

FINAL DRAFT

SD SCOPE: CROSS SECTIONAL ANALYSIS FOR OUTPUT 2

**CONCEPTS AND THEMES: LANDSCAPING SOCIAL
DEVELOPMENT***

by

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Contents	Page
Intorduction	1
Arranging the Categories of Social Development Activity	2
Overall DfID Purpose	5
• Enabling secondary stakeholders	5
• Assumptions for Social Analysis	6
• Analytical Consensus among SDAs	6
• Levels and Immediacy	7
• Removing barriers to market entry	9
• Good governance	10
Key Substantive Development Objective	11
Secondary Substantive Social Protection Objective	12
Strategic Objective	15
• Enabling primary stakeholders	15
• Poverty and social relationships	15
• Social capital: practitioners' concepts	16
• Adverse incorporation	16
• Social capital in practice	17
Means Objectives	18
• Enabling discourses	18
• Applied knowledge of poor people's livelihood systems: successfully deploying capital	19
• Promotion of the human rights of the vulnerable and marginalised: strengthening the IRS generally and specifically	19
• Promoting equality between men and women: re-orienting all 4 corners of the IRS	20
• Promoting socially responsible business: improving the market corner of the IRS	22
References	24

Introduction

This paper offers an overall landscape for understanding social development in terms of the 3 frameworks noted by Eyben in 'Beyond the White Paper' (ODI 4/3/98): social capital; social exclusion; and rights-based. It constitutes one of a series of papers emerging from the DFID Social Development Department, 'Systems for Coping with Poverty Eradication' (SCOPE) project. It draws upon a series of 8 'theme' based reviews of DFID's social development activity, focussing upon the concepts which spread across those themes. It presents a logical arrangement of social development themes both as a guide to overall strategy and policy prioritisation, and as a support to the iterative design of a Social Development Management Information System (SDMIS). The paper presents a diagrammatic landscape with key headings, through which the remainder of the paper is organised.

It should be emphasised from the outset that although the Social Development Department within DFID no longer commits itself explicitly and formally to an 8-theme organisation of its work, these themes remain implicitly in effect as its defining agenda. Having identifiable categories of SD intervention is both vital for DFID's own tracking of its priorities and necessary for the efficient management of information via keyword entry to its databases. Of course these categories need not remain fixed. Their alteration and nuancing should be continuous, iterative, deliberate and transparent. This paper therefore represents an exercise of logical arrangement for policy and strategy which probably should be repeated if not annually, at least regularly. This paper claims a value both for what it substantively offers by way of clarification of the present Social Development agenda as represented by DFID, but also as a model for similar exercises in the future.

Given the 8 present categories of SD activity, or 8 'themes' at the time of preparing this paper, it is clearly a very complex task to establish a transcending conceptual order, especially when so many of the terms, theories and concepts are contested at almost every level of stakeholding in the domain of social development. Thus these conceptual inputs into the SCOPE SDMIS design is best understood as a process of distilling complexity into a series of cross-cutting themes in a way that enables 'social development' in DFID to be grasped both by its practitioners as well other development colleagues. It is iterative in the sense that what follows already reflects a 'funnel' process of collating material from 8 different papers (Output 1) on DFID/SD themes current up to the end of 1998, which themselves were based upon the analysis of a series (sometimes overlapping) of DFID/SD projects. It is further iterative in offering an initial, tentative interpretation of the material which may itself be controversial. This paper reflects feedback from other SCOPE colleagues and some DFID Social Development Advisers on earlier drafts.

Additionally, and probably irritatingly for other development practitioners (including some SD ones), 'social development' has to be understood as a site of contested ideas, debates and dilemmas where consensus is limited though some repetitive beacons shine through. From the outset, therefore, there is little prospect of establishing a consensus around a particular author's interpretation.

Arranging the Categories of Social Development Activity

An early problem to be overcome is the relation between the different categories of SD activity. They do not all have equivalent conceptual status. Let us consider the list which has been guiding DFID's SD activity recently and on which the SD-SCOPE project had to rely for organising its 'theme' reviews:

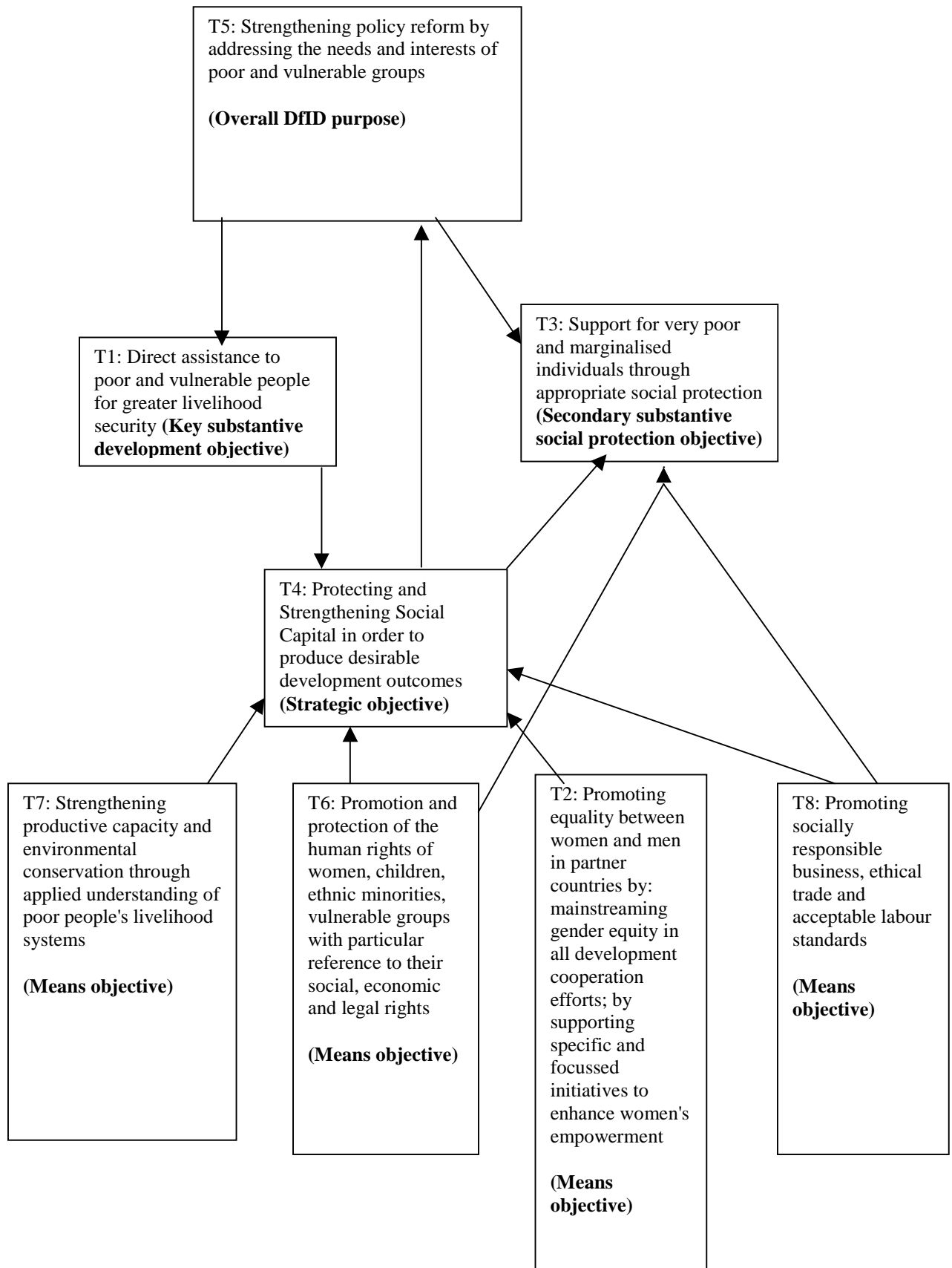
1. Direct assistance to poor and vulnerable people for greater livelihood security;
2. Promoting equality between women and men in partner countries by: mainstreaming gender equity into all development co-operation efforts, and supporting specific and focused initiatives to enhance women's empowerment;
3. Support for very poor and marginalised individuals through appropriate social protection promoting social and economic re-establishment and reintegration;
4. Protecting and strengthening social capital in order to produce desirable development outcomes;
5. Strengthening policy reform by addressing the needs and interests of the poor and vulnerable groups.
6. Promotion and protection of the human rights of women, children, ethnic minorities, vulnerable groups, especially their social, economic and legal rights;
7. Strengthening productive capacity and environmental conservation through applied understanding of poor people's livelihood systems;
8. Promoting socially responsible and ethical business and acceptable labour standards.

Such a list, especially given DFID's concerns to develop the policy leverage end of its work, does not define a logical relationship between the different categories of intervention. We can imagine three different 'languages' for describing them. **First**, some categories appear more strategic and 'meta', some more capacity building oriented, others more operational and donative. In a **second** language, some are more programmatic, some more project oriented, and others more social protection, service, safety net oriented. In yet a **third** language, there may be a useful distinction between: overall DfID purpose; a key substantive development objective; a secondary substantive welfare objective; a strategic objective; and 'means' objectives.

The basis of any validity to these distinctions is heuristic rather than intrinsic truth. Projects and programmes, of course, are established at different levels of ambition, so that 'means' objectives in one context might be 'ends' in another, and vice-versa. It is virtually impossible to make absolute pronouncements on such distinctions, since social development is particularly, and validly, characterised by much circularity of argument. Thus terms like social capital and participation typically double up as both

means and ends. Readers may therefore object to the idea that a 'rights' theme should be categorised as a 'means objective' (Theme 6 = T6). However, to the extent that DFID as a whole has organised its policy via the rigour of logframe hierarchies, then global poverty elimination is the supergoal. Increasingly the purpose of DFID, given its own constraints as a small Western donor, is to address this supergoal via strengthening policy reform to concentrate activity and resources upon the poor (including the very poor) and the vulnerable or marginalised (i.e. the existing poor, or those who could easily become poor). It seeks to contribute to this process via two key, and sometimes interrelated concepts: greater livelihood security; and social protection.

Thus, translating this **third** language into a diagram (below) would prioritise DfID's current move towards policy analysis and the identification of macro-level policy levers in re-defining its relationship to partner countries (T5), while not altering its substantive poverty elimination objectives (T1 and T3). However, the diagram and its arrangement of themes draws an implicit distinction between the 'development' objectives more associated with T1 and the 'social protection' objectives more associated with T3. This distinction (perhaps over-emphasised here for heuristic purposes) is important for conceptualising **social development** (in contrast to social sector budgetary allocation, or other kinds of development) through the central strategic objective of protecting and strengthening social capital (T4), hence its place in the diagram. The final set of themes (T7, T6, T2, and T8) have then been grouped together as 'means objectives', since they refer more to enabling activities: knowledge (T7); moral assertions regarding rights (T6); moral and efficiency arguments about gender equality, which are not synonymous with the reduction of poverty (T2); and the correlative duties of the private sector (T8).

Diagram 1: The Social Development Logical Landscape

By ordering the SD activities in this way, we are trying to offer a landscape for comprehending the logical structure of social development within DFID. This should then constitute the basis for browsing the cross-cutting issues in any one project or sector programme, providing a series of entry points for more detailed search and tracking of social development activity within DFID.

Even if this particular attempt does not survive criticism, some arranging and logical prioritising of activities (focal areas) is necessary as the basis for organising and maintaining the SDMIS. The criterion for this particular arrangement of logical priorities among the themes is derived from DFID's symbolic re-titling (i.e. no longer ODA) which signals a stronger commitment to the idea of creating more favourable international conditions (economic and ethical) which enable partners to DFID (i.e. governments and other representatives of organised civil society) to frame poverty eliminating policy and generate the resources to implement such policy.

In this context, aid projects take on a revised justification: more as a testing of policy and implementation models and capacity in conjunction with partners, i.e. more as a means to strengthen policy reform; and justified less in terms of bringing benefits to a particular catchment population. Crudely, DFID is less about projects these days, and more about influencing policy via ideas, ethical commitments, analysis, global political economic leverage, and experimentation. Thus, projects with partners remain in the repertoire, but as the way to assist the development of policy via experimentation and learning, and as the basis for partners' subsequent routinisation of such activities into mainstream programmes.

Overall DFID Purpose

Enabling secondary stakeholders

Following from the above, as a donor agency, DFID cannot expect to behave either like its institutional counterparts in partner countries (i.e. secondary stakeholders like governments and NGOs) and certainly it cannot work directly with primary stakeholders. It is therefore restricted to an enabling role, improving the capacity of secondary stakeholders to address the needs and respond to the rights of primary stakeholders, who are defined as the poor and vulnerable groups. Thus DfID's own point of entry is crucially via influencing the policy of its partners, and then contributing to the capacity of its partners to follow through on those policy choices. To achieve this, it has to contribute analysis, training and budgetary support.

From a social development perspective, three sets of assumptions or ontologies are required as the basis for enabling secondary stakeholders:

- about people and the social, economic and political environments in which they live;
- about the underlying economic, social, political and cultural structures of the countries in which these interventions are being made;

- and about how change is achieved.

Assumptions for Social Analysis

Thus social development has to be rooted in social analysis, which in turn has ontological and epistemological dimensions (philosophy, if you like). Such analysis is the key to unlock, conceptually, the rest of development. Taking each in turn:

- Are people seen as actors living dynamically in social relationships within unequal structures, or are they seen as producing and consuming households/individuals who will respond rationally to changes in the macro-economic environment; are they subjects of policy (i.e. owners and initiators) or are they objects of policy coming from actors more powerful than themselves; does the category 'poor' really exist socially, i.e. is it a basis for social action?
- What assumptions can be made about the operation of markets; what are their degrees of imperfection, embeddedness and interlocked character; do the coping poor, by definition, experience adverse incorporation; do we see the pervasiveness of patron-client relations in organisational culture; do people from different classes of wealth accept their membership of the same society and the mutual responsibilities which accompany that recognition (i.e. is poverty recognised as a problem for which the non-poor have a responsibility); how is the relationship between secular and religious forms of knowledge and morality assessed by primary and secondary stakeholders (especially in relation to women, girls, minority rights and freedoms); what is the attitude towards the value of life in terms of the moral requirement to invest in health for oneself, one's family and others?
- Is change brought about by: coercion from those in authority; the superior rationality of thought, producing legitimated policy (the rational policy cycle); or by a process of interactive agency in which the poor do also participate (a diverse, diffuse, complicated activity when sometimes competing, sometimes overlapping policy positions are adopted by actors operating in different coalitions)?

Analytical Consensus among SDAs

The positions taken on each of these questions will determine precise approaches and attitudes towards policy influence and leverage. Social development practitioners tend to be distinguished from others, these days, by accepting:

- actors as having agency within fluid structures, unequal but amenable to incremental change for the better;
- markets as socially embedded requiring favourable networks to make them work for oneself;

- widespread clientelism, reducing the prospect of transparent economic or political transactions;
- breakdowns of community responsibility when middle classes have de-linked themselves morally from the poor via commodity relations;
- the power of religious and other forms of identity as a determinant of social behaviour;
- society as constituting multiple realities within which policy outcomes reflect power, negotiation and compromise rather than the outcome of a single, transcending moral philosophy.

Levels and Immediacy

The harnessing of these analytic principles to policy development needs to occur at different levels of decision-making, action and political management; and at different degrees of immediacy to the development problem. Various sets of concepts help to organise these distinctions and therefore the SD landscape. First, to borrow from Moser and others, the contrast between strategic and practical, and direct and indirect. (Thin et al 1998 allow for different combinations of strategic/practical and indirect/direct.) Secondly, these contrasts may be calibrated with levels of activity and intervention such as the distinctions between macro, meso and micro, which correspond, respectively, to the Poverty Aims Markers (PAMs) categories of enabling, inclusive and focussed. The following matrix expresses the possibilities and thereby offers a classificatory schema for arranging SD activity, with some examples of activity (partly taken from Thin):

Table 1: Matrix of Levels and Immediacy

	Macro	Meso	Micro
Strategic/Indirect	economic and political reform (promoting good governance); promoting human rights; removing barriers to market entry	Advocacy on human and labour rights; improving quality of regional level journalism	Supporting the development of bye-laws for local environmental conservation and common property management
Strategic/Direct	Strengthening legal aid to give effect to legal rights; strengthening national level NGOs	Strengthening intermediate institutions of civil society, including local NGOs; federations of CBOs; and bank branches	Grassroots empowerment; Target group capacity building for advocacy and running services
Practical/Indirect	Institutional strengthening for health and education services	Institutional strengthening for health and education services	Supporting common property management of local natural resources through training
Practical/Direct	Food aid; development of agricultural policy for food security; capital injections to informal banking	Support for agricultural inputs and services; training bank staff	Micro-financial services; food ration distribution; capital and recurrent costs of schools and clinics

By using this kind of classification, SDD can track, across all its activities, the distribution of its points of entry, and the kinds of analytic assumptions, levers and resources required to make an impact on and with partners. Under 'overall DfID purpose' of strengthening policy reform, we would expect the 'macro' columns to feature most heavily, though not exclusively; likewise, the 'strategic' to feature more heavily than the 'practical'; and likewise, the 'indirect' more than the 'direct'.

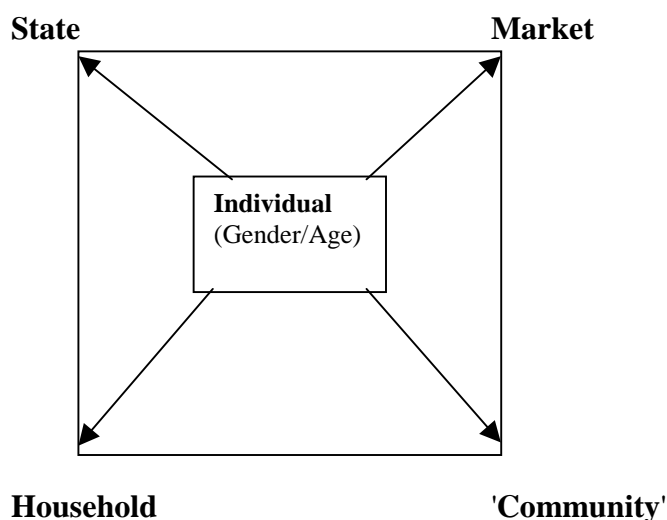
Using this matrix, therefore, two further key 'concepts', arising from the 8 'theme' review papers, can be identified from the strategic/indirect/macro box:

- removing barriers to market entry;
- good governance.

They are relevant here partly because of their policy reform status, and partly because SDD claims on such sub-themes might appear weaker than for other departments

within DfID. However, if we place these sub-themes in relation to the strategic objective of strengthening social capital (see below), then we have an institutional landscape model which helps to clarify the interface between social development and other departments within DfID. This model might be called the 'institutional responsibility square' (IRS)ⁱ, simply represented in the following diagram:

Diagram 2: Institutional Responsibility Square (IRS)



The basic idea here is obviously increasingly familiar to development thinking, especially when understanding and responding to poor people's livelihood options. Each of the four institutional corners is problematic for the individual (and the term 'community' remains deliberately ambiguous, referring to a multitude of sub-societal organisational forms, with entailed values and structures). The assumption of the IRS is that all people's livelihood success requires some effective and functional interrelation between all four corners. In this sense, they represent points of entry but not necessarily sharp boundaries between the TORs of different DfID departments. Thus the market and state corners are of strategic and policy interest to social development, as well as the more obvious 'community' (for social capital) and household (for social sector services, including skills training for capacity) corners. It is in this sense that social development, under DfID's overall purpose, intersects with removing barriers to market entry, and to good governance.

Removing barriers to market entry

People pursue livelihoods through productive and reproductive activity, which involves market and non-market linkages. In all the paradigm shifts of the post WW2 development decades, and even more so in the aftermath of the Cold War and the collapse of command economies, there has never been any serious abandonment of the principle that people's livelihoods are significantly secured through participation in economic activity organised as a series of commodity markets for labour, goods, services and assets. One of the definitions of poverty, therefore, has been the particular problems faced by the poor in entering and being adequately successful in

these markets. The imperfect, interlocked and socially/culturally embedded character of these markets have discriminated against the poor, who may be additionally hampered by lack of skills. A feature of their poverty has also been an organisational weakness to mobilise sufficient voice and collective muscle to force entry. What are these barriers? Let us also understand that there are barriers to staying in (and thereby quality of being in) as well as getting in.

- Lack of appropriate education and skills;
- Discriminatory segmentation (gender, race, ethnic, linguistic);
- Lack of financial capital;
- High interest rates on loans;
- Conditions of negative social capital (bribes, degraded networks, protection rackets, theft);
- Lack of appropriate facilities at workplace (crèches, toilets);
- Below subsistence wages;
- Poor labour standards (health and safety, insecurity, long hours);
- Corporate irresponsibility (global/MNC, macro and meso);
- Long travelling time;
- Large reserve army of labour.

This list has policy reform implications in terms of legislation and ensuring compliance (strategic, indirect); in terms of targeted funds and training (practical, direct); in terms of donor leverage on MNCs (strategic, direct); and in terms of developing voice among organised labour through formation of labour unions and other forms of group mobilisation (strategic, direct). It remains an agenda of enabling secondary stakeholders to respond to primary stakeholders needs and priorities.

Good governance

The state corner of the IRS has been recognised also as a key site of policy reform under the agenda of good governance. Again the interface with social development is strong. Whereas 'good government' could be more easily isolated as a public administration theme, revolving mainly around the issue of competence (in a technical, skills sense), good **governance** is essentially about accountability to ensure competence and efficiency and refers explicitly to the exercise of pressure from the 'community' corner of the IRS. Good governance cannot be achieved without what social development brings to the equation under the 'strategic objective' heading below. But good governance is itself a precondition for maintaining positive social capital, more conducive to the interests of the poor, at all levels (macro, meso and micro). While an example of the circularity of argument, noted above, these statements represent a programme of induced policy reform, where the line of causal influence will have to be from the bottom up to alter the distribution of benefits from bad governance. If bottom up, then certainly social development but via other secondary stakeholders in this most sensitive of sovereignty areas of donor interest. It is the 'strategic objective' element of the social development agenda which offers the 'how' answer - hence **induced** policy reform.ⁱⁱ

Key substantive development objective

The pursuit of this objective consists of the interface between enabling secondary stakeholders and the self-help activity of primary stakeholders. Five conceptual elements support this objective. Each is contested in various ways, but the concern here is to identify the distinctive contribution made by a social development perspective. Even within this perspective, the problematic of power remains underestimated.

1. **Poverty** is recognised as multi-dimensional, multi-layered and gendered. It refers to a lack of resources or 'capital' on the dimensions of: personal (literacy, skills, education, nutrition, health, rights), social (successful kinship and networks, institution and capacity building in CBOs), economic (assets, opportunities and services like banks and infrastructure), cultural (ethnic, religious and other subordinations), political (exclusion from representation and policy making), coercive (no power to create order out of disorder and uncertainty) and environmental (living in degraded, non-sustainable conditions). It is important to distinguish between the social and economic analysis of poverty. The economic analysis emphasises income and consumption (measured by quantitative variables), and focuses upon labour markets and entrepreneurial activity (usually small-scale, possibly informal) as a policy response. The social analysis takes the absolute condition of poverty as read and focuses upon causation through relationships, using concepts such as: deprivation, vulnerability, marginalisation and, more recently, exclusion. It is therefore particularly concerned with the conditions of access to labour markets, economic opportunities, social sector services, and the benefits of full community and civil society (i.e. different levels) membership. The level of security and the ability to exercise choice are two principal qualitative variables used in this analysis. The heterogeneity of the poor and the diverse ways that poverty is reproduced leads to a distinction between these general concepts and context specific analysis, deploying these concepts. This prompts a 'social development' agenda with universal as well as relative characteristics.
2. **Social development** is conceived then as crucially about investing in the 'social', increasingly conceived in terms of 'social capital' (even though an increasingly contested term). Given this, most discussion can be postponed to the 'strategic objective' section (below). The markers here are: pursuit of functional social cohesion; community development; gender awareness; creating skills to sustain social activities; using PRA as a way of managing the interface between secondary and primary stakeholders; improving information and communications; empowerment.
3. **Gender** is clearly recognised in the reproduction of poverty of men as well as women. It is therefore accepted as an intrinsic element of the social development agenda. As a 'means objective', its contested features are discussed below. The principal issue is whether the gender issue is adequately integrated into the social development agenda through a focus upon the quality and utility of gender **relationships**, or whether it disguises a retained notion of 'women' as a target-

group? If so, this may be attributable to the feminist history of placing gender on the social development agenda (which is not to say it could have been done any other way). Another way of expressing this mainstreaming concern is the placing of greater emphasis on the reproductive roles of men rather than just the productive roles of women.

4. **Participation** entails ownership to be distinguished from 'contribution'. The SD 'participation' message has oscillated over time: client consultation and contribution; populist celebration of indigenous knowledge and rights; an interface perspective involving the coalition of knowledge and a comparative advantage analysis of the respective inputs of secondary and primary stakeholders. All 3 versions remain represented in current practice, with the ideological preference for the second 'populist' version now giving way to the third 'interface' version. In development terms there has always been a danger that the second version removes responsibility for poverty eradication from other corners of the IRS and concentrates that responsibility at individual, household and community where the causes of poverty only partially exist.
5. **Sustainability** in the sense of institutional sustainability, requiring enduring social relations delivering optimal utility to the greatest number (at whatever level of activity). This may refer to the horizontal relations among the poor as they emerge from poverty significantly via their own efforts, or to vertical relations between the poor and the non-poor (either from within the community or official and quasi-official secondary stakeholders). The key development issue concerns threats to institutional coherence and whether these are endogenous (i.e. derived from pessimistic game theory), or exogenous (structural trends away from collective to individualistic moralities). Social development seeks to overcome these threats via mobilisation and capacity building. A key dilemma is whether target groups or whole communities survive better in developmental terms. Sustainability thus becomes a key element in the 'strategic objective'.

Secondary substantive social protectionⁱⁱⁱ objective

The key purpose of this section is to clarify the distinction between the categories of 'poor' and 'very poor' in terms of DfID's objectives. Although the SD descriptive distinction between the 'poor and vulnerable' and 'very poor and marginalised' is intentional in the descriptions of themes 1 and 3, a corresponding programmatic distinction between 'development' and 'social protection' is clearly more provocative. The 'intended' descriptive distinction accepts the heterogeneity of poverty in terms of both income/consumption levels and the efficacy of social claims upon resources and services (i.e. 'marginalised' means excluded, 'vulnerable' does not). The 'provocative' programmatic distinction implies that there are, embodied in the definition of the very poor, unsurpassable constraints to self-help among the primary stakeholders and that social protection responses are therefore more ethical than unrealistic development ones.

The labelling problem with this distinction is that if the category 'very poor and marginalised' is only associated with 'social protection', then there is a moral hazard for authoritative labelling in keeping the defined numbers of 'very poor and marginalised' as small as possible to minimise claims on national budgets through appropriate social protection.

In social development terms, the paramount criterion should be: 'possibilities for poverty eradication through the social action of primary stakeholders'. The application of this criterion should lead conceptually to a twofold classification:

- the **poor** where self-help forms of social action are possible (with assistance);
- and the **highly dependent poor**, where to expect self-help as a substitute for responsibility and programmes of social protection would be immoral.

Thus the **characteristics of being poor** are chronic structural disadvantage leading to: lack of physical assets or access to their usufruct; powerlessness in social relations; dislocation under conditions of agrarian transition; gender disadvantage; victim of violence; social, ethnic, racial and cultural discrimination; social and economic dependency; and low economic worth. The social development presumption here is that through assisted social action (the development interface between secondary and primary stakeholders) these conditions are susceptible to rectification. In other words, this version of poverty can be transferred to the 'key substantive development objective'.

By contrast, the **characteristics of highly dependent poverty** are likely to be a *poverty intensive sub-category of the above*, but especially describing the excluded experience of individuals reflecting the breakdown of family or community based social protection and mutual support systems: elderly without families; the dying; orphans; chronically sick; malnourished victims of famines; severely disabled; victims of life-threatening, communicable diseases; outcast women in patriarchal societies; permanently dislocated under conditions of sustained emergencies.

The presumption behind this 'activity incapability' definition of the destitute is that poverty is experienced individually with no growth capacity either individually or collectively. There is no prospect then of investment in various forms of capital (human, social, economic etc.) to eradicate these forms of poverty. The appropriate response by secondary stakeholders, materially and morally, is therefore the provision of public social protection, such as: primary health care; basic education; food security (safety nets, rations); clean water; and sanitation.

This conclusion should then clarify the distinction between social development and social protection intervention:

- **For the poor** and the sustainable improvement in their livelihoods, *both* social development and social protection intervention are necessary, but with the prospect of greater long term cost recovery for social sector services via intermediate strategies of supporting various forms of capital (human, social, economic etc.) among the target category. Sustainability of the process through *primary stakeholder activity* is the key.

- **For the highly dependent poor**, the social protection intervention is necessary with low prospects of cost recovery over the longer term. In this context, sustainability of the *secondary* stakeholders to continue provision is the key. One key implication of this is that the *highly dependent poor need income*, which has to become the key ingredient of any concept of social protection.

We can sum up this argument with the following illustrative matrix:

Table 2: Matrix of Poor/Highly Dependent Poor Distinction and Substantive Objectives

Definition/Response Features	'Social development' definition	Stakeholder Responsibility
Poor	Resource-poor, but capable of social action with assistance	Primary, with secondary 'promotional' assistance. This might entail elements of social protection, but emphasising the prospect of longer term cost recovery and sustainability of the primary stakeholder.
Highly dependent poor	Extremely resource poor through intense, often case specific social exclusion, thus incapable of social action	Secondary, and 'protective' with likely long-term or permanent dependence of the primary. Thus sustainability of the secondary to continue social protection is essential.

Having deliberately over-labelled and over-simplified the 'social' distinction between the poor and the highly dependent poor for heuristic purposes, some qualifications should be made. First, clearly the poor also need primary health care, education, clean water and sanitation as well as the highly dependent poor. The issue is **how these needs are met** and with what respective roles for secondary and primary stakeholders. Secondly, some examples of highly dependent poverty may not be permanent. Thus orphans may graduate to the activity capable status of the poor. Thirdly, the poor/highly dependent poor distinction as 'lived experience' may not be a stable one. Some people, such as Ethiopian farmers under crop failure conditions, experience short periods of activity incapability when timely social protection (i.e. food, even via food for work) is essential.

Strategic Objective

Enabling Primary Stakeholders

In a social development model, the central strategic activity to support the key substantive development objective is the enabling of primary stakeholders via the protection and strengthening of desirable social capital. The 1997 White Paper on International Development identifies 4 types of capital required for sustainable development (DFID 1997:18):

- Created capital: including physical infrastructure, machinery and equipment;
- Natural capital: the environment and natural resources;
- Human capital: human skills and capacity;
- Social capital: strong social relationships and institutions.

The SDD focus within DFID is therefore 'social' capital, though it strays into 'human' capital as a means to strengthen social capital. Two categories of comment should be made before proceeding further. First, given the significance of human capital as an input to the quality of social capital, it should be noted that human capital is largely created and maintained by the activities of women and the investment of resources (sometimes at personal sacrifice) by them. Secondly, some advocates of social development may be anxious at the conceptual and operational over-privileging of 'social capital' as a key description of their profession, especially as its meaning and utility is so contested. This is done here deliberately in order to endow the term 'social' with more accurate and distinctive content than hitherto, thereby to reveal more clearly the distinctive contribution of social development. However, it is also recognised that the term 'social development' increasingly embraces broader concerns of social policy and social protection, especially at the level of overall and sector specific policy analysis, i.e. at the 'earlier' level, in this paper, of 'enabling secondary stakeholders'.

Poverty and Social Relationships

In the various ways that poverty can be described and understood therefore, the focus here is upon *relationships* which reproduce or overcome poverty, however poverty is defined in other terms (i.e. vulnerability in terms of assets, skills, employment, capabilities, levels of consumption, quality of life, health, education, and so on). Thus part of the meaning and causation of poverty is the presence of negative and dysfunctional, or positive but insecure relationships which offer only degraded or highly qualified access to means of livelihood. Under these social conditions, the strategic social development objective has to be the creation of more secure and functional relationships which enable the poor (as individuals or in wider collectivities) to manipulate the four corners of the institutional responsibility square, the IRS, more successfully and autonomously.

This social development focus on the connection between social relationships, sustainable livelihoods and poverty elimination is therefore conceived as an issue of social capital. As suggested above, it is already a contested concept, with many ambiguities. In policy terms, there is clearly a difference between the Putnam (1993)

approach, with social capital, positively conceived and embedded in centuries of political culture and not easily amenable to deliberate strengthening, and other concepts (such as Bourdieu 1993, Coleman 1990) enabling more pragmatic interpretation, leading to definite programmes of 'social capital building'. Tendler (1997) argues that the process is not unilinear and that the state (i.e. that corner of the IRS) can act on society (i.e. the other corners) in ways that can strengthen or weaken social capital.

Social Capital: Practitioners' Concepts

Social development, as a programme and project activity, accepts that social capital can be protected and strengthened to the advantage of the poor. Three 'practitioner' accounts of social capital can be identified to illustrate the strategic objective:

- '...the density and nature of the network of contacts and connections amongst individuals in a given community' (Narayan and Pritchett, 1996:3)
- '...the "fabric" of society--the interconnected web of relationships, units and values, such as organisations, networks, common pool regimes, behavioural norms, information flows, and attitudes that constitute a society's stability and integrity and promote development. Social safety nets are a part of social capital...' (Thin, 1996:52)
- 'The term "social capital" derives from the broad idea that social relationships and shared values are resources that can help people act effectively....DFID is focussing on how people use networks, associations and broad principles of social organisation as a means of reducing risks, accessing services, protecting themselves against depredation and acquiring information'. (SD SCOPE ToR, Annex 1:5)

These versions of social capital have guided many years of enabling primary stakeholders, particularly through the social mobilisation programmes of poor country indigenous NGOs, *long before* terms like social development and social capital appeared in the vocabulary (see, e.g. Wood and Kramsjo 1992 on the history of social mobilisation of the poor in Bangladesh since the mid-seventies).

Adverse Incorporation

Two dark sides to social capital have been identified: intensive senses of identity leading to exclusivity and intolerance (Putzel 1997); and adverse incorporation (Wood 1999). Adverse incorporation is concerned with the quality of social capital (including *within* households, affecting women and children in particular). It may be defined in the following terms:

In contexts of highly imperfect markets, corrupt state practices, and patriarchal norms, poor people (and especially women and children) face a problematic search for security in income flows and stable access to stocks and services. They are obliged to

manage this vulnerability through investing in and maintaining forms of social capital which produce desirable short-term, immediate outcomes and **practical** needs while postponing and putting at permanent risk more desirable forms of social capital which offer the **strategic** prospect of supporting needs and maintaining rights in the longer term.

Adverse incorporation refers, therefore, to particular forms of interaction involving the four corners of the IRS, with particular implications for policy. Furthermore, it is not a pathological form of regime but generic under sets of conditions widely prevalent in many development contexts. Enabling primary stakeholders to overcome strategically negative forms of social capital while not sacrificing the maintenance of immediate practical needs is clearly a key and **mainstream** strategic objective of social development.

Social Capital in Practice

Other dimensions of contestation about social capital are: problematic of community; levels of operationalisation; and lessons and good practice.

- **Community:** heterogeneity of interests and livelihood support systems has to be recognised down to very micro-levels; spatial notions of a community of interests as a basis for social action cannot therefore be assumed; more flexible, non-spatial concepts about relationships and social capital are required, more akin to Anderson's Imagined Communities (1983).
- **Levels of operationalisation:** a **macro** (PAM-enabling) sense of social capital asserts that social processes contribute to the achievement of development goals as much as economic factors and natural endowments, and is close to the 'good government' PIMS (support for democratic and participative processes, promoting greater accountability of institutions, direct promotion and protection of civil and political rights); the **meso** (PAM-inclusive) version increasingly describes the development of people's organisations (usually socially targeted) by NGOs to interface with sub-national manifestations of the state and market corners of the IRS; the **micro** (PAM-focused) version embodies pre-existing social development concepts like participation and local institutional development (supported by the pursuit of gender equity from within the household outwards).
- **Lessons and good practice:**
 1. Process approaches should be encouraged in projects seeking to change local level social relationships. Ideally these will: have 'long haul' time scales (at least 5 years); derive from prior analysis and action-research; indicate prospect of long term from the outset if quality good.
 2. From the outset, use existing knowledge (local and universal) about participatory approaches and local institutional development.
 3. Start on small scale and only expand when results are clear at that scale.

4. Avoid pre-defining units of association/ social action (e.g. do not assume village organisation, caste, clan and other kinship or poverty identities).
5. Think of levels of intervention and entry points (strategic/practical, direct/indirect/, macro/meso/micro) and reinforcing combinations to strengthen efficacy of an IRS configuration.
6. Consider, especially, how organisational forms relate to the state: franchise, part of governance, by-passing, substitute?
7. Anticipate pseudo-participation and standardisation as participatory approaches go to scale.
8. Incorporate participation into design, assessment and evaluation.
9. Avoid single dimensional labelling of targeted primary stakeholders.

These 'good practice' prescriptions indicate a strategy whereby SDAs pursue social development through power-sensitive social analysis.^{iv} This could be described as seeking a balanced improvement towards the greater achievement of four sets of values: liberty (for choice and autonomy); community (for trust and mutuality); equity (for fairness and legitimacy of allocation); and social order (for freedom from fear, and for security). Ideal social capital can then be seen as social relationships and structures, institutions and identities **through which** this balance is delivered (means) and a quality of life enjoyed (ends).

Means Objectives

Enabling Discourses

The key social development strategic objective of 'enabling primary stakeholders', as described above, requires enabling activities in support. These might be considered as a series of **enabling discourses** in the realms of empirical understanding and ethics to move present under-performing configurations of the IRS towards a more functional plateau for poverty eradication. These activities accept that the overall DFID purpose of 'enabling secondary stakeholders' has to be supported by social analysis consisting of the interrelation between ontological and epistemological assumptions about actors and their capabilities, knowledge of socio-economic process concerning livelihoods, and ethical stances.

The assumptions about actors and their capabilities have been set out above ('Analytical Consensus among SDAs'). They offer essentially a 'creating room for manoeuvre' perspective as the basis for working with secondary stakeholders to work with primary stakeholders. These assumptions about actors therefore have to be enriched and given operational significance through applied knowledge harnessed to ethical positions. Hence the series of means objectives:

- applied knowledge of poor people's livelihood systems;
- promotion of the human rights of the vulnerable and marginalised;
- promoting equality between men and women;
- promoting socially responsible business.

Applied knowledge of poor people's livelihood systems: successfully deploying capital

Livelihood systems are being conceptualised as virtuous, mutually reinforcing relationships between the different forms of 'capital': created, natural, human and social. Other conceptions of this are the 'resource profile' categories of: material, human, social, cultural, membership of common property management systems, political. Thus poverty reduction requires improved coping strategies by individuals and households. These strategies will include some or all of the following elements:

- improved productive capacity;
- better access to natural resources, infrastructure and markets;
- environmental conditions for sustainable production;
- equalised gender participation in reproduction, production, trading, cultural and political activity, and other decisions, such as natural resource management and household strategic options;
- interface between primary and secondary stakeholders requiring greater participation of primary stakeholders, greater use of their knowledge, and a recognition of their constraints (including risk).

This constitutes a checklist for assessing both the knowledge inputs and the practical behaviour of primary and secondary stakeholders in pursuit of the social development strategic objective.

Promotion of the human rights of the vulnerable and marginalised: strengthening the IRS generally and specifically

The full title of this component in the means objective (theme 6) is 'promotion and protection of the human rights of women, children, ethnic minorities, vulnerable groups with particular reference to their social, economic and legal rights'. This is ethical activity consisting of building ever-widening coalitions and consensus around a set of moral assertions to establish an enabling discourse. It is creating revised principles of responsibility for the poor (and vulnerable) and the destitute (and marginalised) as the basis of a more poverty focussed configuration of the IRS. Although a distinction is being made between civil and political rights on the one hand and economic, social and cultural rights on the other, this rights-based framework for social development is addressing all 4 corners of the IRS in different ways.

- Certainly if 'rights' are being asserted then there has to be a legal aspect: strengthening the utility of the state to poor people's lives in the domains of family law, religious freedoms and contract based transactions (trade, labour, property).

- However, gaining the voluntary acceptance of rights among the other 3 corners of the IRS (market, 'community' and household) reduces the enormous costs and inequalities induced by legal and coercive responses to non-compliance. Thus securing the voluntary acceptance of rights is very efficient for poverty eradication.

The rights-based framework requires further disaggregation to be useful as a guide to social development. In the sense that the social capital framework focuses more on the poor and vulnerable and triggers 'development' activity by secondary stakeholders, and in the sense that the social exclusion framework focuses upon the highly dependent poor and marginalised (by definition) and triggers 'social protection' responses, so the rights-based framework needs to distinguish between the appropriate configurations of the IRS which improve conditions for the poor and the highly dependent poor alike, and those which target the highly dependent poor more specifically since their claims are by definition weaker so that the corresponding *sense* of rights by secondary stakeholders needs to be that much stronger.

Thus DfID's human rights themes need to be classified into:

- **general/enabling** (good governance, free and fair elections, management of inflation, sanctity of contracts, freedom of association, removing barriers to market entry, and others taken from the various international conventions since 1948);
- and **specific/entitlement** (right to basic needs in effect, but entailing receipt of social sector spending and relief goods as necessary by the highly dependent poor, which is accepted as legitimate by the rest of the population in labelling and 'quality of entitlement' terms).

Promoting equality between men and women: re-orienting all 4 corners of the IRS

The full title of this 'means objective' theme is 'promoting equality between women and men in partner countries by: mainstreaming gender equity in all development cooperation efforts; and by supporting specific and focussed initiatives to enhance women's empowerment'. The first part of this statement is mainly a reference to discourse setting, creating the ideological space within which more operational gender equity activity can occur. The second part may imply this discourse element as well as more direct, strategic social development activity to enable primary stakeholders. In both of these senses, the intention has to be to reconfigure the IRS ideologically and actually towards greater gender sensitivity with respect to rights and needs.

Several key issues remain unresolved: the relation between moral and efficiency arguments; has the shift from WID to GAD really occurred; distinguishing therefore between gender roles and gender relations; shift from needs to rights; conflation of

poverty reduction with gender equality and use of the practical/strategic distinction; heterogeneity of women; intersection of gender relations with other relations.

- **Moral and efficiency arguments:** within the social development landscape outlined above, and in the patriarchal contexts of poor countries, does the moral or rights argument for gender equality appear unduly Western and ethnocentric with unwarranted and inauthentic claims to universalism? Is mainstreaming therefore more likely to occur via efficiency claims which appear as a revised version of New Household Economics with the recognition of plural sources of income to vulnerable households; but do utilitarian, efficiency arguments place undue emphasis upon the interface between market and household, leaving the opposite diagonal of the IRS free of responsibility for providing enabling discourses to widen choice and opportunity for women? Can the universality of a principle of gender equity survive its more relativist interpretations in practice?
- **WID to GAD:** despite the shift of terminology, has there really been a shift from women as a target group (and never a 'group') towards gender equality as an objective? Using the example of credit, is it enough to improve women's access to credit without understanding that the pervasiveness of patriarchal gender relations will limit the female use and control of that credit? The shift from WID to GAD has not, for many gender specialists, yet been matched by an adequate conceptualisation of gender.
- **Gender roles and relations:** the emphasis has been on the differential gender roles in the IRS and the differential access to resources, services and opportunities rather than on the character of relations between men and women (both disaggregated in terms of age and status) which determines the distribution of those roles and benefits and sets the expectations about appropriate social and cultural behaviour. The scope for advancing a gendered IRS needs to be based more firmly upon understanding subordination, exploitation, adverse incorporation, and short-term practical trade-offs made by women at the expense of their long term, strategic needs. The social, economic and cultural constraints on men initiating change in these relations also requires more context-specific analysis to support the overall strategic objective.
- **Needs to rights:** a stronger use of the rights-based framework assists the conceptual transition from WID to GAD, with women now seen dynamically in relationships which need to be improved (i.e. a more structural concept) via the assertion of rights rather than as statically inferior (an outcome concept) and in need. The allocation of moral responsibility across the IRS is thus now shifted from women improving their position alone (via market entry and political representation), to a situation where men and women must be expected to do it together (via the acknowledgement of rights and a consequent alteration of social relations to reflect that reallocation of rights).
- **Conflation of poverty reduction with gender equality and use of the practical/strategic distinction:** poverty reduction policies cannot be assumed to automatically improve the position of women; the concept of poverty is not a

proxy for the subordination of women (hence the significance of the needs/rights distinction, since a rights perspective helps to avoid subsuming gender under poverty); and the contrast between practical and strategic needs also helps to keep apart poverty reduction (material practical need) and empowerment and gender equality (strategic, social capital building even for women who are not poor and vulnerable in a material sense).

- **Heterogeneity of women:** context-specific diversity at all levels (micro, meso and macro) requires the disaggregation of women by age, economic status, domestic rank to understand relationships, roles, power and prospects for empowerment to alter the conditions of the IRS.
- **Intersection of gender relations with other social relations:** this is an extension of the heterogeneity issue with class, race, ethnicity, language and religion which, according to context, can represent further layers of strength or weakness for women. Clearly some women endure multiple discrimination, some of which is shared with their men. This might account for greater gender equality at some levels (micro household and localised community), accompanied by severe discrimination and inequality at other higher levels (i.e. the nation-state) when diversity and differentiated valuation by authority groups kicks in. Thus the moral and rights discourse activity has to be more sustained and intense in some contexts and less so in others, with different implications for the way in which this means objective can support the strategic social development objective.

In the discourse sense, the Gender Strategy Paper for the West Bengal Sexual Health Project (1997) is good practice with stated objectives of: greater gender sensitivity; bridging the gap between men and women in the availability and accessibility of resources; enhancing the access of women to services and benefits; and bringing in a process of empowerment in the programme implementation. But even here, the shift from WID to GAD is not conceptually completed.

In an operational sense, the DFID-funded Jamaica Urban Poor Programme gets closest to adopting a mainstreaming approach to gender equality with an explicit use of a gender perspective as an integral part of planning and practice. However its practice could now be tested against the IRS re-configuration criteria and the contribution made to the strategic objective to achieve that.

Promoting socially responsible business: improving the market corner of the IRS

This 'means objective' focuses upon a sub-set of secondary stakeholders who have not hitherto accepted much responsibility for their role in the reproduction of poverty or its eradication. These secondary stakeholders operate, *par excellence*, at different levels within the increasingly globalised economy making them susceptible to various forms of discourse pressure and straightforward conditionality and leverage, including from increasingly ethically conscious consumers. In developed economies, many of the landmarks in developing the responsibility of this 'market' corner of the IRS have been achieved as a result of successful social capital in the form of labour unions and good governance. The conditions in poor countries, especially under globalised conditions of ruthless competition by major international retail distributors, militate

against the formation of labour unions with teeth. This 'means objective' therefore stands the causation on its head by seeking changes in the conditions of the production, trade and labour markets more on a voluntaristic basis in order to support the development of social capital, especially through the avoidance of adverse incorporation. The objective, in effect, is to persuade the private sector to perform a series of correlative duties from the market corner of the IRS to enable the sub-set of economic rights to be realised.

Three related types of social development engagement with the private business sector can therefore be identified: socially responsible business; legally accountable business; and fair trade.

- **Socially responsible business:** the objective of promoting voluntary participation by the private sector in developing and maintaining guidelines relating to social development issues such as child labour, and work conditions; promoting dialogue designed to strengthen the social aspects of laws and frameworks (which may eventually become legally enshrined).
- **Legally accountable business:** the objective of keeping the private sector within the framework of local, national and international laws which impact upon social development (e.g. labour standards, environmental requirements, and minimum wages).
- **Fair trade:** the objective of ensuring that producers in vulnerable communities are paid higher prices for their products by companies selling them on international markets, and the education of consumers in rich countries about product sources and worker conditions.

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Footnotes

ⁱ The basic idea of looking at different configurations of institutional responsibility is well established in social policy (see e.g. Gough 1994, Esping-Andersen 1990, Esping-Andersen 1999). Normally, however, the model is a triangle. The 'square' is preferred here in order to represent the 'household' as equally problematic as the other corners. Of course, the model can become even more complicated, especially if the broad notion of 'community' is broken down into more constituent elements (civil society, NGOs, social capital, and so on) but this entails losing sight of the main purpose of distinguishing between the main 'domains'.

ⁱⁱ For a further elaboration of these propositions, see Wood 1998, based on earlier collaborative work with P.Davis, a Research Officer at CDS, Bath.

ⁱⁱⁱ The concept of 'social protection' is discussed in the SCOPE Output 1, Theme 3 paper. To summarise here. While the term social protection has usually been associated with the provision of welfare in welfare states, there is now discussion of it in non-welfare state, developing societies (e.g. Holzmann and Jorgensen 1999). The term embraces both the general principle of protection and the specific services to provide it. Using the IRS, welfare and non-welfare state societies can be distinguished in that services are provided more by the state in the former, but more through informal, household/community level arrangements in the latter. The problem for the latter is that rights are not secure, and resources are very scarce. Thus in welfare states, state-led social protection typically includes: cash transfers; consumption subsidies; direct government services (e.g. health and education); regulation of non-state insurers and providers; and occasionally employment generation schemes. The constraints to this provision in non-welfare state societies have been: greater incidence and severity of deprivation; limited public support; acute resource constraints (esp. due to narrow revenue base); poorer institutional development; and relative powerlessness of the needy to exert pressure for social security.

^{iv} This is explicitly pursued in another DfID funded programme, not formally reviewed for the SCOPE Output 1 papers, namely the Aga Khan Rural Support Programme in the Northern Areas and Chitral, North Pakistan. Wood is leading an initiative, developing the social analysis skills of all professional staff in the programme through an in situ Training and Learning Programme in Social Development (see Wood and Tetlay 1998 for a description of the process). This is likely to be extended to the rest of Pakistan through the rural support programme network.