

Introduction

This is the second newsletter of the ESRC Global Poverty Research Group (GPRG). One of the objectives of the Research Group is to show the value of a more multi-disciplinary approach to the analysis of poverty and well-being in developing countries. In this newsletter we report on several activities undertaken over the last six months which strive to meet that objective. One was a major conference held in March at St Catherine's College, Oxford, on the theme 'Growth, poverty reduction and human development in Africa', which brought together around 180 researchers and policy makers from around the world to discuss issues which are central to the work of the GPRG. A second conference on the theme of 'The Bottom Billion' was held in June at St Antony's College Oxford

organised by the director of the CSAE Paul Collier. This conference explored a range of issues of how conflict and governance failures, particularly in Africa, impact on the poorest of the poor. Ensuring that those working in different disciplines can come together to focus on policy issues that face poor countries is one of the key objectives of the GPRG.

Researchers within the Group have met for two workshops during the last six months and have sought to build on the collaborative work already undertaken and on which we report below. There are a range of new and exciting research directions which are emerging from this collaboration. These include joint work on Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), alternative disciplinary approaches to researching life-histories and the role of

experimental approaches in social science research. These new developments build on the extensive research work already undertaken on themes of measuring well-being and investigating the roles of social and human capital in assessing welfare changes in poor societies.

There have been two changes of personnel within the Group. John Toye who was responsible for setting up the Group with David Hulme has retired and Francis Teal from the CSAE will now be the Oxford based co-Director of the Group. We are fortunate in having been able to appoint David Clark and he will be working on several of the themes of the Research Group based at IDPM in Manchester.

David Hulme *University of Manchester*
Francis Teal *University of Oxford*

Africa Commission

The Director of the CSAE, Professor Paul Collier, has been appointed as a senior advisor to the Africa Commission. The Commission was set up by Tony Blair to help drive forward Africa's development. It will publish a report in spring 2005, which will make recommendations to the G8, the European Union, other wealthy countries, and to African countries. In early October the Commission met in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia where commissioners agreed to publish their early ideas in a consultation document.

Over the next two months they will be collecting reactions and more new ideas before they write their report. The highlights of the consultation include a series of major events in Africa, public discussion in the UK

with civil society and Diaspora groups and an e-consultation over the Commission website.

In November, African trade experts from government, business and civil society will join members of the Commission at a consultation event co-hosted by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in Addis Ababa. Discussions will focus on a range of issues including fairer market access and the reduction of trade barriers. There are also five regional consultation events taking place across Africa during December in Senegal, Kenya, Cameroon, Zambia and Egypt. Each event will be an opportunity to contribute feedback on the early ideas of the Commission.

The Africa Commission website is at <http://www.commissionforafrica.org/>

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Insuring Ugandan coffee farmers - *by Ruth Hill*

Coffee production in Uganda, like so much commodity crop production in low income countries, is concentrated amongst poor smallholders, with little access to formal or informal means of insuring themselves. Liberalisation of the domestic marketing arrangements for coffee in the early 1990s, as in other developing country commodity markets, enhanced market competitiveness, allowing producers to receive a larger share of the export price, but also increased the extent to which fluctuations in the international price for coffee are passed on to producers.

Prior to market liberalisation farmers sold their harvested coffee to a primary cooperative society if they belonged to one, or to a private buyer. Coffee was then hulled and sold to the Coffee Marketing Board (CMB), which in turn would grade and export it. The CMB was the sole buyer and exporter of Ugandan Robusta until the beginning of the 1990s. The price at which coffee was purchased was set by the government during the budget presentation annually in June and it remained in force for the rest of the season, irrespective of the price movements on the international coffee

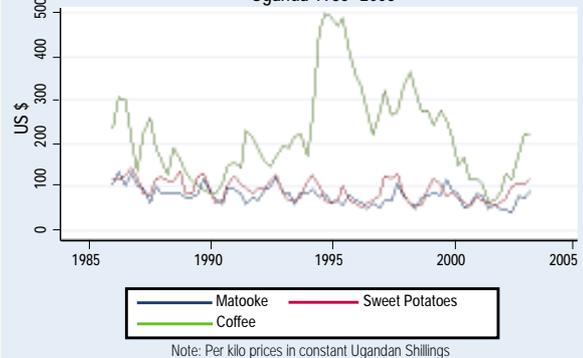
markets. While the farmers' price was relatively stable, the share of the international price they received was very low. In the early 1990s, liberalisation of the coffee sector in Uganda was carried out quickly and efficiently, allowing many private local and international exporters to compete for market share in Uganda. The increased competition that resulted caused producer prices to increase sharply as the share of the border price farmer received increased from a mere 12.88% to 56.25% (see figure 1). The removal of fixed prices by the CMB has also exposed the coffee sub-sector to the vagaries of the volatile international price movements. Figure 2 shows how the price of coffee has become more volatile with respect to staple crop prices since liberalisation.

Research has been conducted by Ruth Hill at the CSAE to investigate the extent to which international coffee price fluctuations affect prices faced by farmers in Uganda and their vulnerability to price volatility in the marketing chain. The effect of uninsured price and yield risk

Figure 1: International and Domestic Coffee Price Uganda 1994 -2003



Figure 2: Coffee and Staple Crop Price Uganda 1986 -2003



on production activities of coffee farmers was also analysed. Data was collected at all levels of the market chain. Surveys of 300 coffee farmers, 100 traders and processors, and a census of 30 coffee exporters were conducted in early 2003 in collaboration with the Uganda Bureau of Statistics with funding from the World Bank.

The description of the coffee sector that the data allows suggests exporters and producers find themselves most at risk from price fluctuations and as a result have a need for hedging instruments. However, in contrast to exporters, farmers do not have hedging instruments at their disposal to protect against sudden price falls. As a result, 90% of farmers said that over the three years prior to the survey they had found themselves unable to buy something they needed because of a low coffee price. Likewise, over a third of farmers that had taken loans in the three years prior to the survey had been prevented from paying back their loans because of low coffee prices.



UNIDO training workshop

The Collection and Analysis of African Firm Data

Estimates of unmet demand for price protection among farmers were large. Data on risk preferences and price expectations were used to estimate demand for a scheme that would offer a minimum price guarantee for coffee farmers whilst allowing them to take full advantage of price fluctuations. We found that at reasonable prices (a premium of 10-20% of the value) more than three-quarters of farmers would demand price protection. These results are corroborated by other data collected on the desirability of price protection products. Coffee farmers in Uganda have little access to credit and insurance markets.

Existing research shows that in the face of imperfectly functioning credit and insurance markets farmers are resourceful in finding other means of insuring themselves, but these methods are often costly and available only to richer households. Research also tells us that when households are unable to insure against income shocks a household's preference for risk and ability to deal with risk will affect the production choices it makes. This suggests volatile prices and limited insurance markets in Uganda will result in a farmer's ability to deal with price volatility affecting the amount of resources allocated to coffee production. Indeed, data analysis shows that other things being equal, farmers who are more risk averse and less able to deal with yield and price volatility (i.e. poorer farmers) devote a smaller share of their resources to coffee production, opting instead to reduce the income risk they face by increasing production of low risk activities at the cost of low return.

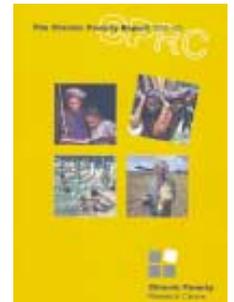


In March 2004 the CSAE organised a five-day training workshop, entitled 'The Collection and Analysis of African Firm Data', for eleven civil servants and development practitioners from Algeria, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. The purpose of the workshop, funded by UNIDO, was to give training on the collection and analysis of data on African manufacturing firms, and to give guidance on how to present research to policy makers and other parties of interest. The course, for which Francis Teal, Måns Söderbom and Neil Rankin were jointly responsible, consisted of four lectures, four computer classes and one seminar. The lectures discussed issues of measuring firm performance, technical aspects of analysing firm-level data and policy implications from empirical evidence and analysis. The computer classes provided hands-on training in the use of data on Africa's industrial sector. As part of the course, participants were asked to research a specific policy-relevant topic using the firm-level data, and to present the findings to the rest of the group in a seminar. Drawing on the skills acquired in the workshop, some of the participants are currently involved in an enterprise survey being conducted in Nigeria during November and December 2004, along with Neil Rankin and Adeel Malik from the CSAE.



Chronic Poverty Report 2004-2005

The Chronic Poverty Report 2004-05 was launched at the House of Commons in London on 12 May 2004. The Report examines what chronic poverty is and why it matters, who the chronically poor are, where they live, what causes poverty to be persistent and what should be done about it. A section of regional perspectives looks at the experience of chronic poverty in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, transitional countries and China. A statistical appendix brings together data on global trends on chronic poverty.



Between 300 and 420 million people globally are trapped in chronic poverty, experiencing deprivation over many years and will often pass their poverty to their children. The Report's concern about chronic poverty leads to a focus on poverty dynamics - the changes in well-being or ill-being that individuals and households experience over time.

Speaking at the launch, Chancellor Gordon Brown said, "I want to congratulate the Chronic Poverty Research Centre. This report is a landmark report. It is a challenge to any complacency, it is a call for change and it is a demand for urgent action."

Hilary Benn noted that "The chronically poor are those who are last in the queue to benefit from development; last in the queue to benefit from the Millennium Development Goals." He described the Chronic Poverty Report as "A mine of information...and also a call for action".

The Chronic Poverty Report 2004-05 is downloadable from www.chronicpoverty.org. For copies of the report, more information or to discuss the findings, email cprc@devinit.org

Elgar Companion to Development Studies

David Clark is in the process of completing the manuscript for the much-anticipated *Elgar Companion to Development Studies*, which is due to be published by Edward Elgar towards the end of next year. The original goal was to produce an encyclopaedia or reference book that covers not just development economics but development studies broadly defined. Contributors, however, have been left with a great deal of latitude to express their own viewpoint and to focus on the issues and questions that - in their view - really matter from a development standpoint. In some cases this has involved making trade-offs between summarising core issues for readers and advancing an intellectual position. In our view this is a worthwhile trade off, which preserves intellectual freedom and spurs academic vigour and ingenuity. This, in turn, should give the book a unique place among

existing encyclopaedias and handbooks.

The volume consists of approximately 140 contributions from an international panel of experts who discuss theoretical, ethical and practical issues relating to economic, social, cultural, institutional, political and human aspects of development in poor countries. The book also includes a small selection of intellectual biographies of leading post war development thinkers, including Peter Bauer, Ester Boserup, Mahbub ul Haq, Simon Kuznets, Arthur Lewis, Gunnar Myrdal, Douglas North, Raul Prebisch, Hans Singer, Dudley Seers, Amartya Sen, Paul Streeten and Jan Tinbergen.

Several papers in the book directly relate to poverty, well-being and human development themes and will be of particular interest to those who follow GPRG's work. These papers include



Basic Needs Approach, Capability Approach, Characteristics of Poverty, Chronic Poverty, Development Ethics, Famine, Globalisation, Human Development, Human Development Index, Income Distribution, Inequality in Global Terms, Least Developed Countries, Poverty and Growth, Social Capital, Social Exclusion, Social Justice amongst many others.

Social Protection for Chronic Poverty Conference *Risk, Needs, and Rights – Protecting What? How?*

This conference will be held on 23-24 February 2005 and hosted by the Institute for Development Policy and Management, University of Manchester. It aims to address three main questions:

- What are the roles of risks, rights, and needs in understanding chronic poverty and its remedies?
- What works, and does not work, in reducing chronic poverty in developed and developing countries?
- What are the political economy conditions required for sustainable anti-chronic poverty interventions?

There is an emerging consensus around the view that social protection provides an effective policy framework addressing rising poverty and vulnerability in developing countries. This is evident from statements by multilateral organisations, bilateral donors, international NGOs and

increasingly by governments and national bodies in developing countries. Agreement on the need for social protection is welcomed, but a number of key issues remain in need of clarification, including its conceptual grounding, instruments, and conditions. Whether social protection can effectively address chronic poverty will depend, to an important extent, on how these issues are resolved. This conference aims to contribute to an improved understanding of these issues from the perspective of chronic poverty. Chronic poverty is understood

as income or capability poverty persisting over time, or even a lifetime, and being passed on to the next generation.

There will be a report on this conference in the next GPRG newsletter.

More details are available at: <http://www.sed.manchester.ac.uk/idpm/news/#protection>



Growth, Poverty Reduction and Human Development in Africa Conference

The 2004 CSAE International Conference 'Growth, poverty reduction and human development in Africa' was held at St Catherine's College on 21-22 March. A generous grant from the Department for International Development enabled us to fully fund a large number of participants from developing countries. A plenary session was held on the final day with Jim Robinson (Berkeley), Tim Besley (LSE), Dany Kaufman (World Bank), and Marcel Fafchamps (Oxford) speaking on 'Trust, government and markets'. The keynote speech was on 'Issues pertaining to health and HIV in sub-Saharan Africa' given by Mark Gersovitz from Johns Hopkins University.

There were 100 papers presented in five parallel sessions over the two days and the presentations covered practically every topic related to poverty and human development. The conference was organised around six themes or tracks which participants could follow: (1) Agrarian Issues - including work on child labour; (2) Firms - their performance and impact on poverty; (3) Human Capital - including work on AIDS and access to health care; (4) Macro Questions - covering work on the impact of aid and public spending on growth; (5) Poverty - its multi-dimensionality, measurement and the role of growth in its reduction; and (6) Risk - how shocks affect welfare and the role of networks in enabling poor families to insure themselves.

One paper given at the conference - '*Growth and Poverty Reduction in Uganda, 1992-1999: A Multi-dimensional Analysis of Changes in Living Standards*', by Stephen Younger - was directly concerned with issues central to the research focus of the GPRG. His paper examined Uganda's progress in poverty reduction when poverty is measured in multiple dimensions. He considered poverty measures defined across household expenditures per capita or household assets, children's health status, and in some cases, mother's literacy. In general, he found that multidimensional poverty declined significantly in Uganda

during the 1990s, although results for the latter half of the decade are more ambiguous.

Another paper focusing on issues related to GPRG research themes was a paper by Bereket Kebede using household level panel data from a rural survey of fifteen villages in the major farming systems of Ethiopia for the period 1995-97 to investigate how Peasant Associations (PAs) allocated land. The paper finds that the 'allocation rule', which takes productive capacity of households into account, departs from achieving an equitable distribution of land, which was

the main thrust of the land reform programme. After two decades of distribution and redistributions, the land holding system exhibits a relatively high level of inter- and intra-regional inequality. This is captured by the high inequality indices - Gini coefficient, Theil's entropy index and logarithms of variance - for land distribution in and between the fifteen survey villages.

The papers given at the conference are on the CSAE conference website at <http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/conferences/>



Socio-economics of tenancy among poor people in India - *by Wendy Olsen*

Wendy Olsen has completed the first stage of a project about socio-economic study of rural land use in India. Her work covers rural labouring, roles of men and women, strategies of households, relationships with landlords, and institutions surrounding the renting of land and water in south Indian villages.

The first stage involved a review of overlaps between the sociology of economic life, and the economics of tenancy where it was discovered that the sociology of power in rural labour markets is closely related to the economic study of power between the landlord and tenant in rural land markets. Both circles of researchers agree that the labour and land issues are linked.

Institutionalism offers two insights into this sort of political/economic scene. First, the contracts - usually verbal - involve both parties in voluntary transactions. However, the weaker party may be forced into accepting a particular contract, such as a bonded labour contract or a 'first-call' on their labour in peak seasons. Wendy Olsen is currently revisiting the existing literature on Indian rural labouring to see how things are changing in this interesting area. Strong seasonality, shortage of water, and inequality are persistent features of India's rural upland areas, near Bangalore, where the fieldwork will be carried out. Little appears to have changed structurally in this area since the previous research Wendy did (in teams) in the mid 1980s and mid 1990s.

The second insight comes from old institutionalism. People get used to their habits and customs. Changing habits requires an injection of creative energy or a conflict. Numerous examples in the literature show women trying to change the gender division of labour - and hitting resistance from traditionalists. In the case of renting in land, it is hard for a woman to take the credit for being a tenant. Usually it is the household that is seen as being a tenant and as household heads are usually male, so there is a male-biased

traditional view. Bina Agarwal's book *A Field of One's Own* (Cambridge, 1995) made this point.

In India, female household heads are more likely to be poor than male household heads. Yet women in the poorest deciles of the income distribution often have greater public visibility and mobility than do middle class women. Low social status is associated with greater freedom in labour markets - except for that sticky



gender division of labour. Women are banned from ploughing the mud and from driving the bullock cart or plough in many parts of South India. Superstitions abound about what would happen if women broke this old tradition. The division of labour is in the background of the current research.

This research explores the rigid and the flexible parts of the institutions and habits surrounding tenancy. We know that men and women both participate in labour practices on rented land, and we know they share the proceeds. What contracts they use is a more open question.

So far, two types of change in tenancy-related contracts are emerging - though fieldwork in two villages will take place much later in the project, and new insights are sure to emerge. Firstly, there is a move toward commercialisation of the tenancy agreement, rather than crop-sharing. Fixed rents in rupees tend to split risk differently than crop-sharing does. Money rents are also likely to be handled mainly by men in most Hindu

castes. Muslim women are unlikely to engage in tenancy activities at all.

Secondly, there is a change toward getting into debt before you even have a crop out of the ground. If you want to borrow money from the bank, in India you can sometimes use the crop as a sort of mobile collateral. However if you borrow from private moneylenders, you pay much higher interest and the moneylender then has your household tied to his household. The tying may involve obligations to do labouring - often women's labouring, like cleaning up after cows or washing the dishes - or it may involve the

obligation to sell your own crop (which comes from your little plot of rented land) to the lender. Whether merchant or landlord, this lender has a strong market position. Whilst the description is schematic, the relations of poor and rich are persistently unequal. Therefore linked land, money and labour markets may be a site of the perpetuation of poverty.

The research question for the next stage of the project is whether household strategies actively engage the poor people in either changing contracts, or in challenging landlords' power, so that their livelihoods are improved.

The methods will be mixed. The team is currently looking at national secondary data, examining tenancy and productivity in the context of religious, state, and poverty-level differences. Some tenants are non-poor but our focus is mainly on the poorer ones or those exiting from poverty. We then intend to conduct a long-term follow up study of social mobility, based upon existing data from the 1980s for 120 households. We will be recording which tenants moved up the income distribution, which are deprived, which have migrated out or - much more rarely - into the arid dryland area of upland India, and which are using which contracts.

Finally Wendy Olsen will be involved directly in interviews with selected people from the same households. The material will thus have a case-study feel, with a survey plus interview and life history for many households (about 30). Part of this material may take a household-history approach, time permitting. A household history would consist of 2-3 person's narratives about their family history and their household.

The last stage of the research will involve close discussion with numerous farmers about their contractual arrangements for agricultural activities. We will explore changing institutions and contracts, taking tenancy to start with but looking also at inter-linkage of markets.

There are numerous precedents for doing such research, but they tend to come from anthropology and they usually have a whole-economy angle not a poverty focus. This research will keep a close 'poverty and well-being' focus. The research will value and voice peoples' strategies and habits. Like Pierre Bourdieu's book *Acts of Resistance* (Polity, 1998), the write-up will look at transposing what we learn from the India surveys into relevant points that are coherent to a wide range of listeners/ readers. Thus 'do women influence labouring contracts?', 'do individuals dissent from household strategies for livelihood improvement?', 'what discourses do different classes of people use with respect to their use of resources?' are the kind of questions that this research can address.

The results will be published in small parts taking each component of the research separately. However it may be possible to compile various learnings into a larger piece since there is so much primary data available. One earlier study dataset by Wendy Olsen and team has been deposited in the ESRC data archive (www.data-archive.essex.ac.uk). Similarly, the new dataset including survey data and interview transcripts, translated, will be deposited as usual so that others can take further the interpretations that are made of these data.

Recent publications from this research and related research:

Olsen, W. K. (2004). *Methodological Triangulation and Realist Research: An Indian Exemplar*. In B. Carter, and Caroline New (Ed.), *Making Realism Work: Realist Social Theory and Empirical Research (Chapter 6)*. London: Routledge (Taylor & Francis)

- (2003). 'Triangulation, Time, and the Social Objects of Econometrics'. In P. Downard (Ed.), *Applied Economics and the Critical Realist Critique*. London: Routledge.

Olsen, W. K., Thandie Hara, and Sampson Edusah (2003). 'Questionnaires in Realist Research: A Case Study of Rural Small-Scale Industry in Ghana'. In P. Downard (Ed.), *Applied Economics and the Critical Realist Critique*. London: Routledge.

GPRG meeting 29-30 June

The sixth GPRG meeting was held at St Antony's College on 29-30 June, timed to coincide with the Bottom Billion conference to which GPRG members were invited.

There were three sessions in the GPRG meeting - the first *Conceptualising and measuring well-being* was led by discussant Geeta Kingdon and included two papers: *Concepts and perceptions of human well-being* by David Clark and *Subjective well-being, isolation and rivalry* by Marcel Fafchamps.

In session two, Abigail Barr presented her paper with Marcel Fafchamps *A client-community assessment of the NGO sector in Uganda*. There was also an opportunity for David Hulme to present work on the first global Chronic Poverty Report - see separate news item Page 3.

The third session focussed on livelihood dynamics in Zimbabwe and Admos Chimhowu presented the paper *Livelihood dynamics in planned and spontaneous resettlement in Hurungwe District, Zimbabwe: Converging and vulnerable*, written with David Hulme. This was followed by a discussion led by Wendy Olsen on research and collaboration plans for the next six to twelve months.



The Bottom Billion

One of the major challenges facing those working in development is the growing gap between the fast growing developing world and the slow growing.

By the 1990s the poorest regions of the world were South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. As the table shows, these two regions were performing much less well than East Asia - dominated in the table by China as the growth rates are weighted by population. Within these two poor regions it is also apparent that sub-Saharan Africa is performing by far the worse. This growing dispersion within the developing world was an important part of the rationale for the 'Bottom Billion' conference organised by the CSAE in June this year, supported by DfID and the World Bank. Explicitly multi-disciplinary in approach, it brought together economists, political scientists and policy makers to address the questions which arise from preventing the poorest falling further behind. Clearly one characteristic of many failing states is conflict, so several of the papers addressed the question as to how conflict could be prevented and the factors that increased the risk of civil war. Issues of governance are a central theme of GPRG activities.

Decadal Growth Rates by Region: Real GDP per capita in US\$ (1996 PPP)

	1960s	1970s	1980s	1990s	Average
Australasia	2.95	1.32	1.49	2.27	1.98
East Asia	6.29	2.92	5.23	7.28	5.33
Industrial	4.57	2.61	2.44	1.81	2.77
Latin America	3.21	3.39	-0.68	1.63	1.67
Middle-East	5.54	0.84	1.09	3.28	2.24
South Asia	2.28	0.69	3.61	3.51	2.70
South-East Asia	2.34	4.80	3.27	2.50	3.21
Sub-Saharan Africa	1.67	0.27	-0.37	0.18	0.27
Average	3.23	2.27	3.06	3.76	3.12

Source: PENN World Tables 6.1. Countries are weighted by population.

The papers given at the conference are available on the CSAE conference website at <http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/conferences/>

CSAE working papers can be downloaded from
www.csae.ox.ac.uk

CPRC working papers can be downloaded from
www.chronicpoverty.org

The GPRG website is at
<http://www.gprg.org/>

and includes an extensive outline of current research as well as links to both the Centre for the Study of African Economies and the Institute for Development Policy and Management.

New working papers

Rational and biased trust, *Abigail Barr CSAE WPS/2004-22*

A client-community assessment of the NGO sector in Uganda, *Abigail Barr and Marcel Fafchamps CSAE WPS/2004-23*

Wages and reciprocity in the workplace, *Abigail Barr and Pieter Serneels CSAE WPS/2004-18*

The resources and governance of non-governmental organizations in Uganda, *Abigail Barr, Marcel Fafchamps and Trudy Owens CSAE WPS/2004-06*

Military expenditure in post-conflict societies, *Paul Collier and Anke Hoefler CSAE WPS/2004-13*

When can school inputs improve test scores?, *Jishnu Das, Stefan Dercon, James Habyarimana, Pramila Krishnan CSAE WPS/2004-25*

Wages and labour management in African manufacturing, *Marcel Fafchamps and Måns Söderbom CSAE WPS/2004-02*

Survival and success among African manufacturing firms, *Alan Harding, Måns Söderbom and Francis Teal CSAE WPS/2004-05*

Community, comparisons and subjective well-being in a divided society, *Geeta G. Kingdon and John Knight CSAE WPS/2004-21*

The influence of ill health on chronic and transient poverty: Evidence from Uganda, *David Lawson CPRC WP41*

Production changes in Ghana cocoa farming households under market reforms, *Francis Teal and Marcella Vigneri CSAE WPS/2004-16*