A pilot of OPHI’s Internationally Comparable Indicators on Missing Dimensions of Poverty in urban, rural and estate communities in Sri Lanka

RESEARCH PROPOSAL
Presented to
PEP Network

By
Ms. Azra Abdul Cader
&
Mr. Shivapragasam Shivakumaran
Ms. Sanjeeewani Kariyawasam
Ms. Arunika Meedeniya

SRI LANKA

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1. Abstract
This paper lays out the proposal by the Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) to pilot the indicator shortlists developed for the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative’s Missing Dimensions of Poverty Data. The proposal has been prepared by the Poverty Assessment & Knowledge Management programme (PAM) within CEPA, a programme which specialises in the development of a multidimensional approach to poverty analysis and reduction by reviewing and refining current poverty measurement methodologies. Piloting the questionnaires would not only contribute significantly to PAM’s work on developing appropriate and meaningful indicators for the Sri Lankan context but would also enable PAM to participate in a global debate on internationally comparable, alternative indicators. This proposal outlines a mixed quantitative/qualitative approach to the pilot in order to test whether the purely quantitative indicators suggested by OPHI capture the information both in terms of extent and accuracy. The definitions and understandings of the different dimensions will also be discussed at a variety of different community-level focus groups and with researchers who are experts in the fields of quantitative and qualitative (e.g. ethnographic) research in Sri Lanka. The results will enable the team to constructively critique the suggested indicators based on responses at household, community and ‘expert’ levels, and propose any suggested amendments and additions to the existing definitions, questions and methodology. The proposed sample will be drawn to be representative of a cross-section of urban, rural and estate communities in a district in Sri Lanka.
2. Main research questions and core research objectives

PEP-OPHI Human Development Capabilities Initiative: Theme 1: Missing Dimensions of Poverty Data

This proposal is to carry out an empirical trial and analysis of the OPHI modules on Missing Dimensions of Poverty. The global debate on the multiple dimensions of poverty has made significant progress but there is still a lack of consensus over exactly what constitutes these dimensions. Testing the validity and appropriateness of the developed tools should offer some insights to this discussion and also develop appropriate means of verification for further study. In the Sri Lankan context there is a need to increase the understanding of other dimensions of poverty given the context of reducing absolute poverty but increasing inequality and vulnerability to poverty.

This pilot test has validating and learning objectives. The validating objective focuses on assessing the validity, strengths and weaknesses of the proposed survey instruments in various different contexts in Sri Lanka, findings which can then be compared to findings from the specific contexts in other countries involved in the pilot. The learning objective focuses on determining to what extent the proposed indicators capture the context of poverty in multiple dimensions in the Sri Lankan experience. Given the validating and learning objectives the pilot study will attempt to answer the following research questions.

Validating research questions
- How valid and relevant are the developed indicators and tools in capturing the reality of poverty?
- How can the indicators that have been developed to capture these dimensions be refined through the pilot test?

Learning research questions
- What aspects of poverty are captured through the tools and what other indicators need to be included to reflect the reality?
- What makes people poor in the present context; what could make people poor in the future?
- How does vulnerability affect the poor and influence the dimensions of poverty – focusing on conflict, disaster, sectoral placement, and recent economic volatility (inflation and increased cost of living, food crisis)? How do they cope?
- How can this understanding feed into poverty reduction policy and practice (improved targeting and understanding trends) and how can we improve access to data on multidimensional poverty?

The analysis will focus on the comparison of answers from quantitative and qualitative methodologies employed in data collection to establish the accuracy and completeness of the existing tools.

3. Scientific contribution of the research including a short list of key references in the literature and knowledge gaps

The pilot will contribute to OPHI’s ongoing work on analysing multidimensional indicators of poverty within the capabilities approach, and hopefully lead to a more effective set of tools which can be used to collect internationally comparable data on alternative poverty indicators.

The study has the potential to contribute to further understanding the process of accomplishing basic capabilities (focusing on material deprivation including access to food, shelter, clothing, schooling, health services, clean water and sanitation facilities, employment opportunities and opportunities for community participation)¹. This can be facilitated through the representation of each of the thematic dimensional focuses on the one hand, and by identifying characteristics that keep people in poverty or help them overcome it, on the other. These will help to further strengthen existing classifications of basic capabilities by helping us understand how the poor are constrained in being able to do certain things (achieving capabilities) and what constraints them from achieving these capabilities. The focus of the dimensions on employment, empowerment, safety and security, shame, and meaning and value display inherent qualities of the basic capabilities approach and hence the potential for this level of analysis.

¹ Gunewardena (2004), pp.7-8
The research would also contribute significantly to the Poverty Assessment & Knowledge Management (PAM) programme’s work within Sri Lanka to develop indicators which would enable the generation and dissemination of more holistic poverty data. The PAM programme was conceptualised to fill an identified gap in the analysis and measurement of poverty in Sri Lanka which is still predominantly based on traditional quantitative, consumption based indicators. The development of alternative indicators is particularly important since the country has moved into the ‘lower middle-income’ bracket. Consumption poverty has reduced and human development indicators are relatively high. However, detailed analysis shows that the country still suffers severe poverty pockets at a disaggregated level, and poverty exists in many other dimensions. There is a need to develop ways of identifying and measuring these poverty pockets with a view to eventually developing policy which addresses the causes of different dimensions of poverty.

There is also a need to better understand the dynamics of how different external events impact the poor. The micro level impacts of recent changes in the country, such as economic volatility, re-intensification of the conflict and recurrence of natural disasters, cannot be captured by the existing data compilation mechanisms which use macro level statistics. This type of study should shed more light on how these events affect households and communities and how they cope in such circumstances.

The PAM programme has, amongst other areas, worked on the analysis of existing ‘alternative’, qualitative, capability indicators in Sri Lanka over the past two years, and is just commencing its second phase during which it plans to focus on the identification and trial of possible indicators relevant to the Sri Lankan context. This pilot is, therefore, an ideal opportunity for the team to accelerate this phase and benefit from the experience of an international research team. The PAM team’s analysis of multidimensional poverty and alternative indicators has included the publication of studies and articles as well as a literature review of qualitative research methods (forthcoming) which drew widely on Sri Lankan literature (including much of CEPA’s work) and partially on international literature. A selection of the relevant key references is attached in the appendix at the end of this proposal. Using a balance of strong quantitative and qualitative methodologies will add more validity to poverty assessment in Sri Lanka and will also add to CEPA’s expertise in poverty analysis.

4. Policy relevance
As outlined earlier in this proposal, developing alternative poverty measures in Sri Lanka is particularly important given the divergence between the statistical reduction in consumption poverty and the anecdotal and qualitative evidence that severe poverty persists in the country in many other dimensions. The relevance of such research is therefore not lost on policymakers, and within central and local government institutions there is an increasing interest in gathering information that better reflects the reality of poverty in the country. At the central level organisations such as the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), the Samurdhi Division of the Ministry of National Building and Infrastructure Development, and the Department of National Planning are all starting to engage in initiatives to improve data collection practices and ensure that data provides a wider picture of the experiences of poverty. These are all key governmental consultation and dissemination partners that CEPA would seek to engage with.

This study will, by virtue of its size (not nationally representative) and the fact that it is a pilot, be restricted in the extent to which it could directly influence policy. However, we believe the results of the study would play a significant role by kick-starting a more in-depth debate in Sri Lanka on alternative poverty indicators, and in this sense would certainly help increase knowledge about new research techniques. CEPA has already initiated discussions on this issue during the first phase of the PAM programme, and has established a dialogue with key players such as the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) and the Department of National Planning. However, this dialogue has been limited by a lack of recent data and evidence as we have not been able to undertake a pilot study looking specifically at capability indicators. The debate has, therefore, remained at a theoretical level using secondary qualitative and quantitative data from other studies. This study would take place at a critical time, enabling us to capitalise on existing interest.

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2 A social safety net programme
generated from the first phase of the PAM programme and add more detail and credibility to discussions on poverty measures.

The DCS produces and analyses all official data through large scale sample surveys in Sri Lanka and CEPA has already worked on analysing existing census and survey data to try and understand the different dimensions of poverty in the country (Gunewardena 2007). The DCS recently attempted to identify poverty indicators using other indicators of basic needs/services at the smallest administrative division in Sri Lanka using small area estimations methods and different sources of data such as the Census and Household Income and Expenditure Survey. This study will provide the evidence to give feedback on the methodologies that are being used by institutions such as the DCS to improve data analysis practices. The research results and the validity tests from this OPHI pilot test will be adequate to add to the Department’s efforts to understand multidimensional poverty.

The Samurdhi Division, Sri Lanka’s foremost social safety net programme, is in the process of revising its beneficiary selection process to include other dimensions of poverty and build a baseline database of beneficiaries to monitor movement out of poverty. This pilot study offers an opportunity to further inform the selection criteria refinement process, taking note of significant recent changes to people’s circumstances such as the increasing cost of living, conflict, natural disasters etc. CEPA has already worked with the Division on refining the selection criteria and this relationship therefore offers clear potential for CEPA to facilitate a discussion on reviewing the identified criteria in accordance with the findings of this study.

The study also offers some potential to contribute to policy debates. At a government level, recent discussions with the Department of National Planning, responsible for assessing large projects and allocating funds to regions, highlighted the current heavy dependence on consumption poverty data to inform resource allocation. They commented that existing poverty measures do not always highlight all those sectors and areas that need improved facilities, but without any other form of poverty measures it is difficult for government departments to justify the allocation of resources to such areas. They see the piloting of modules to capture alternative dimensions of poverty as an opportunity to move away from this reliance and encourage the relevant authorities to improve data collection mechanisms to reflect the reality on the ground. The Department will be engaged for feedback and consultation before and after the pilot in an effort to try and stimulate more discussion around the policy implications of the findings.

At a non-governmental level CEPA is regularly asked by donors (particularly World Bank and Asian Development Bank) and I/NGOs to provide comment and analysis on the manifestations and causes of poverty in Sri Lanka, and to provide policy recommendations which can be integrated into country strategies. These existing relationships offer significant entry points for engagement and the results of this study should provide CEPA with more evidence based information to support recommendations to donors and I/NGOs on potentially changing their priority areas of policy focus.

5. Methodology
The methodology proposed to undertake this study includes both quantitative and qualitative components in order to meet the validating and learning objectives outlined above. CEPA’s experience indicates that using both techniques in poverty analysis provides a more complete reflection of the reality. As such the methodology will include a pre-pilot component that tests the applicability of the questions and refines them in the light of gaps. This would be a largely qualitative exercise involving in-depth discussions with key data users and producers, and communities. This exercise will be followed by the administration of the quantitative survey at the household level. A small sub-sample of questionnaires will contain added qualitative questions within each of the dimensions in order to try and capture in-depth information which may cast light on any missing areas of information. The pre-pilot qualitative component will be largely purposive, where respondents will be selected on the basis of pre-defined characteristics while the survey component will involve a representative sample at some level.

External validity testing of the survey instrument
A number of key person interviews will be conducted with quantitative and qualitative researchers who are experts in the field in Sri Lanka. The questionnaires (in their pilot format) will
be administered to them to establish their views on the nature of questions being asked and to obtain their suggestions for improvement. The key person interviews will be undertaken with approximately twelve data producers and users in Sri Lanka who have experience of working on and using i) large-scale household sample surveys, ii) smaller micro-level quantitative and qualitative research studies, and iii) ethnographic research. Data producers would include representatives from the Department of Census and Statistics, research organisations such as SPARC (Social Policy Analysis and Research Centre), and university departments. Data users include the Samurdhi Authority (the government’s cash transfer programme), the Department of National Planning, NGOs such as CARE and Oxfam, research organisations, academics and donors (World Bank and ADB).

Six community-level focus groups will be undertaken to establish whether the areas included under each of the dimensions reflect how a variety of communities understand and define the dimensions, and whether the questions are appropriately formulated. The questionnaires will be translated into Sinhala and Tamil to enable them to be administered across different population groups and to test their applicability in various cultural contexts. The focus groups will be selected outside the household sample area since there is a need to test the questionnaire in a wider variety of contexts than one district can offer. The groups will be selected on the basis of covering some of the missing ‘dimensions’ as a specific group may be expected to explain certain dimensions in the light of their experiences; e.g. people affected by gender or ethnic discrimination, physical isolation, job insecurity, poor employment prospects or living in an area affected by natural disasters, conflict or high density urban poverty. Respondents in the group discussions will be asked to reflect on what is being asked as well as how it is being asked using participatory techniques involving prioritisation and ranking methods. In cases where respondents feel that they do not clearly understand the question, attempts will be made to elaborate on and redefine alternative questions/approaches with the respondents. The six-seven focus groups will be selected as follows:

- 2 x tea estate groups (one male and one female)
- Conflict affected Muslim community (2 mini groups of men and women)
- Natural disaster prone area (drought, or flood/landslide prone area)
- Samurdhi families (recipients of government cash transfers) in a remote rural area in the Southern province
- Underserved urban settlement (slum) in Colombo

Following these activities the questionnaires will be amended and refined to ensure suitable explanation and flow, inclusion of background information for enumerators, such as household characteristics and respondent information, and open-ended questions for the qualitative in-depth analysis for the sub-sample.

The selection of the groups will help to understand how contextual realities affect the poor and make them more vulnerable. These factors can help to identify how the poor cope when faced with these conditions.

In addition to the missing dimensions we can make use of this research exercise to see how contextual factors affect poverty. In an environment where consumption poverty is becoming less significant (in the Sri Lankan case consumption poverty is reducing and hence there is a need to see how various contextual issues and shocks affect poverty in various dimensions) we would like to see how various shocks affect poverty and its different dimensions. This will be done through the qualitative component – focus group discussions and key person interviews which have also been selected in keeping with this exploration, as well as the quantitative profiling exercise (see section e. in this proposal).

**Internal validity testing of the survey instrument**

Internal validity testing will be undertaken using a household survey with two sampling levels. The first level of sampling is a representative sample at the district and sectoral level within a selected district. A smaller sample of 18 households from the quantitative sample will be selected for qualitative in-depth interviews.

**Quantitative sample survey**
The size and heterogeneity of Sri Lanka’s population means that sampling for national representation with the available resources is not possible. Our pilot study will attempt to avoid bias in its analysis as a result of the sampling, therefore we will select a district which enables some level of representation of the population characteristics and geographical spread. On this basis sampling would essentially be representative at sectoral (urban, rural and estate) and spread over DS levels to capture variation within the selected district. The household survey will be undertaken in Badulla district on the basis that all three population classification sectors and most of Sri Lanka’s diverse characteristics are present in the district. The total population in Badulla district is 779,983 and 72.7% of it is rural (in Sri Lanka 80% of the population is estimated to live in rural areas). Labour force participation rates among male and female are 65.2% and 36.6% in Badulla district (national figures are 65.5% and 28.1% respectively). Income poverty figures for the district vary from 17.19% to 51.15% (headcount ratios), indicating a diverse spread of poverty in the region that will enable testing the questionnaire modules with limited income poverty bias.

The sample will be selected at random in three stages independently within each sectoral stratum. There are 15 Divisional Secretariats (DS Divisions) available in Badulla district and each DS division is again administrated by small blocks of GN Divisions. At the first stage DS divisions will be listed and the specified number of DS divisions within a sectoral stratum (e.g. a sample of 7 in the rural sector) will be selected at random. At the second stage, two GN Division (or tea estate for the estate sector) will be selected at random within the selected DS division. Finally in the third stage, 6 households will be selected at random from each selected secondary sampling unit (GN Division /Estate).

A representative sample size for Badulla district would be 384 with a 5% confidence interval. This sample is not possible within the defined budget therefore a stratified random sampling method is proposed for this study, drawing a sample of 180. A proportionate allocation of the sample among the three sectors would be 12 urban households, 131 rural households and 37 estates sector households. These are not sufficient proportions to be tested in statistical models in the urban sector. Therefore 36 urban households, 84 rural households and 60 estate households will be allocated in order to test statistical methods which require minimum sample elements of 30 units. This becomes disproportionate but maintains representative sampling at the sectoral level. Within each DS division the sample will be chosen systematically. Ultimately the sample will be weighted in order to show the representative results across the sectors, therefore a stratified systematic sampling method will be employed for this study.

**Qualitative sample survey**

For a small random sub-sample of 18 households the structured quantitative questions will be followed by open ended questions to enable the in-depth discussion to be recorded. ‘Prompting points’ will be added for the enumerators to encourage the respondent to speak at length. This elaboration will be taken down in detailed note form.

**Analysis techniques**

*a) Validating the questions within each dimension*

The analysis framework will focus on the validation and learning research objectives and questions. Questions in the module will be validated through qualitative work and importance/significance/weight will be provided in order to be able to compare it to the quantitative analysis. The analysis will compare the quantitative and qualitative results to ascertain whether the quantitative questionnaire captures/reflects the ‘reality’ as expressed by the informants in more detailed responses. Suggestions for improvement of the questions or identification of missing aspects that were not covered will be made on the basis of this comparison.

*b) Levels and distribution variables in each dimension*

As the first step of the quantitative analysis, internal validity testing will be carried out by looking at frequency of responses for each of the questions within each dimension. Correlation analysis/factor analysis, basic cross-sectional and sub-group statistical analysis, and test of significance will be considered to identify the factor variables in each dimension. For determining the number of factors in each dimension, descriptive analysis, correlation matrix and the widely
used Kaiser criterion; which retain only factors with Eigen values (say greater than 1), will be
taken into consideration.

c) Composite measure for a dimension
The next step of the analysis will be the development of a composite indicator for the specified
dimension through factor analysis or by simply constructing an average. Here, the results
obtained from qualitative work such as key person interviews and focus group discussions will be
carefully considered for this analysis. The key person interviews and focus group discussions will
include prioritisation and ranking exercises, as used in the participatory approach, to define
aspects that are considered to be more important than others when defining wellbeing in relation
to each dimension. This prioritisation will be used to define the weights for indicators. Equal
weight option will be mainly used for international comparison and the weights derived from
ranking exercise will be used to highlight the importance in Sri Lankan context. We feel that this
approach would be more appropriate than the multivariate analysis of income poverty with other
indicators as income poverty has significantly reduced in the recent years in Sri Lanka as
opposed to the notion that deprivation exists in many angles due to horizontal inequalities (group
inequalities).

d) Relation between each dimension and composite index for all dimensions
We propose to use two options to compute a composite indicator of the five dimensions
considered for this proposal. First with simple equal weights for a normalised Z score in each
dimension; and second with weights derived from qualitative analysis applied to normalised Z
scores. Using the two methods will enable a comparative analysis that will show the relative
importance of different indicators within each of the dimensions. We also plan to carry out a
cross-sectional analysis, test of significance within a sub-group. We will try to find a relationship
between Samurdhi welfare cash transfer recipient families in the sample and the proposed
missing dimensions that will enable an analysis of how these analysis of these missing
dimensions can be applied to welfare targeting. Samurdhi targeting and perceptions of wellbeing
will be regressed using the missing dimensions. The Samurdhi targeting system is has moved
from being purely income oriented to include other dimensions of poverty including vulnerable,
chronic poor, poor and mid-level poor. Past beneficiaries have been classified into these
categories using a matrix ranking classification and participatory methods involving the
community and key officials.

To construct a multidimensional poverty index we propose to use the guidelines given in OPHI
Working Paper no. 7 by Alkire and Foster (2008) which provide a multidimensional analogy to the
uni-dimensional FGT measures. The cut off score for each dimension to construct the poverty
index will be determined based on the qualitative/quantitative analysis of this survey.

e) Proposed additional information for household and sectoral profiling to analyse the missing
dimensions
In addition to the questions in the Revised Survey Module proposed by OPHI, we intend to collect
some additional information on the background of the surveyed households to enable us to
validate and strengthen the analysis. This would help us obtain an understanding of the impact of
the recent shocks on the poor. An outline of the key background information is given below.
- Identification of household: Reference Number: District, DS Division, GN Division, and
  Household Number
- Sector: Urban, Rural or Estate sector
- Religion: Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam etc.
- Ethnicity: Sinhalese, Sri Lankan Tamils, Indian Tamil, Moors etc.
- Particulars of the head of the household: age, sex, education, marital status, employment
  status, number of household members, dependents and income earners, highest education
  level, school avoidance, disability
- Monthly household income / consumption: In Rupees/ in class interval
- Welfare transfers: Samurdhi recipient, other transfers
- Major source of income: by industry, occupation, remittances
- Major sector and type of employment: regular, casual, self-employed, migratory, etc.
- Basic structure of housing and facilities
f) GIS mapping with missing dimensions
This methodology proposes an interesting representation of missing dimensions of poverty in the sample area by producing GIS based maps. This would enable us to assess and understand the regional relative differences between multiple dimensions. Mapping the spread of various dimensions will provide information on intensity levels in geographical regions and enable insights into poverty pockets and regional disparities within the selected district. This can be used as a tool by policy makers and practitioners working within the sample region as a start and possibly replicated by other districts in the future.

6. Data requirements and sources
The information required for this trial will come from the OPHI team and will be translated and adapted for use in Sri Lanka by CEPA. CEPA will work closely with the OPHI team from the inception of the study to ensure that the trial is in line with trials in other countries and that resulting data can be compared. Data required for the sample selection will be taken from the Department of Census & Statistics' survey and census information which is publicly available.

7. Consultation and dissemination strategy
As outlined in the Policy Relevance section of this proposal, at a national level there are clear benefits to be gained from sharing the results of this study with a selected audience of state and non-state researchers and practitioners. These would form CEPA’s consultation and dissemination (CD) partners, and we would be in direct contact with them at all stages of the study, from pre-pilot validity testing, to sharing the findings.

As outlined earlier the external validity testing exercise will involve undertaking Key Person Interviews with data producers and users as a part of the initial consultation process. Following the pilot, workshops will be arranged with these stakeholders to share the results, ensuring they are part of the whole process and giving them an opportunity to provide further feedback. Any further stakeholders who have been identified in the KPIs will also be invited.

While data users at all levels are likely to be very interested in the findings, those at a state institutional level often face pressure to adhere to certain political agendas that can hamper effective informed decision-making. Our prior experience of working in this context makes us wary of predicting any significant immediate changes to come out of this pilot (CEPA has historically experienced issues with government officials not appreciating that quantitative and qualitative samples can be representative, even with much larger sample sizes than is proposed in this study), but we have a great deal of experience of working slowly, strategically and persistently with government representatives to try and change perceptions and attitudes. CEPA will document its experiences of working through this process with various stakeholders.

The work undertaken as part of this trial will form part of the PAM team’s wider dissemination objectives, to raise awareness of the importance of and the need for alternative poverty indicators. CEPA has a cross-programme Policy and Communications Team which specialises in conceptualising dissemination strategies, focusing on the potential to influence policy and practice wherever possible – from grassroots through to the bureaucracy and policymaker levels. This reflects the high importance that CEPA places on communicating and disseminating its work, and we have extensive experience in stakeholder analysis tools and selecting appropriate dissemination methods, including small-scale interactive workshops, training modules, forums and seminars, print and TV media coverage and large conferences. In terms of publications, CEPA’s experiences from this study would be published in the form of an electronic Working Paper and disseminated widely to interested stakeholders. We would also envisage submitting articles to local economic and social science journals as well as the feature sections of selected ‘broadsheet’ newspapers.

Dissemination will also be undertaken through product development. A user manual of quantitative and qualitative indicators focusing on the Sri Lankan experience will be developed, taking into account the PAM Programme’s past work on qualitative indicators and this study which focuses on quantitative indicators. The information generated through this study will also be used to further develop the Understanding Poverty training module developed by in early 2008. The module will be refined following this study, and a training programme will be developed to be marketed to practitioners and researchers. The Meta data, reports and material that are produced
through this study will be made available on CEPA’s online repository of information resources on
poverty (www.povertydatabase.lk), with consent from OPHI. The aim of the database is to
increase the availability of information to all users at the state and non-state level who can use
these resources to inform their work.

CEPA also sees this study as an opportunity to engage in the global debate surrounding missing
dimensions and multidimensional poverty. CEPA would, therefore, be keen to work closely with
other organisations involved in this pilot in other countries. In terms of international consultation
and dissemination, in addition to the engagement with PEP, CEPA will attempt to engage in
forums organised by groups such as the World Institute for Development Economics Research of
the United Nations University (UNU-WIDER) and the International Development Research
Centre, Canada through the Focus City Initiative that CEPA is already a part of. Testing the
validity and the effectiveness in the Sri Lankan context whilst also working with OPHI on the need
for international comparability will add an international dimension to PAM’s work which will
significantly enhance the knowledge management component of the programme. This will help to
add weight to attempts to influence policy nationally.

8. Short list of key references
The PAM team has published a number of articles and working papers, including an edited
volume of papers which explores alternative understandings of poverty in the Sri Lankan context,
entitled *Fresh Perspectives: Exploring alternative dimensions of poverty in Sri Lanka*. A literature
review of qualitative indicators of poverty in Sri Lanka, reviewing alternative indicators which have
already been tested through qualitative research, is forthcoming in 2008. Please see the appendix
for a list of key references related to the topic; references authored and published by CEPA,
references to relevant research in Sri Lanka, and relevant international references.

9. List of team members’ prior training and experience in the issues and techniques
involved.
**Azra Abdul Cader** is a Senior Professional at CEPA and Co-ordinator of the Poverty Assessment
and Knowledge Management Programme. She has extensive experience in desk and field based
research, conceptualising methodological approaches to qualitative and quantitative data
collection, analysing results, and writing reports. She has worked on projects looking at youth,
child poverty, child labour, urban poverty, agriculture policies, and conflict affected livelihood
issues. Previous experience includes:

- **Ongoing – Qualitative Literature Review** – Assesses the findings of existing
  qualitative poverty research in Sri Lanka and suggests qualitative indicators of
  poverty for further research.
- **Ongoing – Focus city action research project on urban poverty in Gothampipura**, 
  Colombo Municipal Council – This project will research and implement a project
  identified based on surveys conducted with the settlement dwellers.
- **2007 – Literature review on child poverty in Sri Lanka** – Using a multidimensional
  approach to understanding child poverty in the context of deprivation, exclusion and
  vulnerability.
- **2005 – Developing Impact Monitoring Systems for Focused Areas of the 
  Colombo Municipal Council (CMC)** – Providing advice on impact monitoring.
- **2004 – Developing a tracer methodology to measure longer term impact on
  children and families of interventions against child labour** - The study involved
  testing the methodologies in 4 field sites in the South American, Asian and African
  regions and culminated in the development of the toolkit of tracer methodologies to
  be used by child labour practitioners.
- **2004 – Understanding the dimensions and dynamics of urban poverty in
  Colombo** – a study to increase the understanding of poverty in urban underserved
  settlements in Colombo in order to develop a project impact monitoring system.
- **2004 – Poverty and Youth Survey** – The study focused on assessing youth
  perceptions on poverty in Sri Lanka, using quantitative and qualitative techniques.

**Shivapragasam Shivakumaran** is a Senior Professional in CEPA’s Poverty Assessment and
Knowledge Management Programme. He has worked as a quantitative analyst for over 30
years and has extensive experience with statistical analyses and quantitative research
methodologies as well as strong skills in the design and use of databases and Management
Arunika Meedeniya is a Junior Professional (under 30 years old) in CEPA’s Poverty Assessment and Knowledge Management Programme. She has experience of both desk-based quantitative analysis of data and field-based research and data collection. She also has experience of supervising teams of enumerators. Her experience includes:

- **Ongoing:** Quantitative disaggregated analysis of the Consumer Finances and Socio-Economic Survey using a data set covering 25 years.
- **Ongoing (scheduled date of completion Dec 2008):** Independent External Monitoring of the Resettlement Activities of the Southern Transport Development Project (for ADB) - Research Assistant involved in drawing the sample, data collection and analysis and development of the data entry format for quantitative data entry. The project is using a 400 household sample and a mixed quantitative/qualitative approach.
- **Ongoing:** Focus city action research project on urban poverty in Gothamipura (for IDRC) - Research Assistant involved in sample selection, developing questionnaires and enumerator training, data collection and quantitative analysis. The project aims to research and implement a project identified based on surveys conducted with a large sample of settlement dwellers and neighbouring communities.
- **2006-2007:** Poverty Database (ADB) – The development of a web based database to improve the understanding and analysis of poverty through enhanced dissemination of information, thereby encouraging informed decision-making on poverty reduction efforts in Sri Lanka (MIS)
- **2006:** Selection of Samurdhi beneficiaries for Jaffna and Mannar districts based on selection criteria for Dept. of Commissioner General, Samurdhi (MIS consultant).
- **2003 – 2006:** Developed Proxy Mean Test Formulae for welfare targeting based on the Consumer Finances and Socio Economic Survey 1996/97 data for the Welfare Benefits Board (Statistical analyst)
- **2003:** Participated in a Clients Survey to generate views of the Samurdhi beneficiaries for World Bank (Sample Survey and Quantitative Analyst)
- **1997 – 1998:** Developed Poverty Estimates using the Central Bank’s Consumer Finances and Socio-economic Survey for World Bank (Consultant)
Sanjeewanie Kariyawasam is a Junior Professional (under 30 years old) in CEPA's Poverty Impact Monitoring Programme. She has experience in field and desk based quantitative and qualitative research, data collection and analysis. She also has experience in supervising teams of enumerators. Her experience includes:

- **Ongoing (scheduled date of completion Dec 2008): Independent External Monitoring of the Resettlement Activities of the Southern Transport Development Project (for ADB)** - Research Assistant involved in data collection, cleaning and entering, quantitative analysis, and documentation. The project is using a 400 household sample and a mixed quantitative/qualitative approach.

- **Ongoing: Focus city action research project on urban poverty in Gothamipura (for IDRC)** - Research Assistant involved in sample selection, developing questionnaires and enumerator training and quantitative analysis and documentation. The project aims to research and implement a project identified based on surveys conducted with a large sample of settlement dwellers and neighbouring communities.

- **2008 - Power Fund for the Poor (for ADB)** - Research Assistant involved in sample selection, developing questionnaires, quantitative analysis and documentation. This project undertaken by ADB in partnership with the Government of Sri Lanka focuses on extending the electricity grid to rural areas with the objective of increasing productivity and reducing poverty.

- **2007: Pro-poor Growth Through Improved Connectivity: Ex-post evaluation of Pilot Interventions (for SIDA)** - Research Assistant involved in data collection, cleaning and entering, qualitative analysis. This ex-post evaluation carried out a year after the infrastructure was completed looked at the occurrence of potential impacts as well as the success of the selection model in meeting its objectives was evaluated.

### 10. Expected capacity building

This project would be very beneficial to the PAM team in terms of developing our skills and experience in testing and analysing empirical results for alternative quantitative indicators of poverty. Experience so far within the team’s work on this area has been limited to conceptualisation and review, with limited funds available for testing new indicators. This project would also offer the opportunity to broaden the work already undertaken on qualitative indicators to developing complementary quantitative indicators.

Importantly this project also offers the opportunity to become part of a global discussion on alternative understanding of poverty and ‘missing dimensions’ which is a core part of PAM’s work. Making these links and applying our experience to the global context will ensure that we can develop not only indicators which are relevant to the Sri Lankan context, but also internationally comparable indicators which are relevant and comparable to other contexts worldwide. The input of experts from other countries and the opportunity to share our learning with other countries would greatly aid in the development of the PAM programme as a whole, and the researchers within the team. For individual team members, particularly junior researchers, there is the opportunity to learn from the study to further develop skills in quantitative analysis and the development of measuring and weighting techniques which enable indicators to be benchmarked across different contexts.

All team members will be involved in the preparation of the material for the fieldwork, with Azra Abdul Cader and Shivapragasam Shivakumaran taking the lead. Sanjeewani Kariyawasam and Arunika Meedeniya’s experience of conducting surveys in the field would help in the translation and explanation of questionnaires. They will also train the enumerators, co-ordinate the fieldwork and supervise data entry and cleaning. Analysis of results and critique of the proposed dimensions and tools will be conducted by all researchers with Shivapragasam Shivakumaran and Arunika Meedeniya taking the lead on the quantitative elements, and Azra Abdul Cader and Sanjeewani Kariyawasam taking the lead on the qualitative elements. Dissemination activities would be co-ordinated by Azra Abdul Cader, Arunika Meedeniya and Sanjeewani Kariyawasam. Arunika Meedeniya and Sanjeewani Kariyawasam have been selected to participate in the HDCA Summer School on Measuring Capability and Multidimensional Poverty in Delhi in August 2008. This is expected to add to their capacities of quantitative research and analysis and will help build a strong base to undertake this study.
In addition to capacity building of the team it is expected that the user manual and training manual can be used to build capacities of others following the completion of the study. This would be in addition to the capacity building of the enumerators who would undertake the field data collection exercise.

11. Any ethical, social, gender or environmental issues or risks which should be noted.
Access to conflict-affected areas and natural disaster-prone areas could be subject to risk factors at the time of field work. The risk to staff and respondents of continuing with the study would be assessed at the time, and alternative areas chosen if necessary.

It will be important to train the enumerators to set the context of the questionnaire before conducting it with the households, in order to allow greater access to members of the household who the head of the household may feel uneasy about involving in such work, such as female and younger members.

There could also be the risk of research fatigue in communities who will not directly benefit from this piece of work. This can be mitigated by communicating effectively with the communities selected and making a strong case for the importance of further work in this area for future poverty related policy.

12. List of past, current or pending projects in related areas involving team members (name of funding institution, title of project, list of team members involved)
   - 2006/7. Azra Abdul Cader and Arunika Meedeniya – Conceptualisation of a longitudinal study on poverty to examine the multidimensional nature of poverty in terms of static and dynamic manifestations. Funding never obtained due to the high cost of panel studies.
Appendix

Selected relevant literature published by CEPA:


Relevant references to Sri Lankan research used in CEPA’s analyses of alternative indicators of poverty:


Some selected references to international research used in CEPA’s analyses of alternative indicators of poverty:


www.arts.cornell.edu/poverty/kanbur/4QZ.pdf


Van Praag, B., 2006. A Multi-dimensional Approach to Subjective Poverty [online]. A slightly modified version of a paper, presented at the conference on The Measurement of...