), Vickers (04/01/2011-31/08/2012), and Casey (01/03-30/04/2013) found alternative posts. Project Secretary, Brown (18/05/2009-21/03/2010), Aznarez (/2406/2010-31/07/2011), Rohl (19/08/2010-14/01/2011-Aznarez Maternity Leave); Medford (10/09/2011-17/05/2012), and Sewell, McKenney and Pickering as casual replacements in-between project secretary appointments. One Sri Lankan researcher left for better paid work. The consultants were not required as initially anticipated given the skills of the local researchers, leading to budgetary underspend.

Particularly disappointing was that having substantially more data than expected, the project ran out of time to maximise outputs from this. With hindsight, such a complex project required 5 years.

c) Methodology

Please describe the methodology that you employed in the project. Please also note any ethical issues that arose during the course of the work, the effects of this and any action taken. *[Max 500 words]*

This research design focused on an interpretive ethnographic approach that combined quantitative and qualitative methods including mapping disaster interventions, participant observations, narrative interviews and associated forms of analysis. It was based on ethical principles that engage with internationalising forces while operating from moral communities undertaking moral activities. Social work carries the presumption of being a moral profession. Our interpretative approach takes reality as socially constructed and contested with researchers seeking to understand multiple social constructions of meaning and knowledge.

Knowledge becomes valid if it is authentic and reflects participants' many voices. Epistemological assumptions in the paradigm include interactions between researcher and research participants, making explicit a researcher's values; embedding research in particular contexts; and not pre-determining the central focus of the study. Our ethnographic data collection methods aimed to get 'inside' the social worlds of our research subjects to access the richness, complexity and particularities of their experiences. They included:

- A comprehensive review of literature and policy documents on internationalising organisations and disaster relief interventions to identify gaps in knowledge.
- A mapping of CSOs, international bodies, governments and other key players in disaster relief in Sri Lanka to ascertain which professions and organisations shape disaster responses, the nature of their involvement, activities and policies towards and philosophies in approaching local communities.
- In-depth, semi-structured interviews of visiting students before and after immersion in Sri Lankan communities to ascertain pre-departure goals, personal aspirations and attitudes, and post-experience knowledge, attitudes and values and extent to which these were achieved. Three cohorts of visiting students will be interviewed (45 IM; 45 PPM (79 completed)), to evaluate their immediate and longer-term perceptions of the impact of overseas work on themselves and communities they became immersed in;
- Semi-structured interviews (30 (38 completed)) with academic staff and students in various disciplines including social work. These explored academic contributions to community empowerment partnership models and whether academic partnerships can meet social needs; and advance human knowledge.
- Interviews (30 (195 completed)) with senior officers of key local organisations and partners including: national Sri Lankan and other CSOs, policymakers and international aid officers to explore the benefits of partnership and challenges to establishing long-term sustainability.
- In-depth ethnographic forms of data collection - participant observations, narratives, autobiographical statements and recorded conversations with members of local communities to determine the impact of the IM and PPM interventions on tsunami-devastated communities. Researchers will live in and visit 3 IM and 3 PPM villages (12 visited) to determine their impact over 3 years and obtain insights into short and longer-term benefits to individuals and communities, and their sustainability over time.
- 2 (12 completed) Focus Groups of social work educators, practitioners and students - one at the beginning of the project to ascertain questions to identify capacity building and training needs; and one at the end to check the authenticity of findings.

d) Project Findings

Please summarise the findings of the project, referring where appropriate to outputs recorded on the ESRC website. Any future research plans should also be identified. [Max 500 words]

Our findings were extensive and cannot be easily summarised. We have divided them into those referring to humanitarian organisations generally and those involving the Institutional Model (IM) and the Professional Practice Model (PPM).

For humanitarian organisations generally, some experiences supported Hancock's (1996) notion of exploitative relations through aid-giving, but there were also strong challenges to this. Supporting Hancock's views were villagers claiming that overseas aid-givers without local partners lacked: clear plans for aid-delivery; long-term engagement; reliability; power-sharing and joint decision-making mechanisms. This impacted negatively on local people

who became accustomed to receiving aid rather than becoming self-sufficient and expected material goods, not intangible ones. Counterbalancing these opinions were those who welcomed receiving practical items like water, food, clothing, medicines, emergency health-care, help finding loved-ones and removing debris during the immediate aftermath. Contributing to community resilience during the short-term and long-term was considered essential in coping with disaster and rebuilding lives afterwards. Local volunteers and religious organisations were deemed especially helpful. Protecting children was thought particularly important requiring immediate attention and expertise. Speedy provision of permanent housing and employment were other crucial priorities. Dealing with fear of the sea and trauma came lower. Competition for needed resources was considered undesirable for its long-term ramifications, especially when it affected land and housing which villagers lost if they lacked deeds or had built too near the sea. Inequalities of treatment were identified by people pointing to multinational hotel chains building on shorelines and people receiving aid when not entitled. Training in risk reduction and preparedness for future disasters were considered essential. Gender and ethnic disparities and other social divisions were replicated, and whom recipients knew mattered.

The IM and PPM were generally positively regarded. Villagers saw them as ground-breaking and embedded in their communities working with them through local organisations, involving them in determining priorities and taking action. Mutuality was observed as locals and overseas people interacted to learn from and support each other, paid attention to power imbalances and cultural differences between them. Villagers felt their values and emphasis on empowerment fed through to tangible and intangible endeavours. The latter included new areas of thinking, viewing and acting in the world; exploring new opportunities, especially for employment and study at home and abroad; gaining confidence in their abilities; building community resources and educational capacities; and expanding their networks. Having students as volunteers was appreciated because they got close to villagers and listened to them; although rare, some undermined project reputations through insensitive behaviour. Criticisms of the IM and PPM included the former's failure to resource long-term sustainability for children's education beyond pre-school; and PPM's insufficient funds for large-scale infrastructural developments in social work. Neither model aimed to address complicated relations between Sri Lankans. Regardless of model, students felt they had had awareness-raising experiences and gained transferable skills for further employment. While welcoming the preparation beforehand and debriefing afterwards, some students felt each model could prepare them better for the exchanges and use their experiences more effectively in passing information onto subsequent cohorts.

e) Contributions to wider ESRC initiatives (eg Research Programmes or Networks)

If your project was part of a wider ESRC initiative, please describe your contributions to the initiative's objectives and activities and note any effect on your project resulting from participation. [Max. 200 words]

Not applicable

3. Early and anticipated impacts

a) Summary of Impacts to date

Please summarise any impacts of the project to date, referring where appropriate to associated outputs recorded on the Research Outcomes System (ROS). This should include both scientific impacts (relevant to the academic community) and economic and societal impacts (relevant to broader society). The impact can be relevant to any organisation, community or individual. [Max. 400 words]

This project's impact has been considerable because it has specifically targeted educators, policymakers and practitioners through the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW) and United Nations (UN) connections. Currently, it affected:

A. professional social work education, research and practice:

- *theoretical innovations and a paradigm shift* based on green social work (Dominelli, 2012) as an emerging field for curriculum and practice development that has transcended environmental and ecological social work through its critique of neoliberal forms of industrial development in coastal areas;
- *curriculum development seminars* to improve social work disaster intervention curricula (seminars 2009, 2010; Dominelli, 2013);
- *practice innovations in delivering aid* during natural disasters through the toolkit and manual. This was translated into Chinese for use during Lushan earthquake; and 2013 Uttarakhand floods in India and Nepal;
- *including social work research in physical science-based research* funded through EPSRC (BIOPICCC – climate change and older people) and NERC (scoping study on landslides in Nepal; and Earthquake without Frontiers);
- *commissioning two special editions of International Social Work* on disaster interventions (Vickers; Drolet)
- *founder member, Rebuilding Lives Post-Disasters Network*

B. UN officials

- *discussions around social work as a discipline with important players* responding to natural disasters through presentations at humanitarian aid sessions, meetings on mitigating risks and adaptations for climate change.
- *seeking to get social work recognised as a qualification* for humanitarian aid workers.
- *presentations during Breaking the Mould Conference* which included Head of OCHA as keynote speaker and lengthy discussions about new developments afterwards.
- *discussions with representative of ISDR*

C. IASSW policies and structures

- *securing RINGO status* at the UNFCCC COP meetings (from 2010), presenting side events, running IASSW's stall, exhibitions and giving interviews on risk reduction, community engagement in disasters and environmental justice.
- *developing IASSW's policy statements* on disasters and climate change.
- *founding and heading Disaster Interventions and Climate Change Committee* since 2010.
- *developing IASSW's Global Agenda on disaster interventions*, and, as member of Global

Agenda International Committee driving the issue forward including creating a Global Agenda Observatory to influence UN policies.

- *engaging social work academics and practitioners through presentations at World Congress in 2010 (Hong Kong) and 2012 (Stockholm). Other presentations by Vickers and Palmer-Cooper.*
- *highlighting the importance of gender issues in disasters (Dominelli, 2012)*
- *engaging the voluntary sector.*
- *disaster interventions sessions to initiate changes in curricula development for social work academics and practitioners in China, Denmark, South Africa, Curacao.*

b) Anticipated/Potential Future Impacts

Please outline any anticipated or potential impacts (scientific or economic and societal) that you believe your project might have in future. [Max. 200 words]

The initiatives described above require funding for consolidation in future and this will be sought. Further publications are being planned. Particularly important is to build on the practice guidelines (toolkit and manual); policy guidance for policymakers engaged in disaster risk reduction that involves community engagement initiatives, targeting the European Union and the UN, especially through discussions on what should be done post-2015 (Millennium Development Goals) and the post-Hyogo deliberations. More work needs to be undertaken to: lead to policy changes in OCHA, especially its top-down approaches to disasters where it lacks capacity and locally driven connections; widen the range of countries engaging with green social work as a new form of disaster intervention in the social work curriculum; and bring the findings closer to community groups and practitioners in related fields including emergency planners and humanitarian workers, not just social workers and community development workers. There are on-going discussions about further social work research in this area. Substantially more writing can be done from the data that has already been compiled, and it is also hoped that since the extensive database that has been submitted to the ESRC archives will be used by other researchers to mine the data further.

You will be asked to complete an ESRC Impact Report 12 months after the end date of your award. The Impact Report will ask for details of any impacts that have arisen since the completion of the End of Award Report.

4. Declarations

Please ensure that sections A, B and C below are completed and signed by the appropriate individuals. The End of Award Report will not be accepted unless all sections are signed. Please note hard copies are **not** required; electronic signatures are accepted and should be used.

A: To be completed by Grant Holder

Please read the following statements. Tick **one** statement under ii) and iii), then sign with an electronic signature at the end of the section (this should be an image of your actual signature).

i) The Project

This Report is an accurate overview of the project, its findings and impacts. All co-investigators named in the proposal to ESRC or appointed subsequently have seen and approved the Report.	X <input type="checkbox"/>
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ii) Submissions to the Research Outcomes System (ROS)

Output and impact information has been submitted to the Research Outcomes System. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted as soon as they become available.	X <input type="checkbox"/>
or This grant has not yet produced any outputs or impacts. Details of any future outputs and impacts will be submitted to the Research Outcomes System as soon as they become available.	<input type="checkbox"/>

iii) Submission of Data

Data arising from this grant have been offered for deposit with the UK Data Service.	X <input type="checkbox"/>
or Data that were anticipated in the grant proposal have not been produced and the UK Data Service has been notified.	<input type="checkbox"/>
or No datasets were proposed or produced from this grant.	<input type="checkbox"/>