

Science, Technology and Inequality: an old challenge in a new guise



ResIST Meeting, Rio de Janeiro
17-20 January 2007

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Replacing Peter Healey



What are ResIST's goals?



ResIST aims to understand processes that contribute to the increase of inequalities *through* S&T but also which contribute to the mitigation of inequalities *through* S&T

ResIST wants to root its work in affected communities, groups, and networks

ResIST grounds its work on case studies and comparisons between groups, countries, regions around the world [including Southern Africa, Latin America, Europe]

ResIST basics



ResIST = **R**esearching **I**nequality *through* **S**cience and **T**echnology

⌘ April 2006 – March 2009

⌘ €1.3m specific targeted research project

⌘ *Citizens and governance in a knowledge-based society* (priority 7) of FP6

⌘ 11 partners from 10 countries

⌘ Martin Institute at Oxford University coordinating

ResIST team



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**Scientific
and
Technological
Change**



Inequality

Why Inequality?



- ⌘ We recognise that inequality is a complex and multidimensional issue
- ⌘ We don't start with the proposition that inequality is always bad and the obligation to remediate it is always an overwhelming social obligation
- ⌘ However, we do believe that major inequalities are a significant cause of personal unhappiness, social injustice and political instability
- ⌘ Because of this there is an obligation to scrutinise all governance systems & look at scope for more socially inclusive policies

Why S&T?



- ⌘ The most pervasive and obdurate sources of social distribution are enshrined and entrenched in S&T systems
- ⌘ Because of their entrenchment these sources are often seen as technical and thus overlooked & seen to be beyond the scope of social science analysis

Forms of inequality related to S&T



⌘ Structural inequality

⌘ Representational inequality

⌘ Distributional inequality

Why now?



- ⌘ The Global knowledge economy gives such issues more general salience
 - ⊞ emergence of China, India, Brazil as global players in S&T
 - ⊞ future of Africa and Caribbean countries
 - ⊞ Europe in a global context
- ⌘ Specific emerging technologies may accelerate inequalities and raise the spectre of sociotechnical or - at the extreme - biological speciation
- ⌘ Wide range of reasons in current world to address all the bases of inequality
- ⌘ New opportunities emerge to discuss S&T policy with respect to inequalities, and the role of global policy institutions and processes - the role of the UN, WTO, EU

Challenge 1: The Influence of Policy Contexts & the Scope for Change (WP1)



- ⌘ How do policy contexts for key S&T processes affect the production and distribution of knowledge resources, and what is the scope for alternative framings and policies?
- ⌘ What is the capacity of the 'knowledge economy' to address and frame key issues of inequality and development?
- ⌘ Who buys in to it and why?
- ⌘ What are the key issues, policy actions and actors that affect outcomes?

Challenge 2: Building Capacity in the Context of Global Scientific Mobility (WP2)



- ⌘ What is now the role of human capital in institutional capacity building?
- ⌘ How can we better understand and manage scientific migration and location decision-making?
- ⌘ What is the relationship between human mobility flows and processes of knowledge transfer?
- ⌘ What is the role of diasporas in capacity building?
- ⌘ How can career opportunities be considered resources in their own right?
- ⌘ What does all this imply for issues of inequality?

Challenge 3: Articulating New Accountability Systems (WP3)



- ⌘ What normative assumptions about the purposes and uses of S&T are embodied in accountability systems?
- ⌘ What reconfiguration of interests takes place on the boundaries between conventional S&T policy-making and alternative approaches?
- ⌘ What can we learn from alternative forms of accountability that seek to privilege or protect the poorest?
- ⌘ How is transnational accountability organised in key areas of technological development (e.g. e-waste, vaccines)

Challenge 4: Assessing the Distribution of New Technologies (WP4)



- ⌘ When and how do new technologies lead to new industries disrupting existing patterns of trade and employment?
- ⌘ Under what conditions does technological development promote (in)equality?
- ⌘ What constructive interventions can be made?
- ⌘ Do technologies vary as potential platforms for development that will aid the poor?

Challenge 0: Assessing and integrating our work into research policy in Europe & in/with developing countries (WPO)



⌘ How to collaborate with practitioners and policy-makers in this project in:

- ☒ identifying key resources and cases?
- ☒ defining policy options and the conditions for its successful implementation?
- ☒ building broader alliances, lasting beyond the project, to support local capacity building?

World Regional Meetings

Dialogue with Stakeholders



- ⌘ What role do issues of inequality play in the S&T activities of stakeholders?
- ⌘ What do stakeholders envision as the key issues?
- ⌘ How does the work in which stakeholders are involved relate to the aims and concerns ResIST seeks to address?

- ⌘ How can you help us?
- ⌘ How can we help you?
- ⌘ How to organise collaboration and support networks?

This Meeting



⌘ Thematic workshops

- ☒ Science and Technology Policy and Inequality
- ☒ Health and Environmental Justice
- ☒ Technology, Human Resources and Inequality

⌘ Discussion about ResIST's Work Packages

⌘ Exploring options and opportunities for collaboration and network building