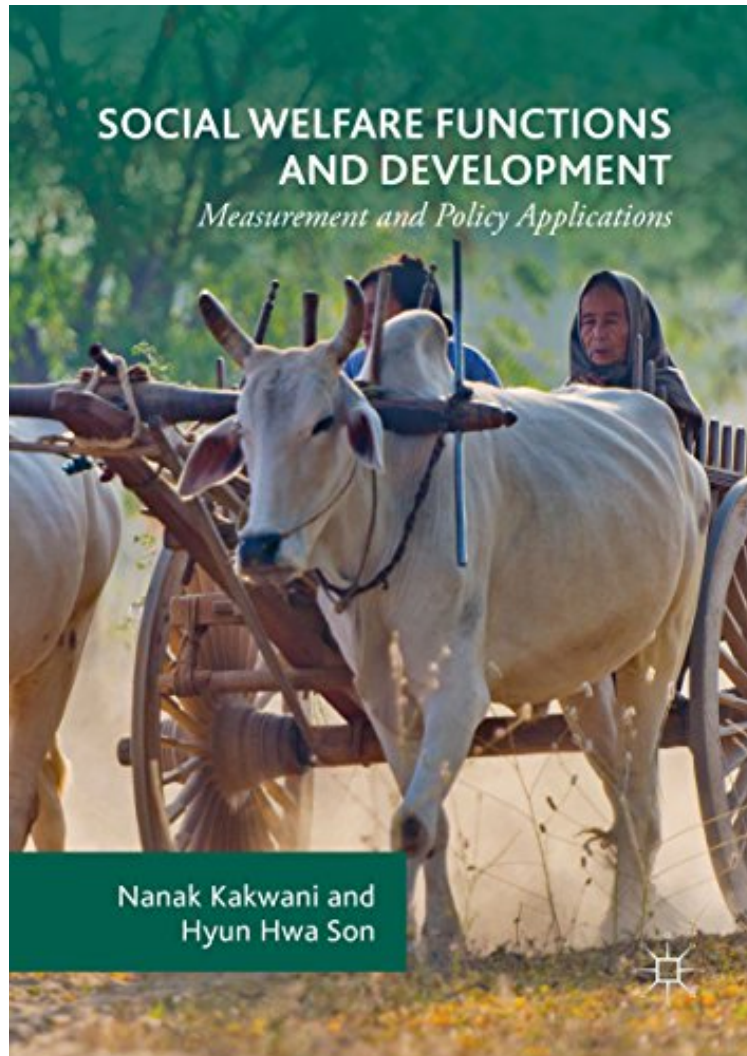


Social Welfare Functions and Development: Measurement and Policy Applications

Nanak Kakwani, Hyun Hwa Son
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Nanak Kakwani and Hyun Hwa Son make use of social welfare functions to derive indicators of development relevant to specific social objectives, such as poverty- and inequality-reduction. Arguing that the measurement of development cannot be value-free, the authors assert that if indicators of development are to have policy relevance, they must be

assessed on the basis of the social objectives in question. This study develops indicators that are sensitive to both the level and the distribution of individuals' capabilities. The idea of the social welfare function, defined in income space, is extended to the concept of the social well-being function, defined in capability space. Through empirical analysis from selected developing countries, with a particular focus on Brazil, the authors shape techniques appropriate to the analysis of development in different dimensions. The focus of this evidence-based policy analysis is to evaluate alternative policies affecting the capacities of people to enjoy a better life.

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