

Policy regimes and wellbeing: a comparative analysis

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An earlier collective work (Gough, Wood et al 2004) developed a typology of 'welfare regimes' across the world distinguishing three broad meta-regimes: welfare state, informal security, and insecurity regimes. The goal of this paper is to relate this framework to the detailed study of wellbeing in four countries: Bangladesh, Ethiopia, Peru and Thailand. This will be done at two levels. First, I present a cluster analysis of over 100 countries to investigate in more detail the different combinations of state policies, welfare mix and welfare outcomes across the developing and developed world. This will test whether, as previously argued, our four countries inhabit very different regime types, between which there can be little convergence. The second level draws together detailed WeD analysis of the policy regimes of the four countries, relating social policies to their political economy and cultural contexts. Taken together this will hopefully illuminate the role of political institutions in shaping wellbeing outcomes in a cross-national framework.