



RESEARCH
FOR SOCIAL
CHANGE



“UNRISD stands for more than the UN Research Institute for Social Development. Over the course of four decades, UNRISD has also come to stand for path-breaking ideas, innovative approaches and new thinking. By examining the social dimensions of global challenges, UNRISD helps ensure that the issue of people’s security is always in our line of sight. And in the process, it truly has helped to shape a vision of a better world for all.”

Juan Somavia, *Director-General, International Labour Organization*

“UNRISD = United Nations Refuge for Integrity, Solidarity and Development. Thank you, UNRISD, for these 40 years. And survive...the future is yours! With much love.”

Johan Galtung, *Director, Transcend: A Peace and Development Network*

“In a period when all too much social science research has either succumbed to pressures to conform, or lost itself in confusion, the work of UNRISD stands out because of its clarity, commitment and creativity. I look forward to each new publication from UNRISD, because it raises new issues and even explores old ground in an insightful way.”

Jayati Ghosh, *Professor of Economics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, India*

The **United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)** is an autonomous agency engaging in multidisciplinary research on the social dimensions of contemporary problems affecting development. Its work is guided by the conviction that, for effective development policies to be formulated, an understanding of the social and political context is crucial. The Institute attempts to provide governments, development agencies, grassroots organizations and scholars with a better understanding of how development policies and processes of economic, social and environmental change affect different social groups. Working through an extensive network of national research centres, UNRISD aims to promote original research and strengthen research capacity in developing countries. Current areas of research include: Civil Society and Social Movements; Democracy, Governance and Human Rights; Identities, Conflict and Cohesion; Social Policy and Development; and Technology, Business and Society.



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FOREWORD

Since the creation in 1963 of the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), the world has experienced profound changes through decolonization, urbanization, industrialization, democratization and globalization. Over this period, UNRISD has played an important role in mobilizing research capacity to assess and understand the economic, social, cultural and political causes and implications of these processes—in particular the question of why poverty and violent conflict continue to afflict so much of humanity. It has engaged researchers from developing and developed countries alike in the global pursuit of improving our understanding of social development issues. And it has made a significant contribution to the preparation for United Nations conferences and summits and their follow-up processes.

Throughout those 40 years, UNRISD research has been characterized by a focus on people-centred

policies and critical questioning of certain aspects of modernization and economic development. This approach has proved indispensable for understanding how market-based strategies and economic growth need to be complemented by institutions that protect and empower the disadvantaged, and promote equality and social justice. The Institute's current work, on patterns of development that are economically viable, socially inclusive and democratically based, is particularly relevant to the ongoing efforts of the United Nations system to promote sustainable development, poverty reduction and good governance.

The status of UNRISD, as an autonomous organization that can engage freely in independent thinking, allows it consistently to address sensitive issues, scrutinize mainstream policies and approaches to development, and propose innovative solutions. As such, it is a highly valuable asset to the United Nations family.



Kofi A. Annan
Secretary-General
United Nations

PREFACE

When UNRISD was created in 1963 on the initiative of the government of the Netherlands, there was growing concern that rapid economic growth was generating very uneven social development. Today similar concerns persist, not so much in relation to high economic growth—which has proved elusive—but in relation to rapid technological change and globalization. While there have been important shifts in perspective about how the contradictions of development should be dealt with, the broad normative agenda introduced with the creation of the United Nations remains as relevant now as it was over 50 years ago. The core elements of this agenda—welfare, equity and human rights—have guided UNRISD research over four decades.

The Institute has deployed its limited resources to bring to the United Nations and policy makers the knowledge generated in many of the world's research centres on the complexities and different approaches associated with these fundamental goals. It has also sought to bridge the gap between research and policy by persuading researchers of the importance of policy makers' concerns, and insisting that policy makers respect the integrity of

the research process and the search for alternative ways of addressing pressing social problems.

As an autonomous entity within the United Nations system, the Institute's governance structure has allowed it great flexibility to interact with a broad range of institutions and actors, and the freedom to decide on research themes, choose methodologies, select researchers and identify publication outlets. One remarkable feature of the Institute's 40-year history is the sheer number and diversity of researchers that have contributed to its work. A major attraction of UNRISD has been not only the opportunity to serve the United Nations, but also the openness and seriousness of the Institute's intellectual agenda. Researchers have felt that they could contribute to addressing this agenda without compromising their intellectual and scientific integrity.

In this report, we paint a picture of "UNRISD at 40" through a substantive presentation of the Institute's research agenda over the years. We hope that readers will find the volume suitably commemorative—but, more importantly, that they will derive new understandings of our contributions

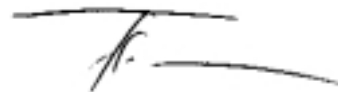
to social development thinking and debates in six areas: social policy and well-being; social cohesion and conflict; sustainable development; democratization, civil society and governance; gender and development; and markets, business and regulation.

In an overview report of this nature it is impossible to reflect in its entirety the vast amount of research that has been organized in connection with UNRISD projects that span four decades. For reasons of space alone, we cannot cite all the papers, books and authors. But I would like to take this opportunity to thank the several thousand researchers and writers from academic, civil society and policy-making institutions who have contributed to the Institute's studies, workshops and conferences.

The success of UNRISD and the networks of researchers associated with it would not have been possible without the support and commitment of successive UNRISD Boards, whose composition over the years has underscored the Institute's truly international nature. Because UNRISD has no endowment fund or fixed allotment from the

regular budget of the United Nations, it relies on voluntary contributions from a core group of donor governments and a number of private grant-giving bodies. Over the years these donors have shown faith in UNRISD by allowing it to exercise full intellectual autonomy. I would like to express my gratitude for the generosity of these donors and for their trust in UNRISD.

I have been privileged to serve as Director of the Institute since 1998. I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to thank United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan for appointing me to this post. I would also like to acknowledge the guidance and engagement of those who have served on the UNRISD Board during my tenure, and the commitment and loyalty of the Institute's staff.



Thandika Mkandawire
Director

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