

Research and Methodology Discussion Paper 2

14th of April, 2003

with David Satterthwaite, Romi Khosla, Jane Samuels, and Michael Mutter
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Removing Unfreedoms Framework and Current Development Approaches

In the follow-up discussions of the **Removing Unfreedoms Project**, a meeting was held at IIED with Michael Mutter, Romi Khosla, David Satterthwaite, Nick Hall and Jane Samuels. Michael Mutter convened the meeting.

The discussion opened with the proposal to formulate some kind of framework through which one could view community aspirations that was based on "Removing Unfreedoms". David S. was of the view that substituting "Right's" with "Freedom" did not necessarily seem useful.

Michael Mutter pointed out that DFID, for instance, was wedded to a "Rights based" approach and would be suspicious of replacing that Freedom as the key word. He said that "Livelihoods" and "Rights" was an inherent part of the DFID approach.

The question was, therefore, how one could find a common meeting ground between the DFID and Sen approaches.

In addition Mike Mutter wondered how one would relate a "Freedom based" development approach to the Millennium development goals that had already become part of the UN-Habitat agenda.

Romi Khosla pointed out that the Freedom based approach was not intended to substitute existing programs. He saw them rather as an opportunity to formulate an over-arching common framework, a shared lens through which one could view at a wide range of poverty initiatives in the field. He said that rather than substitute existing donor led approaches he saw the approach more as a way to gather a shared perception which would not impinge on the "Rights" based projects but would rather enable one to be able to compare one programme to another through a common framework.

David S. pointed out that the Slum's federation and Sparc may not react to Unfreedoms as it could be too abstract a concept.

These organisations are more concerned with problems of negotiating and pressurising for "Rights" rather than for the "Removal of Unfreedoms".

Mike Mutter wondered whether it might eventually bring Human Development Index approach to cities. HDI, he said, is a national governmental level index. He wondered whether a Freedom centred evaluative index approach could eventually be developed for inter-city comparisons and whether a beginning to this approach could be started by using the "Cliff" programme as the basis for a common meeting ground.

The discussion then turned to what kind of event could be proposed for the colloquium. David S. speculated whether it may be a good idea to identify three or four key persons who could use "Sen's Lenses" to see how they saw the freedom approach being relevant in their own particular domains. Such key persons could be community health specialists Caroline Stevens from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical medicine?? And Anne Power for Housing?? Jo Beal and her work on divided cities-South Africa?

These key person presentation could be ten-minute duration on how the speakers saw the relevance of "Unfreedoms" to poverty programmes.

Jane Samuel's explained her ideas for the colloquium taking place in a series of simultaneous moving discussions rather than an event where each table is linked to a specific subject. The discussions take place at 5-6 tables with at least two people moving on after 15-minute sessions.

Mike Mutter suggested the concept of table captains who would summarise the table's discussion to the colloquium. David S. pointed out the reporters would have to be carefully selected as there was always a tendency for the reporters to make uninspiring summaries of the discussions.

At the conclusion of the meeting it was confirmed that Nick Hall would be making all the arrangements for the colloquium and that Jane Samuels would be passing onto him a list of potential invitees that she had put together.