



Incorporating Gender into Research on Labour Law in the Global South

Professor Deirdre McCann, Durham Law School
deirdre.mccann@durham.ac.uk

 @ProfMcCann
 @UnacceptableFoW

Gender Equality in International Development Workshop
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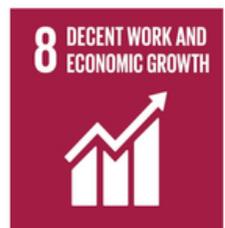
The Decent Work Regulation Project

- The DWR Project responds to **UN SDG8**: inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and **decent work for all**.
- **Challenge:** to find **innovative regulatory strategies** that can effectively achieve **decent work**, especially in Low and Middle Income Countries (LMICs).
- In response to this challenge, the DWR Project supports a set of linked **research and policy activities** towards understanding and improving **labour market regulation** across the world.

**Decent
Work
Regulation**



 **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**



Unacceptable Forms of Work (2017-18)

ESRC/GCRF Strategic Network on Legal Regulation of Unacceptable Forms of Work (UFW)

- Global network that includes more than 60 research and policy bodies in 20 countries across the world
- UFW: 9 Research Agendas on regulatory challenges that are present in both the global North and South



UFW: Global Dialogue / Local Innovation (2018)

- Casual work (e.g. “day labour”, “zero hours contracts”, “on-call work”)
- Forced labour
- Informal employment
- Violence and harassment in certain jobs and sectors, including in the care sector and in domestic work
- Weak enforcement of labour standards

Decent Work Regulation in Africa (2018-19): Regional Network-Building

- Centred on **effective regulatory strategies** for decent work in the in **southern Africa**, with a particular focus on the **garment sector**.
- Funded by Durham University through the HEFCE/GCRF, the Project was a **collaboration** between Durham University, the University of Cape Town and York University.



- DWR-Africa established a **regional network of researchers and stakeholders** in southern Africa, conducted **research** on challenges to **labour law enforcement** in the region, and generated recommendations for **research and regulatory policy**.

Decent Work Regulation in Africa (2018-19): Global Impact



- **Lesotho:** focus on **work-life and gender dynamics** and how these relate to informality in – or are associated with – the **garment sector**.
- Some of the research findings are reflected in our **documentary** on life in the garment sector in Lesotho and South Africa. The film - ***Rethabile's Story***, directed by Darren Hutchinson - was launched at the UN in Geneva (July 2019).

- **Global impact:** International Labour Office (ILO); Lesotho Labour Commissioner; Apparel Manufacturers of South Africa, ILO Pretoria, and by trade unions across the region (Swaziland, Madagascar, Uganda, Zimbabwe, Ethiopia. Lesotho: Labour Code reform; national-level Framework for a Decent Work Training Programme.



Labour/Data Justice (2019-21)

- **New stage:** focus on the design and implementation of **regulatory frameworks** that respond to the **digitisation of working life**.
- **First phase:** investigation of novel law-centred initiatives to secure **decent work for domestic workers in Mexico**. **Focus:** rapid **digitisation** of the sector and the challenges it poses for labour/data justice.



- **Domestic work:** vital source of female employment and a site of **regulatory experimentation**.
- Highly relevant in terms of **gender equality and social justice**.
- **Aim:** to generate findings and recommendations that can contribute to **policy and legal reform in Mexico**, as well as to **international initiatives**.

Legal Regulation of Working Time

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 Shaped by the past, creating the future

Decent Work for Domestic Workers: Equality and Legal Protection

Dr Deirdre McCann (Durham Law School)
Dr Jill Murray (La Trobe University)

Across the globe, domestic work is characterised by working hours that are both extremely long and highly unpredictable. Domestic workers are employed by private households to provide work that includes cleaning, cooking and caring for children and other family members. They may be needed during the night or at very short notice, especially when they are care workers. Yet, traditionally, domestic workers have been excluded from labour laws, leaving them open to abuse.

The research programme on Decent Work for Domestic Workers has investigated how new laws can be designed to regulate working hours in domestic work. An original conceptual framework for the regulation of working time in domestic work and a Model Law that can be drawn upon by policy actors to design legislation and collective agreements, have been proposed.

The research has informed global policy debates on domestic work and has been integrated into international treaties and national legislation, including in Australia, Nicaragua, the Philippines and Thailand.

Contributions have been made towards ensuring safe and decent working hours for domestic workers, improving the lives of working women, and designing new regulatory techniques suited to the informal economies of low-income countries.

"Dr McCann's study has been indispensable to the ILO. It shaped the international standards and is influencing ILO policy at the international level and in countries across the world."

Manuela Torres
Director, Labour Protection Department
International Labour Organization

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