

cepa



# Core Belief



**Poverty is an injustice that should be overcome. Overcoming poverty involves changing policies and practices nationally and internationally, as well as working with people in poverty.**





## Vision

A world in which decision-making, especially where it affects the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable women, men and children, is based on non-partisan, robust evidence.

## Mission

To be a leading organisation providing independent analysis of poverty, with a view to shaping policy that affects the lives and livelihoods of vulnerable women, men and children in Sri Lanka and the region.



CEPA is registered as a company limited by guarantee under Sri Lanka's Companies Act 17 of 1982, on 24th April 2001 and re-registered under the Companies Act No.7 of 2007 on 28th July 2008.

The Centre for Poverty Analysis (CEPA) is an independent Sri Lankan Think Tank established in May of 2001 by Sri Lankan professionals working on poverty and development related issues. CEPA carries out a range of client services that includes; research, consultancy, evaluation, impact monitoring, training and facilitation.

Founded with the intention of institutionalising poverty impact monitoring and poverty analysis within the Sri Lankan institutional landscape, CEPA strives to fill a need for applied policy relevant advice, and has been providing practice oriented services that are grounded in sound empirical research since then. Over the years, CEPA has responded to the needs of a constituency that included a variety of actors - state, non state, international, national, civil society, community based organisations as well as the private sector - and has influenced policy making in the development field.

**During the last 19 years, CEPA has succeeded in developing a body of knowledge on poverty to become the leading institution on poverty-related research in Sri Lanka. It has developed fresh and challenging perspectives on poverty; explored alternative dimensions; conducted in-depth analyses of specific poverty conditions; contributed to a better understanding of poverty in Sri Lanka and formulated policy initiatives to alleviate the multi-dimensional facets of poverty. CEPA has developed a research capacity with innovative research methodologies and practices. It has also contributed to a transfer of technology as CEPA's researchers have worked with partners in different parts of the world, while its services have been sought by numerous national and international organisations.**

CEPA's research and services have been funded by international organisations, foreign donor agencies, NGOs and government agencies. Regardless of the source of revenue, CEPA has always been insistent of its research integrity, and in order to maintain its independence, CEPA over the years has developed its own Development Fund so as to generate a capacity to carry out independent research.



# Ownership



CEPA's Subscribing members representing, hold the ownership of the organisation and are prominent members professional and academic spheres of the country. The Subscribing Members serve CEPA on a voluntary basis.

Being a not-for-profit Think Tank, CEPA's Audited Accounts are presented to the Subscribing Members at Annual General Meetings where the Executive presents an account of the research, advisory and policy influencing activities carried out during the preceding financial year.

CEPA is governed by a Board of Directors drawn from eminent persons in the academic, public, business and private sectors. The Board of Directors provides guidance and direction to CEPA's management and offer their services to CEPA on a voluntary basis.

#### **Chairpersons of the Board since 2001 have been:**

- Prof. Nimal Sanderatne
- Mr. Sunil Bastian
- Prof. Hiran Dias
- Prof. Savitri Goonesekere
- Dr. Indrajith Coomaraswamy
- Mr. Murtaza Esufally
- Prof. W. D. Lakshman
- Prof. C.M. Madduma Bandara (Current Chairperson)

<http://www.cepa.lk/about-us/profile/board-of-directors.html>

# Expertise



CEPA is a **key actor in the policy influencing domain** of Sri Lanka today. Its success has been grounded in a robust evidence base and in strategising its communications to encourage policy influencing processes. Within the areas of monitoring and evaluation, CEPA has **proven experience in both qualitative and quantitative research** and its **focus on the Q2 (or Q squared) approach** that mixes both qualitative and quantitative methods in a complementary way, puts it at **the cutting edge of the use of research methodology**. The expertise in qualitative research has been complemented by an increased capacity in statistical analysis, and the ability to carry out relatively large field surveys.

CEPA **conducts research in all regions in Sri Lanka**, and since the end of the war, has conducted extensive research in the Northern and Eastern provinces of the country. CEPA's emphasis has been on understanding poverty impacts; dynamics and effects of post conflict development interventions carried out in the targeted communities.

**CEPA works in Sinhala, Tamil and English, giving it the ability and advantage of being able to reach out to different constituencies** within Sri Lanka as well as internationally.

CEPA's key strength lies with its core staff and those who support the organisation as Fellows, Research Associates and Consultants and CEPA's Subscribing Members and the Board of Directors. CEPA is led by an Executive Director and supported by a Management and Leadership team comprising Senior Researchers, who are also leaders of the Thematic Programmes and Team Leaders of Communications, Research Quality & Learning Programmes, Head of Finance and Head of Administration.

**Senior researchers at CEPA hold Doctoral and Masters degrees**, while all junior researchers hold graduate degrees and are encouraged to pursue post graduate studies in their fields. CEPA's **staff of 30 is multidisciplinary** covering the disciplines of economics, political science, environmental science, sociology, communication and finance with further specialisations within the areas of statistics, natural resource management, urban planning, law, public policy, conflict studies, migration, media, information management and human resources.

# Research, Advice and Consultancy

CEPA's research has always had an overarching focus on poverty, and programmatically, research has been structured under seven new thematic areas of **Basic Services and Social Protection, Sustainable Development, Livelihoods and Employment, Labour Migration, Diaspora and Development, Social Cohesion and Reconciliation, and Urban and Rural Transformations.**



**Basic Services and Social Protection** thematic programme is based on CEPA assisting communities to engage with the service providers to effect changes and improvement to services they receive.

**Sustainable Development** thematic programme aims to build a body of knowledge and generate evidence that creates a strong lobby for a system change towards sustainable development.

**Livelihoods and Employment** thematic programme aims to understand how the changing nature of work often continues to marginalise and exclude the same set of men and women who were pushed to low paying high risk jobs and the potential the same changes may have for being a more inclusive, equitable and just process for the most vulnerable men and women in Sri Lanka.

**Labour Migration** thematic programme focuses on examining the socio-economic

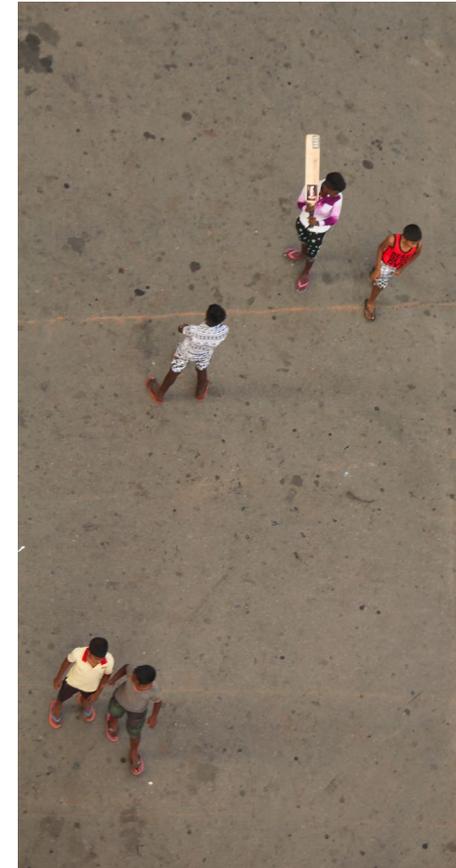




and political underpinnings of labour migration within/from/to Sri Lanka, thereby, questioning and challenging the linear narratives about Sri Lankan migrant workers.

**Diaspora and Development** thematic programme focuses on the diasporic community, its engagement with local development needs, their expectations in engaging with Sri Lanka and reconciliation in the post-war context.

**Social Cohesion and Reconciliation** thematic programme strives to build shared values in community enterprises as equal members integrating peace and conflict sensitivity lens for sustainable development. In our work we try to understand; research; and document factors that either reduce social cohesion or strengthen it.





### **Urban and Rural Transformation**

thematic goes beyond hard infrastructure and services provided by the State and capture how ordinary people and communities participate and contribute to development. The purpose of the transformation is to encourage more people-centered development design, implementation and operationalisation of development strategies at local and national level, in terms of urban and rural spaces.



# Support Programmes



## Communicating Research

The Communications programme continues to work closely with the thematic programmes to ensure that research findings are disseminated to a larger audience with the aim of influencing policy at different levels. The Programme uses various strategies and tools to successfully communicate the research and increase CEPA's visibility, attract new clients, donors and create research opportunities. The Programme has been able to undertake communications related projects and thereby, demonstrate the Team's expertise and maximise its capacities.

## Research Quality and Learning

**Research Quality and Learning (RQL)** support programme is committed to continuously enhance our capacity to creatively and rigorously develop, interpret, and apply theory and method. The stress on quality is designed to enable independent, self-reflective, and ethical research that speaks to, and expands existing knowledge. Thus, RQL enables all researchers at CEPA to consciously set and continuously review standards and learning in pursuit of a research praxis that is ethically grounded and politically informed.

## Finance and Administration

The **Finance and Administration** programmes provide financial, management and administrative support to the organisation.

CEPA's range of client services falls into four categories; **Applied Research, Advisory Services, Dialogue and Exchange** and **Training and Facilitation**. This multiple service provision ensures that the organisation's outputs are grounded in empirical research (Applied Research) often with a specific focus on a development project (Advisory Services). Dialogue and Exchange ensures that this empirical knowledge is translated into practical policy advice and recommendations are communicated to relevant



stakeholders and/or tailor-made to feed into development planning at institutional level in both government and non-governmental organisations. CEPA's Training and Facilitation complements its other service areas to transfer expertise and knowledge acquired through CEPA's research and practical use of various research methods and tools. CEPA provides customised, fee-based training on request based on the content, time frame and language preferences.

Courses on understanding poverty, qualitative research methods, citizen score cards, monitoring and evaluation and facilitation, migration, social cohesion, media and development communication to name a few. CEPA's training style is interactive with use of participatory approaches and designed for small groups (8 - 10) for maximum interaction, sharing of ideas and learning. It draws from both theoretical and practical experience.

### CEPA has

- Engaged with communities in the Northern, Eastern, Central and Southern Provinces to understand and gather people's knowledge and perceptions of local reconciliation mechanisms and national reconciliation policies, reflecting the levels of intra and inter-communal social capital and trust in local institutions.
- Contributed to the evidence base on the dynamics of poverty in the plantation sector, migrant workers and other vulnerable groups including children, Women Headed Households in post conflict situations enhancing the use of mixed methods in research and impact evaluation within the Sri Lankan context.
- Produced documentaries to engage with state and non-state sector audiences on poverty and development issues focusing youth, inequality, education, parliamentarians, children etc.)
- Communicated local knowledge through the Southern Voice network to contribute to network's global discourse on State of the SDGs. This is based on CEPA's discourse on the impacts of jobs based in the apparel industry as a result of the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IRs) of automation.
- Provided training on understanding poverty, short course on migration and Community Report Card (CRC) tool as a way of transferring knowledge and understanding of working on poverty issues to development practitioners, state and non-state actors at national and local government level and in the media.
- Disseminated research and knowledge using both online and offline tools to ensure information availability in an arrowing social accountability space. The Poverty Portal holds data and information resources with an online and offline presence.



# Clients and Partners

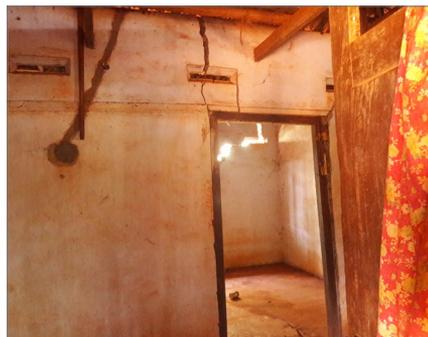


- Agency for Technical Cooperation and Development (ACTED)
- Asia Foundation
- Asian Development Bank
- Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
- Berendina Development Services
- British High Commission (BHC)
- Centre for Governance Innovations
- Centre for Policy Dialogue (CPD)
- Centre for Policy Research
- COFREPECHE (Spell out)
- Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
- Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)
- European Centre for Development Policy Management (ECDPM)
- German Development Corporation (GIZ)
- Global Alternative Tourism Networks (GATN) of Asia and Pacific Alliance of YMCAs
- Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund (GCERF)
- Government of Canada
- Industrial Technology Institute
- International Development Research Centre
- International Labour Organisation (ILO)
- Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation Sri Lanka
- JanathakshanGte. Ltd.
- John Keells Foundation
- Norwegian Embassy
- Overseas Development Institute (ODI)
- Public Affairs Centre (PAC)
- Sarvodaya with Arigatou International (AI-ECP)
- Search for Common Ground (SFCG), Sri Lanka
- Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium
- SOAS University of London
- Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI)
- Swiss Agency for Development Cooperation
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Netherlands
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
- United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)
- United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
- University of Bath
- University of Manitoba
- University of Zurich
- The William & Flora Hewlett Foundation
- The World Bank

## CEPA has made a significant headway in influencing policy as its research outputs are taken into consideration by policymakers and government officials when formulating policies and implementing programmes to assist poor and marginalised communities

### Impact and Influence

- CEPA works with government ministries to influence policy while retaining its fiercely defended independent stance. Over the years, CEPA has shown keen interest on child poverty and has made a concerted effort to create multi-dimensional child poverty index for Sri Lanka.
- CEPA has expanded and diversified its client portfolio with research projects and assignments in collaboration with foreign missions and the state, non-state, private sectors, like-minded research institutions as well as conducting joint research with overseas and local academia on specific assignments.
- The Diaspora and Development thematic has been actively engaging and providing knowledge to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) since its inception where the thematic programme was able to help MFA develop its policy paper on '*Engaging Overseas Sri Lankans as Development Partners*'. CEPA also helped newly recruited MFA officers by reviewing and providing feedback on the policy paper on Diaspora.
- CEPA continues in its efforts to channel the knowledge it generates to a diverse clientele including the media and the public through various communications outputs and tools.





### In the International Arena CEPA has:

- CEPA under the Sustainable Development thematic continued its engagement with the Southern Voice Network to collaborate on designing a multi country research on policy coherence for sustainable development. CEPA also collaborated with the Southern Voice Network to generate the global report “State of SDGs” (SVSS). This flagship report provides evidence based analysis and recommendations to improve the delivery of the SDGs.
- CEPA’s participation and links with UNESCAP People Forum on Sustainable Development (Thailand), UNESCAP South Asia SDG Forum (Bangladesh), UN High Level Political Forum (United States) and Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI, Pakistan) to share findings of the study on how automation in the apparel industry in Sri Lanka has impacted jobs (SDG 8, SDG 5) and how that is also interlinked with other aspects such as education for livelihoods (SDG 4), social protection (SDG 1) and sustainable consumption and production (SDG 12).
- CEPA continues its engagement with the South Asian Disaster Review as part of Duryog Nivaran South Asian Network.
- CEPA’s collaboration with the Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium (SLRC) as a core member for over six years researching livelihoods and services affected by conflict, through which SLRC aimed to provide a stronger evidence base about how people make a living, educate their children, deals with illness and access basic services in fragile and conflict affected situations.





## Within Sri Lanka CEPA:

- Partnering with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Department of Census and Statistics (DCS), Oxford Policy and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the Ministry of Planning in child related activities to identify dimensions and indicators relevant with the aim of devising a method for measuring child poverty in Sri Lanka.
- Understanding micro credit lending and its effects on women, especially focusing on the practices adopted by lenders and how such practices affect the micro-borrowers in various districts, especially focusing Batticaloa and Monaragala Districts.
- Engaging on the areas of Trafficking In Persons (TIP), forced labour, irregular migration and Gender Based Violence (GBV) and enable to understand and provide support services for victims of trafficking in persons and formulate policies in collaboration with development practitioners.
- Partnership with the Energy Forum has played an influential role in interacting with community organisations to increase awareness on energy equity and sustainable use resulting in the launch of a consumer network and establishment of Consumer Charter on Energy.
- Continuous engagement with Local Government and CSOs, has enabled to enhance accountability and service delivery of free state services selected by district level Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) in lagging regions.
- Is working in close collaboration with the Sri Lankan Ministry of Foreign Affairs on an initiative looking at creating home-grown models of post-war economic development that will foster an environment conducive for reconciliation and peace with the engagement of overseas Sri Lankans.
- Has been studying to understand the plantation sector status quo in comparison to the rural sector specifically focusing on the sector-specific policies, programs, service provision by government and the effectiveness of the same.
- Has been offering a short course on migration, development and conflict designed to create an interactive learning space for those interested in understanding the intricacies of migration, including how different types of migration is inter-connected with conflict, natural disasters and (under) development. This is learner-centric with interactive activities in the delivery of the course, with the aim that the knowledge shared has impacted the way policy makers approach the topic and think of issues unique to migration.
- Continues to work on assignments related to baseline assessments, monitoring and evaluation such as gender mainstreaming, peace building and reconciliation efforts in projects, implemented by clients, with a view to foster transparency and increase accountability.



## CEPA continues to work on a diverse number of Projects and Assignments over the years. Some of which are:

- Fostering cooperation between Civil Service Organisations and government authorities to provide better social services.
- Conducting assessments on youth, and women in peace building and reconciliation; empowering women for inclusive and sustainable transitional justice.
- Matching the needs of the Provinces within resources of Overseas Sri Lankans to facilitate Partnership in Development.
- Working Towards Creative Partnerships- New Forms of Engagement with the Sri Lankan Diaspora.
- International and National Private Sector for Post-War Development, Reconciliation and Peace Building.
- Carrying out assignment on Mapping of local stakeholders to support SMEs and Cooperatives especially in the Northern Province with a view of supporting business and cooperative development, and assess their capacities to support project interventions.
- Supporting national reconciliation efforts by addressing grievances of the concerned sections of the population through targeted resettlement of the last of the conflict affected internally displaced persons.
- Continuous engagement in studying technical and vocational education graduates' employment in Sri Lanka.
- Providing critical analysis and feedback to the UN led Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through the Southern Voice (SV) Network.
- Collaborating with the Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) and UNDP to carry out a pilot study on understanding the interlinkage between SDGs for policy coherence.
- Engaging with the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR) discourse highlighting future trends related to job security for women.
- Partnering with The Asia Foundation (TAF) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) on studies relating to trafficking especially focusing Gender Based Violence (GBV) and labour migration.
- Engaging on studies focusing the fisheries with emphasis on gendered issues, lack of women's involvement in the deep-sea fishing as they engage in processing of fish that is harvested by the deep-sea vessels and the fisheries harbours.
- Linking with University of Bristol, University of Bath and Zurich University.

# Core Values

## Respect

CEPA values the contribution of all those who participate in and contribute to CEPA's work. We respect the rights, dignity, and potential of all those involved in our work.

## Integrity

CEPA acts according to its mission and we are honest and transparent in what we do and say, and accountable for our collective and individual actions. Our work will always be guided by the principles of balance, independence, and impartiality.

## Excellence

At CEPA we constantly challenge ourselves to achieve the highest level of learning and performance to achieve greater impact and make a difference.

## Collaboration

At CEPA we are committed to continuously sharing our knowledge and engaging with a wide range of people and institutions to achieve our goals.

## Flexibility

CEPA strives to be flexible and will adapt to and accommodate changing or extenuating circumstances to best meet its mission and objectives.





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