

<b>Institution: University of Kent</b>
<b>Unit of Assessment: 20</b>
<b>Title of case study: Promoting Awareness of Gender and Sexuality in Development Policy</b>
<p><b>1. Summary of the impact</b></p> <p>Dr Kate Bedford's work has demonstrated the limits of existing frameworks for addressing gender and sexuality in development policy and has had a significant impact in four main ways. First, it has supported and influenced the work of the major NGOs (including Sexuality Policy Watch, and the Bretton Woods Project/Action Aid) in holding development institutions to account on questions of gender equality. Second, it has had substantial influence on the work of transnational public bodies (including UNRISD), challenging conventional wisdom and stimulating debate among policymakers. Third, it has had considerable impact on how development practitioners are taught, in the UK and beyond. Finally, it has enjoyed a sustained influence in shaping a new area of critical public debate, improving public understanding of sexuality and development and engaging diverse international audiences. In the light of increased global attention to gender and development (evident across several leading international institutions), Bedford's research has stimulated important debate about policy orthodoxy and has directly influenced several campaigns for policy change.</p>
<p><b>2. Underpinning research</b></p> <p>Bedford has produced a large body of original research, emphasising the need to foreground considerations of gender and sexuality in development policy. The case study centres on three strands of this work: two projects undertaken entirely since Bedford's appointment to Kent (in June 2007) and one started before her arrival, with significant data analysis and further library based research undertaken at Kent to bring it to completion.</p> <p><b>a) Gender and development policy in the World Bank's post-Washington Consensus development lending (2002-2009):</b> explored the gender policies of the world's largest and most influential development institution as it embraced a reformulated approach to neoliberal economic development focusing on inclusion of the poor, strengthening institutions, and ensuring the social sustainability of structural reform. The research assessed how World Bank gender policy in Latin America had changed in light of this macroeconomic policy shift. Research involved analysis of policy and loan documents; stakeholder interviews; and fieldwork on loans in Ecuador and Argentina.</p> <p><b>b) The 'Doing Business' Initiative of the International Finance Corporation (2008-2009):</b> one of the few pieces of gender research conducted on the IFC (the private sector arm of the World Bank Group), this involved analysis of key policy reports and the Africa regional case study of women's entrepreneurship.</p> <p><b>c) The Commission on the Status of Women (2009-2010):</b> a study of this key UN policy-making body focusing on its efforts to promote equal sharing of care responsibilities between men and women. Research involved analysis of expert papers, official statements and officially agreed conclusions of the Commission's 53<sup>rd</sup> session; and interviews with 18 member state representatives, UN officials, and NGO participants.</p> <p>Taken together, this body of research demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender policy frames with apparently universal appeal (e.g. invoking sharing loving partnership between men and women) can have unintended exclusionary effects. These are most significant for the poor and racially marginalized.</li> <li>• An important shift towards prioritising increased partnership between men and women in the gender policy of the Commission and World Bank makes the need for frank discussion about</li> </ul>

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the costs and benefits of gender sharing frames especially pressing.

- Research on sexuality has a far wider significance to development practice and scholarship than has hitherto been assumed, especially in addressing how policies may reflect sexualised assumptions about gender sharing. Notably, the research extended existing scholarship beyond a focus on HIV/AIDS and reproductive health to include employment, care, and poverty policy.

### 3. References to the research

1. *Developing Partnerships: Gender, Sexuality and the Reformed World Bank* (University of Minnesota Press, 2009). 978-0-8166-6540-2. Published by leading, university publisher following anonymous peer review; positively reviewed in four leading journals; REF 2.
2. 'Gender and Institutional Strengthening: The World Bank's Policy Record'. *Contemporary Politics* 15.2 (2009) 197-214. Refereed.
3. 'Doing Business with the Ladies: Gender, Legal Reform, and Entrepreneurship in the International Finance Corporation'. *Labor, Capital and Society* 42 (2010) 1-2. Refereed.
4. *Harmonizing Global Care Policy? Care and the Commission on the Status of Women* (2010) Peer-reviewed, commissioned and partly funded by UNRISD. REF 2.

All publications were supported by a £125,000 RCUK competitively awarded fellowship (2007-12).

### 4. Details of the impact

**a) Significantly influencing the work of NGOs holding transnational development institutions to account regarding gender equality.** The research has provided significant resources, which have been relied upon by key activist and advocacy organizations to challenge conventional wisdom about development. For example:

- *Sexuality Policy Watch*. This Ford Foundation funded global forum of researchers and activists aims to contribute to sexuality-related global policy debates and to promote effective linkages between local, regional and global campaigns for policy change. In 2009 the Rio de Janeiro-based secretariat commissioned Bedford to conduct research into a gender equality initiative of the World Economic Forum (a group comprised of over 1,000 leading companies aiming to improve the world economy). The resource (source 1) was made available on the group's website and promoted in their newsletter. It is underpinned by the analytic critique of gender equality statistics and sharing models of coupledom developed in outputs 1 and 3. It highlights the transgressive uses to which gender indexes can be put by development activists, while critiquing the limited measures of women's empowerment being deployed in this instance. The resource has been used by SPW in their campaigns to challenge the gender equality policies promoted by free market institutions such as the World Economic Forum: SPW notes that it made "a wonderful contribution to this ongoing conversation [about gender equality in global economic debates] which calls attention to gaps and potential pitfalls of mainstream gender and development indicators" (foreword to source 1).

- *Bretton Woods Project/Action-Aid/Oxfam*. BWP, supported by Action Aid, is an advocacy group offering oversight of, and a campaigning role relating to, the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. It invited Bedford to write a report for non-academics to stimulate debate about the Bank's 2012 World Development Report on gender and to contribute to campaigns for a reformed approach. This report (source 2), based on outputs 1, 2 and 3, was distributed widely (including to 2,176 print subscribers and 8,321 electronic subscribers), and was regarded as a "terrific contribution" to debates on gender equality and unpaid care within development by the President of Gender Action (an international organization promoting gender justice in international financial institutions, source 3). Action Aid subsequently increased their work on unpaid care, and, in collaboration with Oxfam, hosted the London launch of the UN special rapporteur's report on unpaid care work and women's human rights, due to be submitted to the UN General Assembly in October 2013. Bedford was invited as one of three panel discussants at the official launch on the grounds that her research on the limits of gender sharing as a solution to care burdens would enable participants "to get a different perspective" (source 4).

**b) Advising global public policy bodies on sexuality and development.** Bedford's research has assisted organisations working towards poverty alleviation, enhanced social care provision, and gender equality within development. In particular, she was commissioned by the United Nations Research Institute of Social Development (UNRISD) to investigate the relevance of sexuality and diverse family formation to the 2009 meetings of the UN's Commission on the Status of Women meeting about care. The subsequent working paper (output 4) has been widely read (downloaded over 2,000 times between March 2010 and July 2013 (source 5); cited in a Human Development Report research paper for UNDP (source 6); and publicised in the International Council on Social Welfare's European region Newsletter (March 2010). The research was a key driver in pushing international bodies like UNRISD to think more seriously about the unintended exclusions that can stem from development policies that rest on sharing coupledom as a normative foundation. In May 2013 Bedford was invited to speak in Mexico at an *International Expert Meeting on Time Use and Unpaid Work*, organized by UN Women, intended to guide the institution in effective measurement of the economic value of unpaid care.

**c) Significant impact on teaching and professional practice.** In 2011, Bedford was one of 14 international experts invited to teach on the Certificate in Advanced Studies in Gender, Justice, and Globalization (University of Bern), a course for professionals in the fields of development, national and international government, teaching, and the media, where she drew heavily on outputs 1 and 4 to discuss the institutional constraints within which transnational feminist policy entrepreneurs operate. A summary of her World Bank research was also published in the Institute of Development Studies bulletin for development practitioners (source 7), and a non-academic summary of her Commission on the Status of Women research was published in the journal *Reproductive Health Matters* in 2011 (this journal, translated into seven languages, is distributed free to 3,500 individuals, groups and organisations in the Global South).

Bedford has also been invited to address and inform representatives of policy making bodies, including at a workshop on sexuality and development in Brighton (April 2008); an event on challenging the development industry in Cape Town (August 2009), and a panel on masculinities convened at the House of Commons by the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Debt, Trade and Aid (November 2009). These activities have been grounded in a long-standing relationship with the sexuality and development group at the Institute of Development Studies, a stakeholder hub that brings together development funders, policymakers, NGOs, and academics and that includes many members who campaign for policy change around gender and sexuality in development.

In May 2013, Bedford was asked to serve as one of two experts (along with the Senior International Officer for Stonewall) on the advisory board for the Sexuality, Law and Poverty segment of a four-year, £11.1 million Department For International Development (DFID) Accountable Grant given to the Institute of Development Studies (IDS). The grant will fund advice to both the UK and the global development community in seven key policy areas. The sexuality area received £1.25 million, the largest amount ever awarded by DFID to research the links between sexuality and development. Bedford's work is widely cited in the outputs produced from the stream so far (i.e. source 8), and, drawing on her research, she has advised the coordinators of the sexuality theme on several key issues, including the importance of ensuring effective links between gender research and sexuality research; the value of a legally pluralist approach to exploring norms about gender and sexuality in developing countries and the limits of mainstream policy approaches to the links between sexuality and poverty (all outputs). Particularly significant aspects of Bedford's research in her engagements with development practitioners, including those within IDS, include her analysis of the relationship between sharing coupledom and neoliberalism and her critique of assumptions that poor and racialized men are especially violent. For example, her research has been used by development practitioner and gender activist Alan Grieg (IDS) in a UN-funded project done in collaboration with local NGOs in India, Kenya, and Uganda to mobilise men to challenge gender-based violence in institutions (source 9). Bedford was consulted on the research design for this initiative and gave feedback on a draft programme evaluation, using her research to support this key example of intersectional programming on men's issues.

**d) Sustained broader influence on critical public debate.** Bedford's research has made an

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influential contribution to campaigns which have generated, shaped and informed critical public debate about sexuality and development and has improved democratic participation in such debate (including by reaching out to new stakeholders). For example, her research has been used to enhance public engagement about sexuality and development via you-tube, as part of IDS's *Pathways to Women's Empowerment* project (source 10). She initiated a policy and activist debate about economic justice and sexuality at the Barnard Center for Research on Women (see <http://bcrw.barnard.edu/publications/toward-a-vision-of-sexual-and-economic-justice>), co-organizing a public lecture (attended by over 300 people) and a colloquium bringing together people working on global economic justice and global sexual justice in late 2007. Drawing on contributions from artists, public intellectuals, and development practitioners, she co-edited a special issue of *The Scholar and the Feminist Online* (source 11) in 2008. This provides "a forum for scholars, activists, and artists whose work articulates the ever-evolving role of feminism in struggles for social justice" and is widely read (while no data is gathered on specific pages viewed, from May 2012-July 2013 the journal as a whole had 127,000 page views from 152 countries). Bedford's introduction, based partly on analysis developed in output 1, discusses the conceptual foundations for better collaboration between sexual and economic justice activism. This intervention significantly shaped the direction of subsequent work with activists. For example, the success of the initiative on sexual and economic justice led the organisers of a later event on domestic work (done in collaboration with activist groups), to centre "intimate labor" as a key mobilizing concept. It also resulted in a follow-up, 2013 initiative on gender, justice, and neoliberal transformations featuring photo and video activism on sexual violence. Again, these activities show Bedford's work as a strong influence in advancing critical debates in the area.

In sum, Bedford has worked closely and collaboratively with leading stakeholders in gender and development policy over an extended period, and has played a key, ongoing role in foregrounding and advancing recognition of the importance of attention to sexuality in its formulation. Her work has also been used by diverse activists, in many countries, who are challenging policy orthodoxy.

### 5. Sources to corroborate the impact

1. [http://www.sxpolitics.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/working\\_paper\\_kate\\_final.pdf](http://www.sxpolitics.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/10/working_paper_kate_final.pdf). SPW note the "wonderful contribution" of the research to conversations about gender equality.
2. K. Bedford. 'Gender and the World Development Report: Limits, Gaps, and Fudges.' *At Issue* update 79. <http://www.brettonwoodsproject.org/2012/02/art-569646/>, drawing heavily on the research outlined above.
3. Email dated 27/2/2012 from Elaine Zuckerman, President of Gender Action, describing the "terrific contribution" of Bedford's research to debates on gender equality within development.
4. Invitation by Rachel Moussie of Action Aid to act as a discussant at the official launch of the UN Expert Report on Unpaid Care and Women's Human Rights. On file with author.
5. E-mail dated 27/9/2013 from UNRISD Technical Team, noting the high downloads of output 4.
6. M. Desai, 2010. *Hope in Hard Times: Women's Empowerment and Human Development*. Human Development Research Paper 2010/14. UNDP, citing output 4 at 73.
7. K. Bedford. 2008. 'Holding It Together in a Crisis' *IDS Bulletin* 39.6. Invited contribution to journal widely read by development practitioners, evidencing interest in her research.
8. Waldman, Linda. 2013. *Literature Review Concept Note on Sexuality, Law and Development*. Produced for the DFID Accountable Grant, showing extensive use of Bedford's research to inform IDS' current work on sexuality, law, and development.
9. A. Greig, IDS. E-mail 9 August 2012, asking for feedback on the research questionnaire being used in a project to mobilise men to challenge gender-based violence in institutions. Evidences employment of Bedford's intersectional research approach by development practitioners.
10. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=5urqkGgAz58](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5urqkGgAz58), showing use of the research to enhance public engagement with issues relating to sexuality and development.
11. *The Scholar and the Feminist Online*. <http://bcrw.barnard.edu/publication-sections/sf-online/>. See issues 7.3 (towards a vision of sexual and economic justice); 8.1 (valuing domestic work) and 11 (gender, justice and neo-liberal transformations), showing the impact of Bedford's research on activists and artists.