Rethinking poverty alleviation: a 'poverties' approach
Edward R. Carr

Online Publication Date: 01 January 2008

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Rethinking poverty alleviation:
a 'poverties' approach

Edward R. Carr

This article argues that the practice of poverty alleviation is greatly limited by a vision of poverty that fails to capture the locally specific causes of and solutions to the challenges that threaten human well-being. This problematic vision of poverty takes real-world form in such initiatives as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers. It is a key reason why this and other contemporary poverty-alleviation efforts do not show greatly improved results compared with previous efforts. By reframing our understanding of the challenges to human well-being from poverty to 'poverties', however, we might envisage a new approach to policy development in relation to poverty that moves us towards a truly sustainable development.

Introduction

Where once economic growth was the stated goal of development, today poverty alleviation appears to stand as its principal objective. This shift in focus has engendered a concern in development circles with the identification and measurement of poverty. In this article, I argue that development's preoccupation with identifying and measuring poverty goes beyond competing definitions and methodologies to the core of our conceptualisation of poverty itself.

Contemporary efforts to alleviate poverty, however opposed they might appear in other ways, share a conception of poverty as a singular, universal problem. Defining poverty like this shapes approaches to poverty reduction in three practical ways. First, current approaches to poverty alleviation begin from preconceived notions of what are and are not problems to be dealt with in a particular place. Second, because the causes of poverty are often seen as being the same everywhere, approaches to poverty alleviation generally overlook the local processes by which phenomena become classified as problems (or poverty, if such a concept exists locally) and they also overlook the local means by which people already attempt to address these problems. Finally, because poverty is conceived as a singular problem with universal causes, contemporary poverty-alleviation efforts have difficulty in identifying the trade-offs and synergies – the compromises and the mutual benefits – that accompany any poverty-reduction intervention and must be managed to ensure the efficacy of that intervention.

I argue that if we are to productively address the issues currently aggregated under the heading 'poverty', we must move beyond this singular conceptualisation towards an approach that encompasses 'poverties': the various, complex barriers to human well-being that emerge in particular places. Such an approach does not necessarily signal the death of large-scale efforts to alleviate poverty, nor does it require the abandonment of development itself. Instead, a 'poverties' approach forces us to seriously re-think development goals and our means of achieving them. Such a re-thinking seems necessary if we are to address the challenges to human well-being in the world today.

Identifying and measuring poverty

A recent paper on the definition and measurement of poverty (Ruggeri Laderchi *et al.* 2003: 3–6) summarised common problems encountered when trying to define and/or measure poverty, under eight headings: (1) The sphere of concern in which poverty is defined; (2) whether or not universal definitions of poverty, or approaches to defining and measuring poverty, can be applied to all societies; (3) whether the methods used to identify and measure poverty are objective or subjective; (4) whether or not poverty lines can be drawn that are justifiable, and whether or not such lines should be particular to a context, or universal; (5) what the unit of measurement (individual, household, village, nation) should be; (6) how to deal with the multidimensionality of poverty; (7) the time-horizon for the identification and measurement of poverty; and (8) the extent to which a definition of poverty provides (or should provide) a causal explanation for poverty.

I shall argue here that an understanding of poverty as both singular and universal is central to all of these concerns. The question of the sphere of concern comes into play only if we assume that we cannot redefine this sphere in different contexts. The issues of poverty lines, unit of measurement, and time-horizon similarly become problems only if we are seeking the one true poverty line, unit of measure, or time horizon, valid in all contexts. Multidimensionality presents a challenge primarily if we are seeking the correct configuration of challenges that might be addressed in all contexts, rather than seeking particular configurations and solutions in different places. The objectivity or subjectivity of one's methods and definitions reflects the tension between a universalising impulse and a particularistic focus on the voices of those living in different places, and the danger that these voices might be lost to preconceived understandings of poverty. Even causality becomes a problem in the context of a universal definition of poverty, for what might be a cause of the problems labelled as poverty in one place might not be the cause, or even an important cause, of other, similarly labelled problems in another context.

An understanding of poverty as both singular and universal shapes approaches to the identification and measurement of poverty in three ways. First, in our efforts to alleviate poverty, we tend to rely on preconceived notions of poverty and its solutions. This is so because the variability that marks the 'poverty' that we seek to address is conceived not as the product of locally unique problems, but instead as particular manifestations of a universal phenomenon. Thus, writers can make the claim that 'growth' (most recently, in Sachs 2005) or 'access to capital' (for example, De Soto 2000) is *the* foundation for a global solution to poverty.

Second, because poverty is often seen as being the same everywhere, and therefore capable of being addressed through known sets of interventions, there is little impetus to understand how people living in particular places come to identify poverty (if, indeed, such a concept exists locally), and how they address issues that they label as poverty. While there is clearly a concern in the literature about the imposition of external notions of poverty and its solutions upon those living in particular places (for example, in the objective vs. subjective methods

issue described above), this concern is largely focused on correctly identifying poverty in order to apply the most appropriate intervention. What is lost in this focus is the fact that a singular, 'correct' identification of poverty does not mesh well with heterogeneous local definitions of and solutions to the multiple challenges to human well-being. Without an understanding of these local definitions and solutions, interventions associated with current approaches to poverty alleviation risk damaging, for example, the resilience of livelihoods that are crucial for the management of a particular local issue and, in so doing, risk creating more problems than they solve.

Finally, treating poverty as a singular, universal problem leads to difficulties in the identification of the trade-offs and synergies that characterise any poverty-reduction intervention. As poverty is currently conceptualised, issues of fertility, education, income, and environmental quality often become mere manifestations of 'poverty', itself a manifestation of inadequate growth or inadequate access to capital. In such a conceptualisation, these issues are not seen as problems unto themselves which might interact with each other in complex and unique ways in particular places. Thus, while perhaps recognising as interlinked the various issues that poverty alleviation is meant to address (for example, recognising that fertility, education, income, and environmental quality are in many ways interdependent), current approaches to poverty resort to interventions that are most often conceived in a sectoral manner (education reform vs. market reform vs. environmental protection), because sectoral approaches are assumed to work together in the resolution of a common problem. Such efforts, while aimed at resolving a perceived general underlying problem, often fail to capture the compromises and the mutual benefits of these inter-linkages. By overlooking potential gains and compromises, we reduce the efficacy of our interventions, because we cannot consider and plan for the new opportunities and challenges that will inevitably accompany any change in a local context wrought by an intervention. In short, without addressing the local multidimensionality of what we call poverty, our interventions may cause more hardship than they alleviate.

Poverty in practice: Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers

The threefold shaping of our approaches to poverty alleviation described above becomes critical to human well-being outcomes when these approaches are put into practice. One site of practical application is the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP). PRSPs emerged in 1999 as an attempt on the part of the World Bank and the IMF to increase the focus of development on poverty and improve national ownership of the development process. In theory, the government of a given country writes the PRSP with stakeholder consultation. In so doing, that government brings to the fore the particular problems facing that country and the specific solutions that best suit its population. Thus, the PRSPs were meant to bring diversity to the overall project of poverty alleviation and development at the IMF and World Bank.

A number of recent studies (for example, Cheru 2006; Craig and Porter 2003; Whitfield 2005), including those conducted by the IMF (2004) and World Bank (2004) themselves, suggest that the reality of the Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) does not live up to the ideals that motivated its creation. I argue that the various problems identified by these studies are specific manifestations of the problems inherent in a singular, universal definition of poverty.

First, PRSPs tend to conceive of solutions to any local issue through the 'common sense' application of 'tested and true' methods. However, both the 'common sense' and the solutions usually are developed outside the site where they are to be applied, and are therefore developed without reference to local conditions. This problem is apparent at multiple scales. Studies conducted by the World Bank (2004), IMF (2004), and various scholars (for example, Cheru 2006;

Craig and Porter 2003; Whitfield 2005) note that the PRSP process does not, in practice, allow for significant national-level discussion or debate about alternatives to the economic policies prescribed by the World Bank and IMF. This is perhaps unsurprising, as the PRSP process requires the submission of an interim paper to the IMF and World Bank for approval before the larger process can go forward. Because of the high stakes attached to PRSP approval (such as access to loans and qualification for debt relief), countries are unlikely to risk rejection by submitting an interim PRSP that challenges the economic orthodoxy of these institutions. Thus, the PRSP promotes a focus, broadly shared among both 'developed' and 'developing' countries, 'on optimizing economic, juridical and social governance in order to create ideal conditions for international finance and investment . . . as the best hope for generating sustained growth, social and economic stability, and including the poor in emerging structures of opportunity' (Craig and Porter 2003: 54).

PRSPs also rely on externally conceived interventions at the local scale. For example, as one component of its effort to boost growth rates in the agricultural sector of the economy, Ghana's PRSP II (broadly representative of others in sub-Saharan Africa) emphasises the development of selected crops that will contribute to domestic food security and export earnings. While on its surface such an effort might seem reasonable and straightforward, it does not consider, for example, how such crops might be differently farmed by men and women. Thus, while targeting specific crops for development might boost Ghanaian agricultural production as a whole, such targeting might disproportionately emphasise crops already farmed by men, and in so doing channel the benefits of that growth into the hands of men at the expense of women. Even if such efforts attempt to take into consideration the gendered character of many crops, studies of agrarian change (for example, Carney 2004) have illustrated that men often co-opt the crops that are emphasised by development projects, regardless of their traditional place in a gendered division of labour, thus placing stress on local social systems and marginalising women's production. Such outcomes can challenge the sustainability of agricultural interventions, and harm the well-being of those affected by them.

Second, PRSPs do not consider the social context and processes through which problems are identified and solutions shaped. This is visible in both the PRS programme and its PRSP outcomes. One of the recurrent criticisms of the PRS process, perhaps noted most clearly in the studies by the World Bank (2004) and IMF (2004), is the way in which the participation of stakeholders in the process has been curtailed by ongoing power struggles within national governments and national bureaucracies. Such struggles have often excluded the elected representation of countries from the process. By assuming that broad participation in the PRS process would be relatively unproblematic, this programme has not adequately considered the ways in which the identification of national priorities is highly politicised, and how such politicisation would intrude upon the poverty-alleviation process.

At the local scale, the PRSP focus on 'known interventions' results in a similar blindness to local social context and the way in which it shapes the identification of and solutions to problems. For example, Ghana's PRSP II promotes the reform of land acquisition and property rights as a means of improving agricultural production. This focus, which emphasises the importance of property rights 'as a means of ensuring security of tenure of small land holders, especially women and the youth' (Republic of Ghana 2005: 32), seems unimpeachable. However, such a focus overlooks the fact that a relationship between gender equity and access to land which might be judged as highly problematic from the perspective of the PRSP may, at the local level, be seen by decision makers as appropriate and functional. For example, in my research in Ghana's Central Region, men routinely assign their wives between 20 per cent and 30 per cent of the land that they give to themselves, although women are more economically productive per square metre of farmland than men (Carr 2005). This allocation of land is not

a result of scarce land resources. Men could assign their wives more land without necessarily compromising their own landholdings. Such decisions, while clearly unfair, unjust, and having a negative impact on household production, are also highly logical efforts on the part of men to maintain their social status within the household. To these men, who are the primary decision makers in this context, land allocation is not a problem. Because the PRSP does not consider how land access comes to be defined as a problem (or not) in particular contexts, it cannot address how this effort to boost production will create local tensions that are unlikely to produce a positive change in human well-being.

Third, PRSPs tend to deal with poverty issues sectorally, failing to address either the compromises or the mutual advantages that apply in different sectors. To return to Ghana's PRSP II, we find a document which addresses everything from agricultural production to population management to water quality in nicely compartmentalised chapters and sub-chapters. Nowhere in the document is there a discussion of the possible impacts that efforts in each of these sections, or the outcomes expected in each sector, might have on the efforts and outcomes in other sections of the paper. This creates the potential for clearly contradictory outcomes, with no planning for how to resolve the issues that will arise as a result. For example, the governance chapter in Ghana's paper emphasises the importance of ensuring gender equity. This chapter is not related to the agricultural chapter, which, as described above, focuses on efforts such as targeted crop development. If, as I have described above, targeted crop development leads to economic growth that favours men, this effort will undermine gender equity – and therefore another section of the PRSP. There is no discussion in the document of the potential for such a problem to arise, and therefore no plans for how to address such problems. The failure to conceptualise problems and interventions as interlinked in Ghana's PRSP II, a document broadly representative of PRSPs in sub-Saharan Africa, illustrates why the PRSP approach 'has so far not contributed significantly to understanding the linkages between growth, poverty incidence, and macroeconomic policies at the individual country level' (International Monetary Fund 2004: 3).

From poverty to poverties

Although this article is informed by the concerns of post-development writers on the dangers of universalising discourses of development (for example, Escobar 1995; Esteva 1992), it does not share with many of these writers a desire to see the abandonment of the development project in the face of what are often presented as inescapable, destructive power relations inherent in development and in which 'the developing' almost inevitably lose. Further, where post-development has been generally more interested in the discursive production of development than in the empirical analysis of how development affects people, the goal of this article is to provide a means of re-engaging with the challenges to human well-being that we call poverty in a manner that better illuminates the lived experience of these challenges. In what follows, I seek to replace the narrative of a singular, universal poverty that informs development today with a new narrative which embraces heterogeneity in both our identifications of poverty and our means of measuring that which we identify as poverty. I do so not to dismantle development, but as a means of overcoming the limitations on development and poverty alleviation imposed by our understanding of poverty as singular and universal.

One means of breaking out of the definitional and operationalised trap created by a singular, universal 'poverty' is to view the diversity of situations labelled as poverty not as merely different manifestations of the same problems in different places, but as different phenomena requiring a degree of individual attention – in other words, as 'poverties' instead of 'poverty'. However, an approach to improving human well-being by addressing 'poverties' must be

more than a greater focus on grassroots identifications of challenges and solutions that somehow bring us closer to the 'truth' of poverty and human well-being. A simplistic valorisation of the grassroots ignores the ways in which local knowledges are legitimised or obscured through social relations of power. The uncritical acceptance of individual, or even majority, definitions of challenges to human well-being and their solutions can serve to reify existing power relations, knowledges, and challenges for many in a community (for an overview of this issue, which has been raised by many authors, see Blakie 2000). Thus, simply refocusing on the local gives us no greater guarantee of representativeness than does a singular definition of poverty.

To create an approach to 'poverties' alleviation that does more than simply reproduce the problems and challenges of our existing singular definition of poverty requires a critical approach to knowledge which charts a middle path between the absolutes of universalising approaches and the atomising tendencies of grassroots approaches to the understanding of poverty/poverties. In such a middle path, which I call a critical grassroots approach to development (Carr, in press), there is a role for both local knowledge and the outside expertise and perspective of the development practitioner. This approach embraces local definitions of challenges and solutions as the foundation for productive development interventions aimed at augmenting human well-being, but does so with an eye towards answering three key questions: (1) Who gains and who loses from existing definitions of problems and their solutions? (2) Who identifies these problems and solutions? and (3) How do these solutions become legitimate in a particular social unit, when their benefits are not evenly distributed across the unit?

This critical grassroots perspective recognises that while we must continue to valorise local voices in development practice, we must also recognise that the solutions that these local voices present to us may not lead us to the alleviation of the barriers to human well-being in particular contexts. A critical grassroots approach allows the development practitioner to examine local strategies for addressing barriers to human well-being in a manner that elucidates both the material and the socio-cultural outcomes of existing strategies.

A critical grassroots approach to local knowledge begins from the same foundation as many critically informed development approaches (a broad umbrella which includes everything from post-modern approaches to the work of Robert Chambers), by asking who defines problems and their solutions, and who benefits from this definition. To illustrate with a hypothetical example of a pastoral group in the West African Sahel, we might note that the members of this group appear to maintain the quality of their herds and the land around them by shifting their location. Rather than simply seek to improve their material well-being by augmenting this strategy, we first need to understand who decides when to move, and why they make that decision. In this hypothetical case, we might find that it is a few senior men in the group who have the authority to make such a decision, and they claim to base their decision on the quality of the local vegetation (they move before it is too degraded). These men claim that everyone benefits from a move to a new location, as all the cattle associated with this group will find more abundant food. By interviewing individuals across households and other social cleavages such as gender, though, we might find that their claim to equal benefits obscures the fact that these senior men have the largest herds, and the greatest capacity to relocate, and so they benefit from a move to a greater extent than a poor man or woman who owns only one or two cows and must liquidate some scarce material goods to enable each move. Perhaps these poorer households have to expend most of their surplus in any move. Such a case suggests that the constant movement of this group, and probably the timing of such movements, is not only about the maintenance of the herd and land, but also about the maintenance of the economic and social status of the older men who make the migration decisions. By moving frequently enough to prevent accumulation by the poorer members of their group, but not so frequently as to

deplete their own resources, these decision makers benefit materially and socially from this strategy. Thus, an intervention that unproblematically augments existing livelihoods by facilitating the existing knowledge base that informs the timing of group movement may not address the causes of that which is labelled 'poverty' for all members of a group. Indeed, such an intervention would be likely to exacerbate those challenges for the poorest members of the group.

It is not enough, however, to simply identify inequities if what we seek is an understanding of local knowledge that might lead to the identification of existing strategies for maximising human well-being that are indeed worth augmenting. A critical grassroots approach adds value to previous examinations of the inequality that emerges/is enhanced/is maintained through development (for example, see several of the contributors to Peet and Watts 2004) by addressing the *persistence* of inequality in local strategies for managing challenges to human well-being. To return to our hypothetical case of the pastoral group, it is likely that the poorer members of this group are aware that the timing of movements puts them at a great disadvantage and prevents them from accumulating wealth or goods. Why, then, do they continue to move with the rest of this group, even as the migration decisions of its leaders negatively affect their well-being? Such an enquiry must not only address issues of material well-being (for example, the security that membership of a group provides against cattle raiding, or the access to resources that membership in a particular group enables), but must also address the ways in which the power relations in this group legitimise certain knowledges that lead to these outcomes. In this case, we must examine how the senior men come to be seen as legitimate interpreters of the condition of the local environment, such that they can make claims about the need to migrate that are difficult to gainsay, and may even be thought uncontestable within this group.

Understanding this legitimacy, and the local knowledge that it validates, is critical to forecasting the outcomes of any poverty-alleviation intervention. In the case of pastoral groups, for example, settlement efforts often encounter major challenges for the local environment and livelihoods. It is important to understand if these challenges stem from verifiable environmental causes, such as overgrazing or overfarming, or because current local knowledge of the environment and resource use can be mobilised by those who benefit from the existing situation to prevent the adoption of new livelihoods that might compromise their situation. These two distinct sources of challenge in poverty alleviation among pastoral groups, or a combination of these two sources, raise different ethical issues and require different interventions to ensure that a given poverty-alleviation effort actually results in improved human well-being for the entire group affected by the effort.

Poverties and the challenge of policy

The refocusing of development policy on a critical grassroots approach to 'poverties' does not necessarily require the atomisation of policy and the death of large-scale efforts to address the various difficulties faced by the world's poor. However, such large-scale efforts will have to be of a very different character from those currently in place. A critical grassroots approach to these strategies not only allows for more productive forecasting of the impacts of such things as agricultural interventions on human well-being than do other local-scale development frameworks, but in its focus on the relationship between power relations, local knowledge, and development, it creates an opportunity to generate new types of generalisation that might facilitate new poverty-alleviation frameworks. This generalisation, founded not on shared indicators of economic activity and environmental conditions but on a shared approach to social processes that link knowledge and power to human well-being outcomes, allows us to build cross-contextual understandings of the challenges and opportunities presented by these processes. For example,

by building a critical understanding of the power and knowledge behind local efforts to maintain or improve human well-being, we can develop broad frameworks for the identification of existing local efforts to manage poverty that are worth augmenting, but without having to identify a 'correct' or 'true' development path along which people must pass if they hope to improve their quality of life.

This new generalisation has two ramifications for poverty-alleviation efforts. First, while we might still generate PRSPs to guide national development policy, these papers would focus on entirely different issues. Rather than focusing on indicators of sectoral performance, a 'poverties' PRSP would address the different, but locally linked, social, economic, and environmental processes at work within the country that contribute to different human well-being outcomes. Second, to focus on these processes, efforts to identify and measure poverty within these PRSPs will require different methods than those currently in use. For example, the sorts of data that would be required about local strategies and their role in the persistence of inequality are not easily obtained through large-scale surveys that lend themselves to the identification of broad indicators. Instead, it is likely that understandings of trends in poverties would be best generated through the simultaneous development of qualitative case studies in a sample of areas across a given country. Broad policies could emerge through the comparison of these case studies to extract common lessons and issues which might then be used to build PRSPs that actually live up to their name. The number of studies would depend on the resolution of the information needed for the PRSP and on the funding available to gather that information.

Conclusion

Addressing barriers to human well-being through a critical grassroots approach that is focused on 'poverties' moves us towards a realistic, more sustainable path to the alleviation of poverty than that offered by contemporary approaches to poverty reduction. For example, Sachs' (2005) vision for the end of poverty rests heavily on the idea that an increase in development aid will pay for the various inputs needed to address local manifestations of poverty. While perhaps affordable, this vision is unrealistic, in that aid levels are unlikely to rise to the levels necessary to make a significant difference in the lives of the poor. Even less realistic is Sachs' belief that the poor will somehow be able to afford the inputs necessary to maintain his proposed interventions on their own in a short period of time. Mountains of historical evidence from the 'big push' era of development suggest this is not the case. Instead, those living with the interventions implemented under this vision will rely on a constant flow of aid money to maintain livelihoods, environmental quality, and ultimately human well-being. Such a situation works against the dignity of those trying to manage difficult circumstances (for a detailed discussion and criticism of Sachs' vision, see Carr, in press).

On the other hand, taking a critical grassroots approach to 'poverties' allows us to build poverty-alleviation programmes on existing local management efforts, thereby valorising the voices and strengths of the poor. Further, such an approach is likely to be far less expensive than the aid-dependent path suggested by Sachs, either at the outset or over the long term. Finally, focusing on building the resilience of existing practices does not mean valorising them blindly. By approaching challenges to human well-being through the careful, systematic consideration of local social relations, we can develop critical understandings of what works, and for whom, in particular places, and thus develop and augment responses that build resilience for all, and not just a few. Such an approach is a much clearer blueprint for sustainable development than anything on offer today.

Edward R. Carr

Acknowledgements

References

Blakie, P. (2000) 'Development, post-, anti- and populist: a critical review', *Environment and Planning* 32 (6): 1033–50.

Carney, J. A. (2004) 'Gender conflict in Gambian wetlands', in R. Peet and M. Watts (eds.) (2004) pp. 316–35.

Carr, E. R. (2005) 'Development and the household: missing the point?', *Geojournal* 62 (1): 71–83.

Carr, E. R. (in press) 'The Millennium Village Project and African development: problems and potentials', *Progress in Development Studies*.

Cheru, F. (2006) 'Building and supporting PRSPs in Africa: what has worked well so far? What needs changing?', *Third World Quarterly* 27 (2): 355–76.

Craig, D. and D. Porter (2003) 'Poverty reduction strategy papers: a new convergence', *World Development* 31 (1): 53–69.

De Soto, H. (2000) *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*, New York, NY: Basic Books.

Escobar, A. (1995) *Encountering Development*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Esteva, G. (1992) 'Development', in W. Sachs (ed.) *The Development Dictionary: A Guide to Knowledge and Power*, London: Zed Books, pp. 6–25.

International Monetary Fund (2004) *Report on the Evaluation of Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers and the Poverty Reduction Growth Facility*, Independent Evaluation Office, Washington, DC: IMF.

Peet, R. and M. Watts (eds.) (2004) *Liberation Ecologies: Environment, Development, Social Movements: Second Edition*, London: Routledge.

Republic of Ghana (2005) *Growth and Poverty Reduction Strategy (GPRS II) (2006–2009)*, Accra: National Development Planning Commission.

Ruggeri Laderchi, C., R. Saith, and F. Stewart (2003) *Does it Matter that We Don't Agree on the Definition of Poverty? A Comparison of Four Approaches*, Queen Elizabeth House Working Paper Series Number 107, Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, University of Oxford.

Sachs, J. D. (2005) *The End of Poverty: Economic Possibilities for Our Time*, Harmondsworth: Penguin Press.

Whitfield, L. (2005) 'Trustees of development from conditionality to governance: poverty reduction strategy papers in Ghana', *Journal of Modern African Studies* 43 (4): 641–64.

World Bank (2004) *The Poverty Reduction Strategy Initiative: an Independent Evaluation of the World Bank's Support through 2003*, Operations Evaluation Department, Washington, DC: World Bank.

The author

Edward R. Carr is an assistant professor in the Department of Geography at the University of South Carolina. His work generally focuses on understanding local strategies by which people manage economic and environmental change. It engages with issues of environmental migration, food security, gender, and development theory. Contact details: Department of Geography, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208, USA. <carr@sc.edu>