

September 2009
Vol. 2

The second issue of the Poverty Portal Newsletter

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The Poverty Portal is an interactive resource platform for professionals, academics, students and all interested parties, which aims to encourage better policy-making practices and awareness on poverty in Sri Lanka through information collation and dissemination.

You can visit the site, upload resources and engage in a debate on poverty issues by clicking on www.povertyportal.lk

Poverty Portal Network

The Poverty Portal Network is a key segment of the outreach component. It is a physical network of professionals, academics, students and parties dealing with poverty in Sri Lanka. It comprises of three different levels of partnerships which together sustain both the breadth of resources available on the portal and also their validity as accredited sources of information. Individuals and organizations registering on the Portal may choose the level that is most suitable to their needs.

The three levels of partnerships are as follows:

Core Group: the Core Group steers the Portal's development and ensures that high standards are maintained with regard to the resources and discussions on the portal. The Core Group consists of experts on poverty related issues in Sri Lanka and are the chief generators of data and information resources for the Poverty Portal. They have also expressed their willingness to undertake the following activities:

- ◆ Provide information resources to the Portal's resource base
- ◆ Help increase the resource pool by guiding the resource collection and dissemination process
- ◆ Take the lead on blog discussions and/or provide comments on blog posts
- ◆ Review content on the Portal according to specific area of expertise
- ◆ Recommend new members
- ◆ Attend network meetings

Resource Partners: the Resource Partners are data and information resource generators who ensure a constant flow of resources to the Portal. They will be involved regularly in Portal activities through blog discussions and resource provision. Responsibilities include:

- ◆ Participation in blog discussions
- ◆ Provide relevant resources to the Portal
- ◆ Attend network meetings

Members: members form a user group that engages on the Portal site. They may have a limited amount of resources to share with the Portal but may wish to access the Portal's resources or engage in blog discussions. Those accessing the portal at Member level are expected to:

- ◆ Participate in blog discussions and provide individual opinions
- ◆ Network with the Core Group and Resource Partners regarding information leads
- ◆ Suggest resource members and resources for the Portal

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issue...**

- ➔ **Introducing Poverty Portal Partners**
- ➔ **Features of the Portal in detail.**
- ➔ **Recent News and Upcoming Events**

Introducing the Poverty Portal Partner Organisations

Government institutions

- Ministry of Plan Implementation
- Central Provincial Council
- Ministry of Healthcare and Nutrition
- National Planning Department
- Centre for Information Resource Management (CIRM), Eastern Provincial Council
- Samurdhi Division, Ministry of Nation Building and Estates Infrastructure
- Information and Communication Technology Agency of Sri Lanka

Universities and related departments

- University of Colombo: Department of Economics
- University of Sabaragamuwa: Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages
- University of Peradeniya, Agriculture Faculty: Department of Agricultural Economics and Business Management
- University of Peradeniya, Arts Faculty: Sociology Department, Economics and Statistics Department.

Non-governmental organisations

- Marga Institute, Colombo
- CARE Sri Lanka, Colombo
- Point Pedro Institute of Development
- Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies, Colombo
- Save the Children Sri Lanka, Colombo

University of Colombo, Department of Economics (DoE) came into existence in the early 1960's. It is currently the largest department within the Faculty of Arts in terms of staff and students, and one of the best qualified departments in the national university system. The DoE staff is involved in research in different subject areas, with Poverty and Development being two major concerns in their teaching and research activities. The DoE admits over 100 students each year to its Economics Special degree, with Streams of Specialization. The 'internship programme', involving final year students, is also another novelty. More information can be found on the website (<http://www.cmb.ac.lk/academic/arts/econ/>).

The Poverty Portal seems a very opportune way for enhancing the skills of the DoE staff; expanding their access to information and providing opportunities for sharing findings from their own research on a wider basis. Students, whether undergraduate or postgraduate, are also likely to benefit greatly from being able to access the rich resources in store through the Poverty Portal and this factor too motivated us in joining the core group.

Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies (GTE) Limited is an ISO 9001:2000 certified organisation with linkages to local Government institutions, I/NGOs, and overseas mission in Sri Lanka, established in April, 1997, and has since become a national service provider in the non-profit sector. CHA has utilised knowledge and linkages to optimise assistance to all intervening agencies following the tsunami and provided linkages to peace, conflict, human rights, tsunami, and poverty related needs within and between Colombo and districts. The organisation has 12 Districts Offices located in Jaffna, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara, Badulla, Kalutara, Galle, Matara, Hambantota, Puttalam, Mannar, and Vavuniya, as a means of broadening its services islandwide.

Hence, CHA has become a member of the Poverty Portal Core Group. This portal was identified as a useful tool for information seekers to obtain poverty related information in Sri Lanka. As a member, CHA is willing to share its resources with the growing Resource Centre of the Poverty Portal in all three languages. In addition, CHA possesses a vast amount of resources on organisations working in various sectors and would serve as an asset in contributing these resources to the portal.

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Introducing the CEPA Poverty Portal team

Azra Abdul Cader: Team Leader, Poverty Assessment and Knowledge Management (PAM) programme.

Ishara Ratnayake: Professional; Task Manager of Poverty Portal outreach activities.

Sanjay Edirisinghe: IT specialist.

Shivapragasam Shivakumaran: Senior Professional; Involved in the development of Poverty Portal Phase 1 and providing content support.

Arunika Meedeniya: Professional; Involved in the development of Poverty Portal Phase 1 and providing content support.

Lakwimashi Perera: Junior Professional; Providing content support.

Tehani Ariyaratne: Project Assistant; Providing content and outreach support .



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

Get in touch with
us...
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Recent News and Upcoming Events

Recent News

The First Network Partners' Meeting was held on the 29th of July, 2009 at South Asian Partnership Sri Lanka (SAPSRI), Colombo. The objectives of the meeting were to introduce a prototype of the Portal to the core group and resource providers, and to obtain their feedback regarding the workings of the Portal as well the outreach program. The proceeding discussion revealed a number of interesting and useful ideas and suggestions which were subsequently incorporated into the Portal.

CEPA conducted a demonstration of the Poverty Portal at the Local Government Symposium on '*Bonding Together for a Prosperous Tomorrow*', held on the 19th and 20th of August at the BMICH. There was interest shown in the Portal, especially among local government employees and students engaged in higher education.

The Consortium of Humanitarian Agencies had their General Meeting on the 28th of August 2009 at Caritas Sri Lanka- Social and Economic Development Centre auditorium. Ms. Ishara Ratnayake and Mr. Sanjay Edirisinghe presented an introduction to the Poverty Portal.

Upcoming Events

10th Annual Symposium on Poverty Research in Sri Lanka on Child Poverty: an alternative understanding to inform policy and practice

CEPA is organizing the 10th Annual Symposium on Poverty Research in Sri Lanka which is scheduled to be held in Colombo in December 2009. This year's theme at the Symposium will be 'Child Poverty' and it will aim to showcase the vast body of knowledge on poverty and how it affects the lives of children, as well as discuss how this knowledge can be best used to develop better child poverty reduction policies and practices. In an effort to maximize the impact of the symposium and facilitate linkages between research, policy and practice, CEPA seeks to involve state and non-state organisations. Organisations are invited to participate in organising the event with CEPA and/or provide financial support for the event.

For further information please contact:

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