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IN SEARCH OF SOCIAL PROTECTION: THE GOVERNMENT OF POVERTY AND THE EVOLUTION OF ENTITLEMENTS ON INDONESIA'S RURAL PERIPHERY

Wednesday 02 October
9.30–11am

Speaker

John F McCarthy
Crawford School of Public Policy

Location

Room 3.03, Marie Reay Teaching
Centre, Kambri Precinct, ANU

Registration is not required

ANU College of
Arts & Social
Sciences
Asia & the Pacific

In response to enduring problems of poverty across the global south, social protection policies (SPPs) have emerged as the main policy approach, with over 60 countries now implementing Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) programs. A large literature has emerged to discuss the benefits of SPPs, the politics that surround them, and the technical implementation problems affecting them. Yet, few studies have examined how CCT programs 'land' locally and work as distributional systems on the ground. Indonesia is developing the world's second-most extensive CCT system. This paper looks at the case of CCTs in the Indonesian province of Aceh. It combines ethnographic studies with a survey to examine the processes shaping patterns of entitlements and enfranchisement within two villages located within pockets of deprivation in this Indonesian periphery. This paper argues that the technologies of government that CCTs employ, specifically econometric targeting, involve a particular politics of knowledge that has constitutive effects. While offering an apparent means of developing a distributional system that avoids clientelism and elite capture at the same time as reducing the poverty headcount and assisting many poor

families, the econometric/technocratic approach provides opaque methods and processes and contributes to the unequal and contested politics of distribution found across rural Indonesia.

Speaker

John McCarthy works on questions of governance, institutions and rural development with a focus on forestry, agriculture, food security and land use. At present he has an Australian Research Council funded project regarding social protection and food security in rural Indonesia. He was previously a Research Fellow at the Asia Research Centre, Murdoch University, Western Australia and Leiden University in the Netherlands. He has carried out various assignments with agencies including AusAID (now DFAT), the World Bank, and the Centre for International Forestry Research (CIFOR). John is Associate Professor at the ANU Crawford School.

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