Social policy

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The development of social policy as a discipline is associated with the emergence of welfare states in European countries. This reading guide provides the user with some key texts and narrative. The development of European countries involved the progressive extension of rights – civil rights in the 18th century, political rights in the 19th century, and social rights in the 20th century (Marshall 1950). Social policy studies the institutions which secure social rights as an intrinsic dimension of citizenship.

In low and middle income countries, the role and scope of social policy follows from Drèze and Sen's distinction between growth-mediated and support-led development strategies. The former poses a trade-off between social policy and economic growth; while the latter rejects this trade-off and argues that social policy is essential to economic development.

Marmot's research into the social determinants of health demonstrates the close connection between inequality and public health, providing a rationale for the role of social policy in advancing health outcomes, and by implication growth and development. Lund provides an insider's account and a critical reflection on the processes leading up to the adoption of the Child Support Grant. It is a useful case study of building social policy in a development context. In the last decade, middle income countries have rapidly expanded provision of social transfers to address poverty and vulnerability, and the challenges in low income country settings are further discussed by Barrientos.

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Readings

Marshall, T. H., (1950) Citizenship and Social Class. *In:* Marshall, T. H. (ed.) *Citizenship and Social Class and Other Essays.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Abridged version at:
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Drèze, J. & Sen, A., (1991) Public Action for Social Security: Foundations and Strategy. *In:* Ahmad, E., Drèze, J., Hills, J. & Sen, A. (eds.) *Social Security in Developing Countries.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 3-40. Access can be negotiated at:
http://www.oxfordscholarship.com/view/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198233008.001.0001/acprof-9780198233008

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Barrientos, A. (2009) Introducing basic social protection in low income countries: Lessons from existing programmes. In P. Townsend (ed.) *Building Decent Societies: Rethinking the Role of Social Security in Development*. London: Palgrave and ILO, pp. 253-273. Free download as a working paper at: http://www.bwpi.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/publications/working_papers/bwpi-wp-0607.pdf

Gough, I. (2013) Social policy regimes in the developing world. In P. Kennett, (ed.) *A Handbook of Comparative Social Policy*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, pp. 205-224
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Discussion questions

What does Marshall understand by social rights? How do citizenship and rights connect to social policy?

Drèze and Sen distinguish between a growth-mediated development strategy and a support-led development strategy. How relevant is this distinction to understanding the role and scope of social policy in developing countries?

What is the relationship between health and inequality? What are the implications for designing social policy in a development context?

What are the main factors explaining the adoption of the Child Support Grant in South Africa? What are the implications for extending social policy in developing countries?

What are the main challenges associated with the adoption and implementation of social transfers in low income countries? What key information might be needed to guide social policy in low income countries?