

Globalisation, UK poverty and communities

Investigations
Work in progress

Start date: Summer 2009

What is the impact of globalisation on communities and people in poverty in the UK?

Globalisation is the increasing integration and inter-dependence of countries' economies, societies, technology, cultures, politics and ecology. It has an impact on communities and poverty in the UK, because of:

- our many connections with other parts of the world;
- the relationship between economic and social trends; and
- our place in the global economy.

This programme:

- will explore evidence about the impact of globalisation on the UK and how organisations and communities are dealing with it;
- will promote awareness and understanding of the impact of globalisation on the UK, and its implications.

We aim to gather evidence on:

- How international connections at community level are changing, and their effects;
- The impact of being part of the global economy on UK poverty and inequality – focusing on the experience of people on low incomes;
- How the international policy environment affects UK anti-poverty policy.

Contact

Teresa Hanley
teresa_hanley@dsl.pipex.com

For the latest information, visit:
www.jrf.org.uk/globalisation

At a glance

Programme title: Globalisation, UK poverty and communities

Aim: This programme aims to explore current evidence on the impact of globalisation in the UK, and how organisations and communities are dealing with it. It will promote awareness and understanding of the impact of globalisation on UK communities and poverty, and its implications.

Timescale: 2009–2011

Budget: £300,000

Contact: Teresa Hanley (Programme Manager) or Marguerite Owen (Research Administrator)

In August 2009, the JRF launched a programme of work looking at globalisation. This paper outlines what we are doing, why, and what we hope to achieve through this work.

This information is correct at the start of the programme. However, our programmes of work develop throughout their course. For the most up-to-date information, visit: www.jrf.org.uk/globalisation

What is the issue?

Globalisation is the increasing integration and inter-dependence of countries' economies, societies, technology, cultures, politics and ecology. State boundaries have become more fluid, with people, money and information moving faster and on a greater scale between states than ever before. Technology has led to ever greater integration of the UK economy and society with other parts of the world. We have more connections with other parts of the world at community and national level. Globalisation and international policy in particular have significantly changed the environment where UK anti-poverty policy is formed and implemented.

The UK economy is closely integrated with other parts of the world and many people's economic well-being is tied to the global economy. We need more research into how the global economy influences poverty and inequality in the UK, and how far these trends can be managed. People on low incomes engage with the global economy as consumers, workers and users of services. We need more information about how people in poverty experience globalisation, and the implications for policy and practice.

Local and national politics and international conflicts affect UK communities. New technologies mean that communities' communication with other countries is much more immediate and sustained. We have limited information on the effects of these connections and how local and national government, civil society (including voluntary sector organisations, the media and religious groups) and communities are responding to these trends.

The international policy arena means that the UK has various commitments and obligations to fulfil. There is limited information for policy-makers and civil society on what constraints and opportunities the international environment gives to addressing UK poverty.

What do we want to achieve?

We aim to provide an overview of how globalisation is affecting UK communities, poverty and poverty-related policy-making. It will help understanding and highlight further questions that require more in-depth work, either for JRF to consider, or for other organisations to take forward.

The programme will explore three key areas of globalisation and their impact on UK poverty, policy and communities:

- How international connections at community levels are changing and their effects;
- The impact of being part of the global economy on UK poverty and inequality – focusing on the experience of people on low incomes;
- How the international policy environment affects UK anti-poverty policy.

This programme will be relevant to policy-makers and advisers in government, research organisations and think-tanks and parts of the private sector and civil society.

What are we doing?

We are gathering evidence through qualitative and participatory research, commissioned papers and multisector events to consider the implications for policy and practice of:

- key aspects of communities' international connections;
- effects of the global economy on UK poverty and inequality – in particular the experience of people on low incomes;
- the effect of international policy environment on UK anti-poverty policy.

Research projects are underway which will be published early in 2011. These explore:

- **Experiences of globalisation: Connection, empowerment and exclusion in contemporary Britain**, Andy Cumbers *et al.*, University of Glasgow
- **Impacts of global economic crises on UK communities**, Naomi Hossein *et al.*, Institute of Development Studies, Sussex
- **Impacts of external conflicts and politics on UK communities**, Mike Cullyer, University of Sussex

A series of 'programme papers' and seminars in autumn 2010 discuss the implications of particular aspects of globalisation for UK poverty and communities. These consider:

- How globalisation is changing patterns of marginalisation and inclusion in the UK.
- The links between global governance, UK poverty and welfare policy.
- Implications for UK communities of the globalisation of the media and new communication technology.
- Impacts of UK foreign policy for UK communities.
- Links between the causes of and solutions to poverty, in richer and poorer countries.
- Globalisation and the cost of living in the UK – implications for people on low incomes.

The papers will be available in autumn 2010.

Events will take place in early 2011 to share and discuss the implications of the programme's findings for policy and practice, aiming to reduce UK poverty and support vibrant communities.

Why is this topic a priority for the JRF?

Globalisation is key to the environment where UK anti-poverty policy is implemented. There is limited evidence of how globalisation affects communities and poverty in the UK. Evidence that does exist is fragmented and rarely multi-disciplinary. A wide range of organisations are dealing with the effects of globalisations.

JRF will seek to document experience, fill some of the research gaps and take forward thinking on an issue that is central to JRF's focus on poverty and disadvantage. We will also bridge disparate networks, connecting organisations and people that do not always come together.

What has informed our thinking?

This programme plan is based on a review of existing research, and consultation with leading thinkers and practitioners dealing with globalisation and its impacts.

About the Joseph Rowntree Foundation

The Joseph Rowntree Foundation and the Joseph Rowntree Housing Trust are two independent charities that work together to understand the root causes of social problems, identify ways of overcoming them, and show how social needs can be met in practice.

Our purpose is to influence policy and practice by searching for evidence and demonstrating solutions to improve:

- the circumstances of people experiencing poverty and disadvantages;
- the quality of their homes and communities;
- the nature of the services and support that foster their well-being and citizenship.

Most of our work centres on the interconnected themes of poverty, place and empowerment.

Published by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation, The Homestead,
40 Water End, York YO30 6WP.

Other formats available.

Tel: 01904 615905 email: info@jrf.org.uk