

August 2009 – Vol. 1

Welcome to the first newsletter of the revamped Poverty Portal!

### In this issue...

- ➔ Introducing the Poverty Portal and its features
- ➔ Network outreach
- ➔ Exploring the Poverty Portal: How can you be a part of it
- ➔ Need assistance: Get in touch

### Supported by



Have a question about the portal and/or your involvement?

Get in touch with us...

Via the email:  
[info@povertyportal.lk](mailto:info@povertyportal.lk)

Or contact us on:

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The Poverty Portal was initially launched as the CEPA Poverty Database in 2007 but now showcases an improved platform, increased resource base, including resources in Sinhala and Tamil, and an active network of researchers, policymakers and practitioners.

You can visit the site, upload resources and engage in a debate on poverty issues by clicking on [www.povertyportal.lk](http://www.povertyportal.lk)

## Supporting Development of the Poverty Portal

The development of the Poverty Portal is led by the Poverty Assessment & Knowledge Management Programme at the Centre for Poverty Analysis. CEPA, established in May 2001, is an independent organisation providing professional services on poverty related development issues. CEPA's mission is to be the leading organisation providing independent analysis of poverty, shaping policy in Sri Lanka and the region.

The PAM programme, established in 2006, focuses on improving poverty assessment, and on the distribution and effective use of knowledge and information relevant to poverty reduction. It recognises that the generation and analysis of poverty data

needs to be built on and improved in Sri Lanka. Knowledge based on evidence and critical analysis provides the basis for developing effective analytical models and tools, and is critical for supporting broad-based policy recommendations. The aims of the PAM programme move beyond the collection and analysis of data and information, in the belief that appropriate collaboration, dissemination, discussion and use of the evidence is the best way to effect change.

The development and sustainability of the Poverty Portal is a key focus of the PAM programme in trying to achieve these aims.

Phase 1 (2007-2008) of

the Poverty Portal was developed with support from the **Asian Development Bank** though a technical assistance grant from the Poverty Assessment and Information Management project. The current phase is being supported by the **Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) Foundation, Sri Lanka**.

The Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) is a private, public-interest institution committed to the ideals of Social Democracy, founded in Germany in 1925. Its main areas of focus are strengthening civil society activism, progressive social engagement and trade union empowerment. More information can be obtained at their website [www.fessrilanka.org](http://www.fessrilanka.org)

## Explore the revamped Poverty Portal: Getting Started

The Portal is free for all those interested in learning more about poverty in Sri Lanka. Users need to register at [www.povertyportal.lk](http://www.povertyportal.lk) to use the site. Registration gives users a username and password.

### Registering helps YOU and US!

- ➔ YOU have unlimited access to the resources available on the site
- ➔ YOU can ask questions about potential resources & discuss poverty issues in Sri Lanka
- ➔ YOU can maintain your own personal space and profile on the site
- ➔ YOU can upload resources onto the site
- ➔ YOU can network with professionals in the development sector
- ➔ Helps US provide you with timely and need based resources
- ➔ Helps US build a profile of our network members
- ➔ Helps US maintain the quality of the site

## Features of the Poverty Portal ...

The Portal is equipped with a variety of innovative and interactive features to provide a dynamic and comprehensive system of information dissemination.

- ➔ **Resource Library:** there are over 500 entries in the growing resource library. Each entry has an abstract in 3 languages Sinhala, Tamil and English, and is available for direct download in pdf format OR the user is directed to the source. Members are also encouraged to share resources on the site (resources will be included in a peer review process once uploaded) [www.povertyportal.lk/cepa\\_library/home-0.html](http://www.povertyportal.lk/cepa_library/home-0.html)
- ➔ **Advanced Search Mechanism:** the advanced search function allows for a comprehensive search of the Resource Centre. Information can be searched by category, key word, author and partners. [www.povertyportal.lk/cepa\\_library/Advanced\\_search-7.html](http://www.povertyportal.lk/cepa_library/Advanced_search-7.html)
- ➔ **Maps and statistics:** an online analytical tool which offers a GIS based graphical representation of poverty statistics and information related to Sri Lanka. This tool can be used to gain a top-down perspective on areas as small as DS divisions, or to draw your own analysis from the data.
- ➔ **Blogs:** an online discussion tool that encourages the sharing of views and information on a particular subject. Members will have access to post comments and discuss issues based on their interest areas [www.povertyportal.lk/blogs/](http://www.povertyportal.lk/blogs/)
- ➔ **Peer messaging:** a peer-to-peer messaging system that helps people to connect with each other and share their individual thoughts and expert ideas regarding poverty and related development issues.
- ➔ **Member Profiling:** the Portal maintains a personal profile of each member so that their involvement in portal activities is visible to other members. Members can keep their profile up-to-date with the latest achievements in their professional career.
- ➔ **News and Events:** a list of current news and event that might of interest to member is available. Members can also upload current news and events that are related to the field of poverty that may be of interest to others. [www.povertyportal.lk/event-10.html](http://www.povertyportal.lk/event-10.html)

### In the next issue...

- ➔ Introducing the Core Group and Resource Partners
- ➔ How can your organisation become a Core Group member or Resource Partner
- ➔ Using the site: How can we help you?
- ➔ Introducing the CEPA team
- ➔ Recent events

## Poverty Network: Outreach Component

The offline component is a key factor in making sure that the Portal runs smoothly and efficiently. CEPA has joined together with local universities, government departments and organisations, non-governmental organisations and private institutions to create an offline system that moderates and maintains the quality of the information and resources available on the Portal. We encourage interested parties to participate in the information sharing in order to, not only make our endeavour more successful, but also to increase their visibility and publicize their research.

The improved site is supported by a outreach component that focuses on increasing the resource and user base as well as building ownership of the overall concept.

The outreach component is in the process of building a strong Core Group (that would help steer the Portal), a group of Resource Partners (to ensure a constant flow of resources) and a group of users (who will engage on the site).

