



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
29 November 2012

Original: English

Commission for Social Development

Fifty-first session

6-15 February 2013

Item 4 (b) of the provisional agenda*

Programme questions and other matters: United Nations

Research Institute for Social Development

Report of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Commission for Social Development at its fifty-first session the report of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on the work of the Institute during 2011 and 2012.

* E/CN.5/2013/L.2.



Report of the Board of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development on the work of the Institute during 2011 and 2012

Summary

The present report covers the activities of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development in 2011 and 2012. It highlights the programmatic achievements during this period, as well as the current institutional and financial situation.

The Institute's research aims to ensure that social development issues remain prominent within the development activities of the United Nations. Work undertaken during the period 2011-2012 relates directly to system-wide concerns, including the sustainable development agenda of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, and the framing of a development agenda beyond 2015.

The work of the Institute is also relevant to recent and current themes of the Commission for Social Development, including social protection, poverty reduction, empowerment and social integration. Because of its focus on the interconnectedness between social, economic and political dimensions of development, the Institute's research complements the sectoral focus of specialized agencies and departments within the United Nations system.

The 2011-2012 reporting period falls within the Institute's 2010-2014 research agenda, which was determined through a consultative process involving a wide range of stakeholders in the United Nations system, Member States, academia and civil society, and approved by the Institute Board.

The research agenda was developed at a time of crisis in the global economy and responds to the need to look at the structural causes and the social consequences of crisis, and to generate longer term sustainable and inclusive policy alternatives. Research is organized in programmes that together address two key questions:

- (a) What social policies can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in the context of crisis and uncertainty?
- (b) What political and institutional arrangements can foster positive social change and deliver improved welfare outcomes to citizens?

During the 2011-2012 reporting period, the Institute has continued to produce high-quality research that is widely used within the United Nations system, in academia and by civil society. It has also made continued efforts to strengthen its institutional processes related to project development and results-based reporting, communications and outreach, and resource mobilization.

The Institute is regularly called upon to advise, consult with, and provide briefings or presentations to interested parties. These activities disseminate research findings, share knowledge with policymakers and other stakeholders, and thus contribute to new thinking and policy debate on development issues.

The Institute is funded entirely through voluntary contributions and its work is governed by an independent board. These conditions provide it with the autonomy essential for producing high-quality policy-relevant research, and for promoting critical debate around alternative policy options.

The Institute depends on the sustained support of Member States to ensure its core mandate and functions of support to the United Nations system. At a time when social crises are becoming more acute in the wake of global economic uncertainty and austerity, the research undertaken by it is more necessary, but it is also vulnerable to reduced funding. These conditions ultimately threaten the autonomous space necessary for independent, high-quality and critical research.

The Institute will continue to work closely with Member States and other international organizations to ensure the continuation of its high-quality, policy-relevant research that can shape debates, identify policy alternatives, and inform policymakers and practitioners in their efforts to address contemporary development challenges.

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I. Introduction

1. The present report covers the activities of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development in 2011 and 2012. It is submitted to the Commission for Social Development in accordance with the terms set out in Secretary-General's bulletin ST/SGB/126 of 1 August 1963, in which it is stipulated that the Board of the Institute should, inter alia, submit regularly to the Commission "a progress report on the work of the Institute".

2. For five decades the Institute has been at the forefront of research efforts to ensure that social issues remain prominent within the development activities of the United Nations. The Institute was established in 1963 as an autonomous space within the United Nations system for undertaking policy-relevant research that highlights social dimensions of development that are often neglected in mainstream development policy and practice.

3. The Institute is funded entirely through voluntary contributions and its work is governed by an independent Board. These conditions provide it with the autonomy to produce high-quality research, independent of agency or political interests, that is used widely by United Nations and national policymakers. It also creates a neutral space within the United Nations system for debate on often sensitive or contentious economic and social development issues.

4. Through its research, the Institute aims to promote critical debate and contribute to policy alternatives that can meet the development challenges of concern to the United Nations system and Member States. In doing so, it contributes to the broader goals of reducing poverty and inequality, advancing well-being and rights, and creating more democratic, just and peaceful societies.

5. The Institute works with an extensive global network of partners in academia, United Nations agencies, government and civil society that collaborate in undertaking research and using the results to influence policy. These partnerships are particularly valued by Southern researchers for whom the Institute provides a platform for making their own research findings and policy concerns visible in international forums.

6. During the 2011-2012 reporting period, the Institute has continued to strengthen its institutional processes related to project development and results-based reporting, communications and outreach, and resource mobilization. At a time when social crises are becoming more acute in the wake of global economic uncertainty and austerity, the research of the Institute is more necessary but is also vulnerable to reduced funding. The Institute continues to depend on the sustained support of Member States to ensure its core mandate and functions of support to the United Nations system and Member States can be maintained.

II. Programme of research: social development in an uncertain world

7. The Institute operates with a five-year research agenda determined through a consultative process involving a wide range of stakeholders in the United Nations system, Member States, academia and civil society, and approved by the Institute Board. A workplan is prepared annually, taking into consideration priority concerns

and themes of the United Nations system, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development. Projects are implemented subject to funding,

8. The current reporting period falls within the 2010-2014 research agenda. This agenda was developed at a time of crisis in the global economy which generated a renewed urgency for identifying policy responses to address both the causes and the social consequences of crisis — whether of finance, food or climate.

9. The agenda is framed around two key questions:

(a) What social policies can contribute to inclusive and sustainable development in the context of crisis and uncertainty?

(b) What political and institutional arrangements can foster positive social change and deliver improved welfare outcomes to citizens?

10. The Institute adopts a distinctive approach to research on social development. It undertakes cross-country comparative and multidisciplinary studies that focus on the interconnectedness between social, economic and political dimensions of development, and on the nature of the systems and processes that expose certain groups to vulnerability and perpetuate poverty and inequality. It thus complements rather than duplicates the sectoral or group focus of specialized agencies and departments within the United Nations system.

11. Activities undertaken during 2011 and 2012, discussed further below, relate directly to system-wide concerns, including the sustainable development agenda of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the framing of a development agenda beyond 2015. The Institute's research also continues to be relevant to the recent and current themes of the Commission for Social Development, including social protection, poverty reduction, empowerment and social integration.

A. Social policy for inclusive development

12. The Institute's work in 2011 and 2012 has focused on deepening the analysis of policies, politics and institutions that can support inclusive development. A number of key activities are described below.

1. Towards universal social security in emerging economies

13. Initiated in 2012, this project examines the efforts of selected countries — Brazil, China, Ecuador, India, Indonesia, the Russian Federation, South Africa, Thailand and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) — to move towards universal provision of social security, with a focus on health care and income support programmes. The research aims to contribute to a better understanding of the social, political, economic and institutional drivers behind successful cases of social security extension in the neoliberal era. Constraints preventing the extension of coverage also receive attention.

14. The project will draw out policy lessons that might be transferable to lower income countries, while giving sufficient attention to specific local contexts and the historical foundations of local institutions. The analysis and interim research findings are a key input shaping the agenda of the Second World Conference on the

Development of Universal Social Security Systems being convened by the Government of Brazil and civil society partners in September 2014.

2. Economic and social development in the Republic of Korea

15. In 2011 and 2012, the Institute collaborated with the Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) on joint research to re-examine the development experience of the Republic of Korea from a social development perspective.

16. The research findings challenge some mainstream development policy approaches, including the “growth first, redistribution later” view of social policy; the ideology of market fundamentalism and a minimal role for the state; and the definition and assessment of “good” institutions based on whether they enhance the functioning of markets. Because many such policy approaches continue to be pursued in spite of lacklustre results, the Korean experience may provide insights to aid donors and recipients alike.

17. A joint policy brief was produced with KOICA. The research findings informed the preparations of the Government of the Republic of Korea for the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan in November 2011, and were presented at the Fifth and Sixth Seoul Official Development Assistance International Conferences in 2011 and 2012.

3. Migration and health in China

18. Undertaken in 2011-2012 in collaboration with the Center for Migrant Health Policy at Sun Yat-sen University in Guangzhou, China, this project provides the first comprehensive assessment of the health challenges associated with internal migration in China. Population mobility on the scale seen in China has huge implications for health and health-care systems: it affects the transmission and burden of disease, and determines access to health care and other social programmes. The links between health and migration in China have to date been largely neglected by researchers, and consequently have not been adequately addressed in policy. Multidisciplinary research involving epidemiologists, social scientists, public health and social policy experts will produce the first comprehensive analysis of this issue. Research undertaken was presented to policymakers at a workshop in Guangzhou in July 2012, at the International Conference on Health Systems Reform in Asia in Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China in December 2011, and at the Second Global Symposium on Health Systems Research, in Beijing, in November 2012.

4. Health in all policies

19. Ensuring that health is a shared goal across all areas of public policy, including in sectors such as education, agriculture, transport and environment, as well as through economic and social policy, is essential for ensuring healthy populations. During 2011 and 2012, the Institute collaborated with the Finnish Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Finnish National Institute for Health and Welfare, and the European Observatory on Health Systems and Policies on the publication *Health in All Policies: Policy Decisions and Implementation*. Targeted at national policymakers worldwide, this volume brings together leading experts from around the world to explore pathways to promoting health and health equity through “health in all policies”. It reviews and evaluates the evidence on intersectoral approaches to

health in different contexts, drawing out good practices and lessons for policy and implementation. The volume will be launched ahead of the eighth Global Conference on Health Promotion in June 2013, to be convened by the World Health Organization in collaboration with the Government of Finland.

5. Regional governance of migration and the protection of sociopolitical rights

20. Against a backdrop of regional economic integration, labour market restructuring and emerging international norms pertaining to labour rights as human rights, this research sheds light on the roles of multiple actors, including Governments, regional and international organizations, civil society, in the governance of labour migration between developing countries. The underlying normative issues relate to legal and social protection for migrants and their families; and migrants' political, social and economic participation in sending and host countries. Activities include an international conference in collaboration with UNU-CRIS and the University of Freiburg (Germany), and a public policy forum in collaboration with the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, in Geneva in January 2013. The project continues previous research of the Institute on South-South migration and social policy.

6. Financing social development in natural-resource-rich countries

21. This project, which concluded with the launch of the final academic and policy publications in 2012, systematically analysed the relationship between mineral wealth and revenues, social development outcomes and social policy decisions in developing countries. Thematic studies explored key issues related to development, economic and social policy, and institutional change in mineral-rich contexts; country case studies were conducted on Botswana, Chile, Indonesia, Nigeria and Norway.

22. The research challenges the deterministic view of the resource curse literature without denying the policy challenges associated with mineral-led development. Findings show that the mineral-rich countries with good social development outcomes provided incentives for productive investment and diversification while safeguarding macroeconomic stability; demonstrated a strong State role with the capacity to negotiate and establish consensus; and invested in comprehensive social policies.

23. The project, which was part of a broader inquiry into the question of how developing countries can mobilize resources for social development and social policies, aims to contribute to an integrated analysis of economic and social aspects of development. The Institute is continuing research in this area with a new project on politics of domestic resource mobilization for social development.

7. Politics of domestic resource mobilization for social development

24. Countries across the globe are suffering declines in national income, investment, employment, worsening fiscal accounts and balance of payments, increasing debt and financial sector distress. Although this may seem like a bleak scenario for increasing social investments, the current situation has reinforced the interest of policymakers in questions of financing and fiscal space, with growing attention to revenue policies and potential resources for social development. It is

increasingly clear that developing countries cannot rely on aid alone to transform their economies and meet the needs of their citizens: they will have to increase efforts to mobilize domestic resources.

25. This new research, initiated in 2011, examines the processes and the mechanisms that connect the politics of resource mobilization and demands for social provision; changes in State-citizen and donor-recipient relations associated with resource mobilization and allocation; and governance reforms that can lead to sustainable revenue yields and improved provision of services.

26. The project aims to contribute to global debates about how to bridge the funding gaps for meeting key global development targets and social programmes in poor countries; enhance national ownership of development programmes and policy space; improve understanding of the politics of revenue and social expenditure bargains; and enhance effective accountability of governments to citizens.

8. Social protection for the elderly

27. Additional research activities focused on the elderly as an increasingly significant group with limited access to social protection. A forthcoming volume on pensions was strengthened by three new studies on pension reform in Argentina, Bolivia, Chile and China. In addition, the paper, “The Political Economy of Social Pensions in Asia” was prepared for a volume published by the Asian Development Bank in 2012.

9. New directions in social policy: alternatives in and for the global South

28. In 2012, the Institute developed and began fundraising for a new programme of research that will integrate existing projects on social policy and inclusive development.

29. At a time when welfare systems in more advanced economies are threatened by austerity, remarkable developments are taking place in some emerging and developing economies, in the nature and scope of policies designed to achieve better and more equitable social outcomes. Are we seeing the emergence of alternative “welfare regimes” that are better suited to the challenges of economies developing in the era of neoliberalism and globalization, including high levels of informality and inequality?

30. The inquiry aims to assess whether we are seeing the development of viable alternative approaches or policies that can assist low-income countries in defining and pursuing socially equitable development paths; provide improved analytic and methodological frameworks and tools for understanding the development of social policies in emerging economies and assessing their impacts; and provide evidence that will contribute to the setting of new global development priorities beyond 2015.

B. Social dimensions of sustainable development

31. The international development community has come to accept that sustainability will require major transformations in patterns of investment, technology, production, consumption and governance. Persistent poverty and growing inequalities are stark reminders that much remains to be done to achieve sustainable and equitable social development. The social dimensions — the third

pillar of sustainable development — are often marginalized, as are questions about how different approaches impact different social groups whose values, priorities and interests are shaping concepts and policies; and alternative visions and processes for the holistic achievement of social, environmental and economic objectives. During the reporting period the Institute strengthened work in this area.

1. Social dimensions of green economy

32. The focus on green economy in the run-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development raised concerns among many stakeholders that the third pillar of sustainable development — the social dimension — was receiving insufficient attention. In early 2011, the Institute initiated an inquiry to examine the social dimensions of green economy and sustainable development and to place these more centrally in analysis and policy debates. Findings illustrate ways in which economic, technological and institutional changes that form the basis of many current green economy strategies run the risk of reinforcing human insecurity and inequalities.

33. Activities under the programme included an international conference held on the theme, “Green economy and sustainable development: bringing back the social dimension”, in Geneva in October 2011. The conference brought together the researchers with 250 United Nations policymakers, government officials, civil society representatives and activists, and led to a number of academic publications, a policy brief, videos, think pieces and podcasts.

34. Findings from this inquiry informed a number of United Nations processes, including a formal submission to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development compilation document, and inputs into the Social Cluster of the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs, the High-level Committee on Programmes Working Group on Climate Change, the Task Team on Social Dimensions of Climate Change, the Issue Management Group on Green Economy, under the United Nations system-wide Environment Management Group, and the Secretary-General’s High-level Panel on Global Sustainability. The Institute organized a number of events at both the official venue and the people’s summit during the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

35. Further research planned for the period 2013-2014 will focus on the nature of policy interventions across the social and environmental domains with the potential to address the social consequences of environmental change while promoting the transformations essential for sustainable development.

2. Social and solidarity economy

36. Multiple global crises (food, finance/economic, energy/climate) and heightened concerns about the social, environmental and developmental consequences of market- and corporate-led development have reignited interest in “alternative” production and consumption patterns and ways of organizing enterprise activities. Social and solidarity economy refers to forms of production and exchange that aim to satisfy human needs, build resilience and expand human capabilities through social relations based on varying degrees of cooperation, association and solidarity.

37. In September 2012, the Institute launched a new inquiry to understand the conditions and the contexts that enable social and solidarity economy to expand; assess the implications of such processes and interactions with external actors and institutions for realizing the potential of social and solidarity economy as a distinctive approach to development; give more visibility to social and solidarity economy in United Nations policy debates; and bring to the attention of policymakers' key findings and recommendations from researchers around the world on the potential and limits of social and solidarity economy, its role in addressing contemporary development challenges and its place in a development agenda beyond 2015. An international conference is planned for May 2013.

3. Making markets work for the poor?

38. In 2011, the Institute continued its partnership with a consortium of organizations, including the International Institute for Environment and Development and Hivos, in a series of events on making markets work for small-scale farmers. These brought together policymakers, academics and practitioners to examine whether various policy approaches actually deliver on their promises.

39. The findings highlighted that sustainable poverty alleviation requires much more than economic empowerment through market access. Smallholders and their families and communities need access to education, health services, infrastructure and off-farm employment opportunities. Social relations also need to be transformed through the reconfiguration of power and collective action; in other words, through political empowerment.

4. Non-State actors and business regulation

40. This project, which concluded with the launch and the dissemination of the final publication in 2012, assessed the achievements and the limitations of new forms of governance where non-State actors play a central role in standard-setting and other regulatory functions aimed at improving the social, environmental and human rights performance of business. The Institute examined these regulatory approaches from the perspective of developing countries and subaltern groups in terms of well-being, empowerment and sustainability.

41. The findings highlight some achievements, including filling some of the regulatory gaps that have emerged with globalization; greater awareness of social, environmental and human rights implications of business activities; improvements in the scale and the quality of regulation; and the emergence of coalitions for progressive change. They also point to developmental, regulatory and political challenges that need to be addressed if non-State actors are to regulate business effectively from the perspective of equitable and sustainable development. They also raise fundamental questions about exactly "whose development" is being promoted, the participation of Southern voices, and whether these types of regulation can really transform business as usual.

C. Gender and development

42. The Institute's research on gender and development addresses the gendered content and impacts of economic and social policies and processes, including the

impacts of globalization, liberalization and crisis on women and gender relations; and the politics of policymaking and the role of women's movements therein.

1. Globalization, labour markets and social policy: gendered connections

43. This research on the links between macroeconomic policies such as financial liberalization, inflation targeting and trade liberalization, as well as public sector reforms, on the one hand, and their gender impacts on the other, further examined issues that are still neglected in contemporary discussions on gender equity and empowerment.

44. Results illustrate that policies associated with globalization have performed poorly in terms of generating sufficient employment that is of decent quality. While globalization processes have narrowed the gap between women's and men's labour force participation rates, this has coincided with more informal and unprotected forms of work, particularly for women. Furthermore, the division of reproductive work in the private sphere has not altered in favour of women despite their increased participation in the labour force.

45. A range of policies and practices can improve labour market outcomes for women. Social insurance programmes could be designed and financed to ensure women's access and inclusion. Efforts to strengthen labour market regulations and social provisions could create a more level playing field for women. Social assistance programmes, such as cash transfers, are also useful, but they need to be conceived as one component of a broader set of social policies that also address issues of redistribution and social reproduction or the care economy.

46. Findings from this research fed into widely published commentaries and critiques by UNRISD researchers of mainstream approaches to gender equality and women's empowerment, such as those represented by *World Development Report 2012: Gender Equality and Development*.

2. Understanding gender-egalitarian policy change

47. There is a need for a much better understanding of when and why different gender issues get picked up by policy actors at national and global levels, while others do not, and whether structures and procedures are put in place to ensure that policies translate into meaningful improvements in women's lives. This is particularly important in the light of framing a new development agenda beyond 2015, if it is to lead to meaningful progress in terms of women's rights and gender equity.

48. This Institute's research aims to explore how policy change that strengthens women's rights occurs, and identify the factors and conditions under which non-State actors can be effective in effecting policy change. The research will also examine the role of transnational forces in shaping national-level processes of policy advocacy and change.

49. A first phase of the project in 2012 explored these questions in three Asian countries (China, India and Indonesia) through an examination of the interests of women and women's organizations on issues of violence against women and reproductive rights. This will be continued in the period 2013-2014 with the ongoing investigation being conducted by the project Women's organizations in the

Asia region and the post-2015 process, while funding is being sought to extend the project to countries in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa.

3. Gender, agriculture and food security

50. Global “multiple crises” have accelerated a rethinking of the neoliberal model of development and renewed calls to re-evaluate the role of the State in supporting agricultural production and enhancing food security. A private sector search for lucrative investment opportunities and a rush towards biofuels to fulfil energy and environmental security needs underpin the need to redefine agriculture after neoliberalism.

51. There is also an emerging consensus that addressing the role of women as farmers and as providers of food is crucial to alleviating hunger, poverty and unemployment. The overlap between the “material” dimensions of agrarian systems — production, reproduction and consumption — and the “social” dimensions — social relations, entitlements and agency/identity — remains underscrutinized.

52. The Institute and the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies held an international exploratory workshop in July 2012 with researchers from Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe. The purpose was to assess knowledge gaps and identify where research is needed to better understand the rapidly changing policy landscape and transformations of gender power relations in rural areas.

53. The workshop was an input to the development of a joint research proposal that will be submitted for funding in 2013.

D. Poverty, inequality and the development agenda beyond 2015

54. The Institute’s activities during 2011 and 2012 have continued to highlight key findings from the 2010 flagship report, *Combating Poverty and Inequality: Structural Change, Social Policy and Politics*. The findings of the report, submitted to the Commission for Social Development at its forty-ninth session, continue to attract attention within academic, policy and advocacy circles, and are particularly relevant to discussions on the agenda beyond 2015.

55. The report highlighted the interrelation of three key factors as being central to sustained poverty reduction: employment-centred growth and structural change that improves incomes; comprehensive social policies that are grounded in universal rights; and political arrangements that ensure that States are responsive to the needs of citizens and that the poor have influence in how policies are made. Above all, its focus on inequality as a critical obstacle to poverty reduction is increasingly supported by evidence from other sources and has become a central pillar in debates about the future development agenda.

56. The report continued to generate frequent invitations for presentations and discussions: in 2011-2012 these included the Global Poverty Summit held in South Africa, the Intergovernmental Expert Committee of the North Africa Bureau of the Economic Commission for Africa, the thirteenth General Assembly of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa in Morocco, as well as at academic venues in Austria, Finland, Mexico, Norway, the People’s Republic of China, the Philippines, Sierra Leone and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

57. Among other follow-up activities in the reporting period, a public policy forum was held in collaboration with the Graduate Institute in Geneva in October 2011, with leading scholars discussing their contributions to a special debate section of the *European Journal of Development Research* on the politics of inequality.

58. Findings have been widely cited in United Nations documents, including reports by the Secretary-General on poverty eradication (E/CN.5/2012/3) and on accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (A/66/126), and in publications of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Employment-centred poverty reduction and social policy in rural United Republic of Tanzania

59. The findings of the flagship report also led to a request from the Gender, Equity and Rural Employment Division of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) to collaborate in applying the framework of analysis to the specific case of the United Republic of Tanzania. Working with Policy Research for Development (REPOA), Tanzania, an analytical framework was developed to examine the linkages between rural employment, rural incomes and social protection for various groups in the rural sector, which can inform the development of FAO and other agency programmes across these areas.

III. Communications, outreach and advisory activities

A. Communications and outreach strategy

60. The Institute aims to ensure that its research reaches a wide range of actors in the global community, and that its findings inform intergovernmental and national policy processes, civil society advocacy and scholarly debates.

61. In 2011 and 2012, the Institute has worked to increase the visibility and the impact of its work. A new communications strategy was approved by the Board. During the reporting period, the Institute:

- (a) Updated and refreshed the brand and visual identity of the Institute;
- (b) Enhanced its use of digital communication tools (including podcasts and videos), and increased its use of social media (including Facebook and Twitter);
- (c) Upgraded website functions to add new features and improve functionality;
- (d) Expanded interactions with stakeholders through virtual and face-to-face forums;
- (e) Organized a seminar series to provide a forum for critical debate on contemporary social development issues;
- (f) Produced 10 issues of its regular e-bulletin to share research findings and other information with a wide audience.

62. The Institute continued to produce a high level of outputs in 2011 and 2012. During the reporting period, it produced 17 research papers and 6 policy briefs;

18 edited volumes and books; 5 special issues of journals and 39 peer-reviewed journal articles.

63. On digital media, the Institute produced 13 videos, including a series of 6 short films on social dimensions of green economy for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (also issued as a DVD), and 31 podcasts. A CD-ROM library of 2010-2011 publications is also available.

B. Seminars and events

64. The Institute launched a seminar series in 2011 to provide a space for presentation of research and for dialogue among the United Nations, policy and academic communities on contemporary social development issues. Audio recordings of seminars are available from the Institute website. The following seminars were organized:

(a) Mineral Rents and the Financing of Social Policy: Challenges and Opportunities (December 2012), speakers: Katja Hujo (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development), Samuel Asfaha (International Training Centre (ITC)-International Labour Organization (ILO)) and Alfredo Calcagno (United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD));

(b) Towards A Gender-Just Transformatory Policy: Assets, Agency and the Structures of Governance (14 November 2012), speaker: Nitya Rao (School of International Development, University of East Anglia);

(c) Catching Up with the “Quiet Revolution”? Work-Family Policies in Latin America (5 October 2012), speakers: Juliana Martinez Franzoni (Institute of Social Research, University of Costa Rica) and Marike Blofield (University of Miami);

(d) Multiple Global Crises and Gender: Rethinking Alternative Paths for Development (25 June 2012), speakers: Devaki Jain, Naoko Otake (ILO) and Mariama Williams (South Center);

(e) In Celebration of International Women’s Day: “Men, Where are the Women?” Swiss Agriculture “Under” Gendered Eyes (12 March 2012), speaker: Fenneke Reysoo (Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva);

(f) Chinese Women’s Paid Work and Unpaid Care Responsibilities during Economic Transition (29 November 2011), speaker: Xiao-Yuan Dong (University of Winnipeg);

(g) The Precariat: The New Dangerous Class (26 September 2011), speaker: Guy Standing (Professor of Economic Security, University of Bath);

(h) Shifting Wealth: An Opportunity for Strengthening Social Cohesion (20 May 2011), speaker: Johannes Jütting (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Head of Unit, Poverty Reduction and Social Development).

65. The Institute regularly co-hosts or organizes events with other United Nations, academic, Member State and civil society partners. Selected examples are highlighted below:

(a) The Institute and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) co-hosted a workshop in Geneva in November 2012 to explore how research on gender should be undertaken and coordinated across the United Nations system;

(b) Institute staff participated in a meeting convened by the Ministry of Planning in Brazil in November 2012 to explore ways to implement a holistic and integrated approach to development that links up economic development, social protection and distribution within a human rights framework;

(c) The Institute co-hosted a civil society development forum for the Group of 20 (G-20) in Paris in October 2011, in collaboration with Pax Romana, Caritas-France and the Rosa-Luxemburg-Foundation. The Forum produced a civil society declaration, delivered to the G-20 at the Cannes summit, which highlighted universal social protection and transformative social policy as essential components of development strategies to overcome current crisis;

(d) The Institute co-hosted a “Provocation seminar” at the European Parliament held on the theme “Pro-poor business, development and smallholder empowerment”, with the International Institute for Environment and Development, Hivos and Vredeseleiden in Brussels in June 2011;

(e) Institute staff participated in the Human Rights Council 2012 Social Forum, in Geneva, speaking at a round table on strengthening the global partnership for development, and co-hosting a side event on solidarity economy and alternative finance;

(f) The Institute and Forum-Asia co-organized a special panel discussion, entitled “The Role of Social Security in Realizing Human Rights”, as part of the fifth Asian Regional Human Rights Defenders Forum in Bangkok in October 2012, to facilitate a dialogue between the development and the human rights communities on the role of social security in realizing human rights;

(g) The Institute was active at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, co-organizing and participating in six events, including “Towards a Green Society? Participation for Social Change”, co-organized with the Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung at the People’s Summit, and an official side event with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the International Social Science Council on integrating the social dimensions of green economy into policy.

C. Consultative and advisory activities

66. A telling indicator of the impact of the work of the Institute and its reputation is the number of requests for consultative and advisory services. Staff are regularly called upon to advise, consult with and provide briefings, presentations and seminars to interested parties. These activities, undertaken in addition to the regular programme of work, strengthen collaboration, disseminate research findings, share knowledge with stakeholders, and contribute to new thinking and policy debate on development issues.

67. Institute staff carried out over 225 advisory and consultative activities in 2011 and 2012 with United Nations, Member States, and academic and civil society constituencies.

68. An important United Nations channel for sharing Institute research findings and ensuring their use in intergovernmental processes is through the Executive Committee on Economic and Social Affairs. As a member, the Institute participates in regular meetings and task teams, and comments on or contributes inputs into key documents.

69. The Institute was a member of the United Nations system task force on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda, which produced the report to the Secretary-General entitled “Realizing the Future We Want for All”. The Institute was also an active member of the task team working group on emerging issues of inequality (including gender) and contributed to the document “Addressing inequalities: The heart of the post-2015 development agenda and the future we want for all”. The Director of the Institute is a member of the Advisory Group for the Global Consultation on Addressing Inequalities in the Post-2015 Development Agenda.

70. During the period 2011-2012, Institute staff participated in 25 expert group meetings of other United Nations departments and agencies, including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the Economic Commission for Africa, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, ILO, the International Social Science Council, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNCTAD, the United Nations Development Programme, UNESCO, UNICEF, UN-Women and the World Health Organization.

IV. Institutional issues

A. Management and staffing

71. At 30 November 2012, a total of 10 staff members were under contract at the Institute in Geneva, including the director and deputy director, three research coordinators, three communications and outreach staff and two administrative and support staff.

72. During the reporting period, three staff members retired and have not been replaced. The senior research coordinator for the gender programme, Shahra Razavi, was offered the position of Chief, Research and Data Section, at UN-Women, starting from 1 July 2013. The research programme was supported by 10 junior research staff on consultancy contracts. Six consultants supported communications and fundraising activities necessary for the fulfilment of the Institute’s workplan.

73. During the reporting period, the Institute hosted 32 visiting fellows and interns from 20 countries: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Kenya, the Netherlands, Norway, People’s Republic of China, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom.

B. Governance and board

74. The Board of the Institute met in Geneva on 4 and 5 April 2011 and 29 and 30 March 2012.

75. In 2011, Lourdes Arizpe (Mexico) completed her term as Chair of the Institute Board. The Secretary-General approved the appointment of Maureen O'Neil (Canada) as Chair of the Board for a four-year period, starting 1 July 2011.

76. At its meeting on 28 July 2011, the Economic and Social Council confirmed the two-year extension of terms of the following Board members: Peter Evans (United States), Rosalind Eyben (United Kingdom), Annika Sunden (Sweden) and Zenebeworke Tadesse (Ethiopia). At the same meeting, the Council confirmed the appointment of two new Board members for a four-year period, starting on 1 July 2011: Ping Huang (People's Republic of China) and Patricia Schulz (Switzerland).

C. Resource mobilization

77. The Institute receives no money from the United Nations general budget and is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from Member States, research foundations, United Nations agencies and other institutions.

78. During the reporting period, multi-year agreements for institutional support were signed with two major donors. The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency signed an institutional funding agreement for four years (2011-2014) and the Department for International Development (DFID, United Kingdom) provided funding for two years (2011-2012). Discussion on potential future funding from DFID is ongoing.

79. Contributions to core funds were also received from Denmark, Finland (Ministry of Health and Social Affairs), Mexico and South Africa.

Core institutional funding, 2011-2012

(United States dollars)

	2011	2012 ^a
Denmark	230 645	200 451
Finland	200 000	200 000
Mexico	2 500	0
South Africa	12 195	0
Sweden	1 571 532	1 510 400
United Kingdom	937 500	601 266
Total	2 954 372	2 512 117

^a Estimate.

80. A three-year agreement with South Africa came to an end in 2011 and was not renewed. Mexico discontinued funding in 2012. As part of a reorientation of research funding to the global South, Denmark will discontinue core support to the Institute from 2013. Further funding from Finland is under discussion.

81. During the reporting period, project funds increased markedly (from \$121,433 in 2009 and 2010), as did the number of project donors. In 2011, \$1,483,708 was received for activities in 2011 and 2012. In 2012, \$304,078 was received for activities in 2012-2013, and \$403,000 was committed for activities to take place in the period 2013 and 2014.

Project funding, 2011-2012

(United States dollars)

<i>Donor</i>	
Asian Development Bank	20 000
China Medical Board	319 814
Department for International Development, United Kingdom	62 835
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	20 240
Ford Foundation	98 505
Friedrich-Ebert Stiftung	57 004
Fundación Carolina	6 793
Hospital do Coração/Ministry of Health, Brazil	130 282
International Development Research Centre, Canada	22 040
Korean International Cooperation Agency, Republic of Korea	219 000
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Norway	155 320
Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency, Sweden	675 953
Total	1 787 786

82. Total income for the Institute (excluding miscellaneous income) for 2011 and 2012 is estimated at \$2,816,195.

Total income, 2011-2012

(United States dollars)

	2011	2012 ^a
Core	2 954 372	2 512 117
Project	1 483 708	304 078
Total	4 438 080	2 816 195

^a Estimate.

83. Conditions for mobilizing resources for research continued to be challenging during the reporting period. Many of the Institute's traditional core funders have reduced or ended institutional funding, often shifting to funding for earmarked activities. This continued decline in institutional funding poses an ongoing challenge for sustaining the core activities of the Institute, many of which cannot be fully covered by project funds.

84. Efforts to increase resources have included the development of new programme areas in an effort to attract larger programme funding; relationship-building with new donors, particularly in emerging economies

(including the Republic of Korea and Brazil); and efforts to invite smaller core grants from a wider range of Member States, including members of the Commission for Social Development.

D. Midterm review

85. In October and November 2012 a midterm review of the Institute's 2011-2014 work programme was carried out by an independent consultant as part of the terms of funding from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency. The review highlighted the achievements of the Institute in maintaining the quality and level of research and outputs, despite a challenging financial environment and reduced staff. It noted major progress in enhancing the visibility and the impact of the work of the Institute through communications and outreach activities.

86. The review also pointed to the value of the Institute as a space for independent research and debate within the United Nations system, which makes effective use of mechanisms to feed research findings into intergovernmental and Secretariat processes, to influence important development debates and inform policy.

87. The autonomous status of the Institute, with a governing Board composed of independent scholars and technical experts, is recognized as an important mechanism for enabling the Institute to play this role.

E. Change plan

88. Since July 2012, the Institute has been involved in discussions led by the change implementation team of the Secretary-General, which aim to create a unified "knowledge" entity. The proposed merger involves independent research institutes, including the Institute (together with the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute), training institutes (United Nations Institute for Training and Research and United Nations System Staff College) and libraries.

89. The proposed changes, if implemented, would have profound effects on the future governance of the Institute, with implications for its leadership, activities and funding.

V. Conclusions

90. Contributions of Institute research and activities undertaken during the 2011-2012 reporting period demonstrate the continued importance of an independent space for research and debate on development issues within the United Nations system. During times of economic crisis, uncertainty and austerity, social problems become more acute, but they also risk receiving less attention or resources from the international community.

91. The Institute will continue to work closely with Member States and other international organizations to ensure the continuation of its high-quality, policy-relevant research that can shape debates, identify policy alternatives, and inform policymakers and practitioners in their efforts to address contemporary development challenges.

Annex

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