



**BREAKING THE CYCLE: WHAT DRIVES INTER-GENERATIONAL POVERTY?
A POLICY SEMINAR FOR SECTOR SPECIALISTS**

**FRIDAY 15 MAY 2009
AT THE NETHERLANDS MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

Two key areas of concern are currently emerging in international policy debates on poverty: How can we tackle persistent poverty and, intimately linked to this question, what can be done to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty?

Young Lives is a global research programme investigating the changing lives of 12,000 children in four countries over a 15-year period, matching the timeframe of the Millennium Development Goals. Launched in the year 2000 it has set out to understand how poverty affects children's lives, how it persists, and to provide the kind of detailed, in-depth evidence needed for the development of effective solutions.

Our long-term nature and innovative design mean that rather than simply measuring poverty, our research is documenting and exploring changes over time, why these happen, and what they mean for poor children and their families and communities.

Our work is unusual when it comes to longitudinal studies, not least because we:

- work across four study countries so we can see common patterns and differences as the two cohorts of children grow up;
- take a multi-dimensional view of poverty and are evolving a holistic understanding of children's development, which includes assessing the impact on children's social, emotional and psychological well-being;
- distinguish between different children in the same household (gender, siblings, age, birth order etc.);
- perceive children as actors in their own lives, rather than passive victims, many of whom show remarkable resilience and resourcefulness in the face of adversity.

Our research methods integrate regular questionnaire based-interviews with the children and their carers every three years, with more in-depth qualitative work using participatory methods with selected children, and monitoring of relevant government policies, budgets and actual spending on services such as health and education at community level.

A team of specialists based at the University of Oxford coordinates a multidisciplinary international team, including four country teams based in Ethiopia, India, Peru and Vietnam. We work in partnership with the Open University, the Institute of Education (London), and the international NGO Save the Children-UK.

AUDIENCE AND MEETING PURPOSE

This event is hosted by the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in association with the Bernard van Leer Foundation and Plan Nederland, and is by invitation only for senior policymakers, practitioners and scholars working with an interest in poverty, childhood poverty and related policy issues.

With Round 2 of the Young Lives data publicly archived and as we embark on Round 3 of our research, we are in a position to share our initial findings and comparative analysis as well as our methods, and to discuss what this means for the next stage of the children's lives. We believe this to be of interest to Netherlands stakeholders who often lead in policy and practice on tackling poverty. The event is designed to stimulate and facilitate high-level exchange of new questions and ideas to progress policy debates on childhood poverty.

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Bezuidenhoutseweg 67, The Hague Tel: (070) 348 6486**

DRAFT PROGRAMME

From 09.15 Arrivals and coffee

09.30 Welcome and Introduction by the chair

Head of Department for Cultural Cooperation, Education and Research (DCO), Ministry of Foreign Affairs

09.45 Young Lives Research

Young Lives and the Dynamics of Child Poverty

Dr Jo Boyden, Director, Young Lives, University of Oxford

Longitudinal Research on Poverty: Opportunities and Constraints

Dr Catherine Porter, Department of International Development, University of Oxford

Discussant: Liana Gertsch (Bernard van Leer Foundation)

10.45 Coffee

11.15 Education For All and Early Education For All? Young Lives evidence from Ethiopia, India and Peru

Professor Martin Woodhead, The Open University / Young Lives

Policy Priorities in Education and the Dialogue with ODA in Ethiopia

Franta Wijchers, Netherlands Embassy in Addis Ababa

Policy priorities and public finance for children in Young Lives countries

Ajay Sinha (Young Lives Policy Coordinator, India)

Discussant: Sonja Kuip (Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs)

12.30-13.30 LUNCH

13.30–15.00 Moving Research into Policy: Discussion groups

Group 1: What are some key entry points to break cycles of poverty?

Group 2: Using longitudinal data for impact evaluation

Group 3: How does research contribute to policy development?

15.00-15.15 Coffee

15.15 Panel Reflection: Breaking the poverty cycle

Invited participants: Liana Gertsch (Bernard van Leer Foundation), Jos von Heinigen (Plan Nederland), researcher (tbc)

Chair: Professor Martin Woodhead, The Open University

16.00-16.15 Close (Jo Boyden, Director, Young Lives)

For further information, please contact: Caroline Knowles, Communications Manager, Young Lives

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