



**CIDA'S ANALYTICAL AND RESEARCH NEEDS
IN THE AREA OF POVERTY REDUCTION**

January 15th, 2002

Foreword

The authors want to express their most sincere thanks to all the professionals who took their time to share their views on this assignment. Nonetheless, they assume full responsibility for the opinions expressed in this report.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The present assessment of CIDA's Analytical and Research Needs in the Area of Poverty has addressed the following five sets of issues: 1) Clients and Outputs (Section 2.1); 2) Analytical and Research areas (Section 2.2); 3) Methodological Approaches (Section 2.3); 4) Partnerships (Section 2.4); and 5) Conditions for success (Section 2.5). It relied on the results of semi-structured interviews and electronic questionnaires sent to resources persons in Canada and abroad, as well as other information sources, to arrive at its conclusions

There are three main findings:

- First, the general sentiment expressed by the vast majority of respondents was the desirability and need for in-house research to be conducted by CIDA with the contribution of carefully chosen partners;
- Second, the primary concern was that the research be practically relevant for CIDA's programs and projects and deal with issues such as those relating to Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) processes and/or the assessment/evaluation of alternative poverty reduction programs;
- Third, the main conclusion of Section 2.2 is that in-house research on poverty at CIDA should focus on causal analysis to understand economic and social behavior and provide guidance for CIDA's policymakers.

The main recommendations of the five central elements of the study are as follows:

Re. Clients and Outputs

There are three main direct clients for CIDA's in-house poverty research: senior management, analysts and operational branches desk officers. The primary products for these sources include briefing notes, country reviews, impact evaluations, Best/Worst Practice reports, and policy papers. The said products are to contribute to four objectives: 1) awareness raising within CIDA; 2) poverty mainstreaming in programs/projects; 3) enhancing operational effectiveness in poverty reduction; 4) informing an original Canadian position on poverty reduction. The research results should be largely disseminated to CIDA's partners in the developing countries to increase the returns on CIDA's investment in research.

Re. Analytical and Research Areas

The case was made to focus squarely on causal analysis of poverty for policy-making, program orientation purposes, and project design and in particular, on issues related to the analysis, elaboration/validation, implementation and monitoring/evaluation of Poverty Reduction Strategies. The following seven research areas were identified (in Section 2.2 and Appendix 2) which meet the criteria of practical relevance for PRS processes and for which gaps in the literature exist: 1) the dynamics of poverty, vulnerability and inequality (PVI); 2) the macroeconomic environment and poverty; 3) trade and poverty; 4) financial capital and poverty 5) HIV/AIDs and poverty; 6) child labour and poverty; 7) governance, right-based approaches and poverty reduction. More specific research topics are discussed in Appendix 2 and priorities identified in the main report. Two cross-sectoral perspectives which should be considered in all seven areas: gender analysis and environment-poverty linkages. The focus should be on rural

areas where the majority of the poor live in most poor countries. It is worth mentioning that these seven research areas represent to a large extent a consensus among knowledgeable researchers and professionals in the development field in Canada and abroad.

Re. Methodological Approaches

Although the precise methodologies cannot be specified at this stage since they will depend on (i) the specific topic being addressed, (ii) the availability of existing data and of financial resources, and (iii) the required time frame, three core methodological principles were recommended. Analysis should be: 1) interdisciplinary; 2) applied and 3) based, when necessary, on original data collection and analysis. They should use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and strategic planning techniques.

Re. Partnerships

Two main types of partnerships were recommended. The first, and most critical, involves a close working relationship between Operational and Policy Branch staff to define research priorities and conduct or oversee collaborative research activities. The second partnership is between the PRU and researchers/analysts in Canada and of necessity, in the South. Close working relationships should be forged with research and professional teams selected in an open-bidding process for the relevance, applied nature and quality of their research. Given financial and human resource constraints and comparative advantage, the role of the PRU should be more to manage research and dissemination activities subcontracted to the latter and to be involved in some of them rather than conducting all research themselves.

Re. Conditions for Success

Three conditions were stipulated with respect to staffing, financing and leadership. In terms of human resources, the PRU should ideally include senior staff with (i) adequate graduate training in social sciences; (ii) experience in dealing with applied research, (iii) practical field policy and program experience in developing countries (iv) knowledge of CIDA policies and procedures and (v) awareness of various international initiatives in the area of poverty reduction. In reality, if such resource persons are not available, it is suggested (i) to put together a team of professionals which, together, combine those areas of expertise (ii) to set a consultative committee to the PRU made up of high level poverty specialists.

Moreover, the PRU must be adequately financed and it requires high-level support from CIDA senior management.

Once this report is validated by CIDA, it should lead to the design of the PRU 5-year strategy and a yearly workplan with precise ToRs for specific research activities to be conducted, identification of partners, calendar and budget estimates.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

MFI	Microfinance Institution
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PRU	Poverty Research Unit
PVI	Poverty, Vulnerability, Inequality
SWAP	Sector Wide Approach

SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context and Methodology

The underlying objective of the present Assessment of CIDA's Analytical and Research Needs in the Area of Poverty is to help CIDA define the mandate for a possible Poverty Research Unit (PRU) located in CIDA's Policy Branch. More specifically, following the ToRs and discussions with the Senior Economists commissioning this study, the report outlines recommendations for this PRU in terms of: 1) Clients and Outputs; 2) Analytical and Research areas; 3) Methodological approaches; 4) Partnerships within and outside CIDA; 5) Conditions of Success.

Through direct and telephone interviews as well as a small electronic survey, the authors benefited from the views of a number of professionals within and outside of CIDA. The majority of responses came from Canadian sources but a significant number were received from abroad, including developing countries. (see Appendix 3 for the list of contributors). We have drawn extensively on these sources in drafting this report.

It should be emphatically stated, however, that the conclusions drawn in this report reflect our own best judgement on the basis of a range of informational sources. We do not pretend to be neutral purveyors of information and have been guided by the following principles in our work:

- Non-duplication of task: A lot of research has been and is being conducted on poverty issues. It is important not to duplicate it and to take into account the comparative advantage of the research teams which have obtained tangible results in this area;
- Practical relevance: CIDA is in charge of defining and implementing Canada's aid policies, programs and projects. It is therefore interested in applied research with practical implications for its programming, monitoring and evaluation activities, not in academic or theoretical research on poverty;
- Cost-Effectiveness: CIDA does not have a lot of financial resources for this PRU and its joint facility with IDRC. It should therefore make hard choices and focus on a few key research areas directly linked to its overall priorities and based on a demand-driven approach. It should also explore as much as possible partnerships with other bilateral and multilateral organisations to leverage its own money by co-financing and co-directing research activities deemed priorities.

It is relevant to note the context within which this study has been undertaken. There have been a number of recent or on-going developments which make the report particularly timely:

- The OECD and United Nations have launched the International Development Goals (IDG) initiative with many countries and multilateral/bilateral organisations endorsing these basic human needs goals to be reached by 2015;
- The major Bank and Fund supported PRSP initiative is under way in a number of HIPC countries and, more recently, this process has been extended to a number of non HIPC countries. Even in countries which are not involved in a PRSP process, the concern for poverty is pushing a number of them to elaborate a Poverty Reduction Strategy. Elaborating

a PRS is not an easy task and the PRSP process is facing a number of difficulties, which recently lead these institutions to ask for a review of this initiative and its related Growth and Poverty Reduction facility;

- The G8 launched an Africa Initiative at their last meeting in Genoa which also emphasises poverty reduction as well as actions against HIV/AIDS. Canada is going to host the next G8 meeting and poverty-related issues will probably be even more explicitly on the agenda;
- CIDA has been working for a long time to reduce poverty and defined in 1996 an official Policy on Poverty Reduction, making it a cornerstone of its action;
- CIDA's Asia Branch developed an Asia Poverty Reduction Operational Framework in 2000;
- CIDA's Performance Review Branch has commissioned a review of CIDA's participation in research in international development and a first draft report is available;
- CIDA's Policy Branch has commissioned a study to make recommendations on the mandate of its Analysis and Research Division and on the use of a new CIDA-IDRC facility.

1.2 Format and Content of the Report

As mentioned above, the study addresses the following four issues, all of which occupy separate sub-sections of Section 2: Clients and Outputs (Section 2.1); Analytical and Research Areas (Section 2.2); Methodological Approaches (Section 2.3); Partnerships within and outside of CIDA (Section 2.4) and Conditions for Success (Section 2.5). Though all five areas are addressed, the decided focus is on Section 2.2. There are two points which should be borne in mind when reviewing this section.

The first point concerns analytical focus. The common thread which links all the analytical/research priorities identified is the focus on causal analysis useful for policymakers and program/project officers. Otherwise put, the emphasis is on understanding the variables and processes which increase, reduce or perpetuate poverty to help design better poverty reduction policies, programs and projects. One subset of processes, which are particularly relevant for development organisations such as CIDA, concerns the sorts of policies and programmes which figure in Poverty Reduction Strategies (PRS). In fact, the central importance of these issues was so forcefully enunciated in interviews with CIDA staff, that we have structured the discussion of research/analytical priorities around the various phases of a Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The second point concerns format. Following a demand-driven approach, we start by identifying the clients of the PRU and their needs in terms of research outputs in the area of poverty reduction. Then Section 2.2 discusses analytical/research areas within the context of PRS processes. It should be read in conjunction with Appendices 1 and 2. Appendix 1 presents an analytical framework which distinguishes between different conceptions of poverty as well as between strategies of poverty reduction and risk reduction. One of the key objectives of this section is to situate causal analysis within the broader framework of poverty analysis and establish its centrality for operational purposes. Appendix 2 provides background information for many of the research areas identified in Section 2.2. It reviews some of the relevant literature and details existing knowledge gaps.

SECTION 2: MAIN FINDINGS

As discussed, the present section analyses in turn the following issues which form the basis of this study: Clients and Outputs (Section 2.1); Analytical and Research Areas (Section 2.2); Methodological Approaches (Section 2.3) Partnerships (Section 2.4) and Conditions for Success (Section 2.5).

2.1 Clients and Outputs of the PRU

The vast majority of respondents in the present study affirmed the desirability and need for applied research on poverty conducted in-house at CIDA. Since CIDA is spending Canadian taxpayers' money, it is only normal that the PRU helps CIDA staff in priority, even though other partners in Canada, other industrialized countries and in developing countries will undoubtedly benefit from this research. The proposed Poverty Research Unit (PRU) would have three major clienteles within CIDA:

1) Senior Management, who needs:

- Regular synthetic briefing notes on major developments on poverty trends and poverty reduction initiatives;
- Help in designing Canada's poverty reduction policies and actions in the field as well as positions in international fora in coordination with other multilateral and bilateral aid agencies;
- Feedback on the extent to which these policies are actually implemented in CIDA's operational programs and projects and their impact on poverty reduction.

2) Analysts who need:

- Regular synthetic briefing notes on major developments on poverty trends and poverty reduction initiatives;
- Help in keeping up to date in terms of the analytical framework and empirical evidence about the micro, meso and macro linkages between their area of expertise and poverty reduction initiatives;
- Help in building up a network of resource persons specialised in pro-poor analysis in their area of expertise;
- Help in assessing *ex ante* and *ex post* the pro-poor nature of the programs and projects in their area of expertise.

3) Program and country officers in Operational Branches, who need:

- Help in making their current actions pro-poor;
- Help in designing future actions with a greater impact on poverty reduction;
- Help in building up a network of resource persons specialised in pro-poor analysis in their area of intervention;
- Help in assessing the poverty impact of projects and policies, *ex ante* and *ex post*.

CIDA's PRU will have to address the specific needs of subgroups and units within these three main categories such as the Performance Monitoring & Evaluation Division, the Multilateral Branch, the Partnership Branch and the field offices.

CIDA's PRU would have the following outputs:

(i) To foster poverty awareness and contribute to CIDA's activities as a learning institution:

- Surveys of literature on specific themes relating priority areas and poverty reduction;
- Briefing notes on poverty trends, new issues and results of major conferences.

(ii) To contribute to poverty mainstreaming in operational programs and projects:

- Operational guidelines for incorporating a poverty reduction perspective in project design and evaluation in CIDA's priority areas;
- Participating in reviews of regional and country programs for compliance with poverty reduction policy.

(iii) To contribute to more relevant and efficient CIDA's poverty reduction interventions:

- Impact evaluations of selected representative CIDA's programs and projects in terms of poverty reduction;
- Conducting and/or participating in applied research programs which will test new or possibly better poverty reduction interventions.

(iv) To contribute to a rigorous, informed and original Canadian position on poverty reduction:

- Keeping abreast of best and worst practices in terms of poverty reduction interventions conducted by CIDA and other major players;
- Helping draft CIDA's policy and position papers.

The research results should be largely disseminated to CIDA's partners in the developing countries to increase the returns on CIDA's investment in research.

These outputs should be:

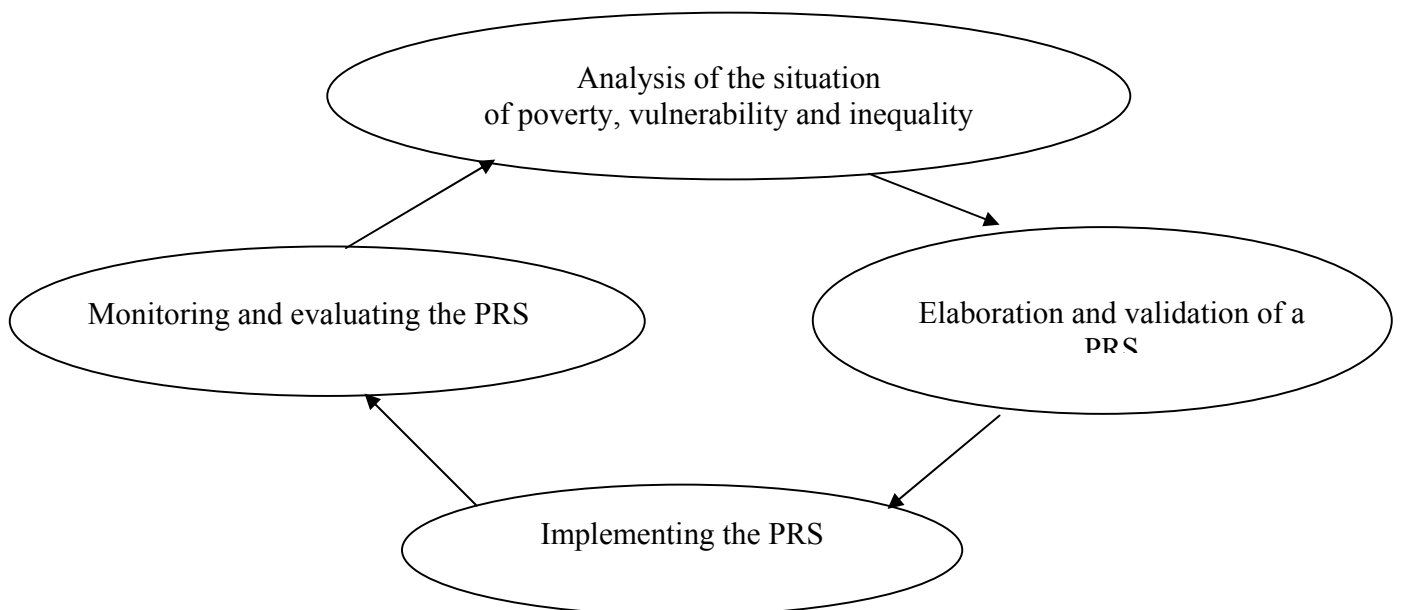
- Timely, i.e., come out in time to feed into the policy-making process;
- Short and not too technical to be accessible for professionals who cannot spend too much time reading and who are not necessarily poverty specialists;
- Relevant for CIDA's operational programs;
- Adapted to the various clienteles.

2.2 Analytical and Research Priorities

Setting analytical and research priorities is always a difficult exercise given the extent of individual researchers' information gaps, personal priorities and vested interests in the north and in the south. However, it is worth mentioning that the research priorities presented below represent to a large extent a consensus among knowledgeable researchers and professionals in the development field in Canada and abroad.

The most important message to come from interviews with CIDA staff was the imperative of linking research activities closely with operational concerns. The key issues raised involved provision of information to better guide CIDA interventions within the context of Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS) processes, in particular Poverty reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP), and Sector Wide Approaches (SWAP) as well as the assessment/evaluation of alternative poverty reduction programs. As a consequence, we have structured the discussion of analytical/research priorities around the various phases of a Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRS). Four phases are schematically depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Phases of a poverty reduction strategy



It is important to emphasise that research needs to be conducted at all phases, not just the analysis phase, especially for an action-oriented agency such as CIDA.

A major cross-cutting issue which should figure in all the research areas below relates to gender. We do not feel that gender issues should occupy a separate category as there is the risk of

ensuing marginalisation. On the contrary, it is more useful to mainstream gender issues by including gender analysis systematically within all research categories. It should be emphasised, however, that gender is not the only relevant social category which deserves attention, as social divisions based on ethnicity, caste, race, status, etc. may weigh heavily on poverty as well.

Another cross-cutting theme is environment. The focus should be on the analysis of linkages between environment and poverty, put in a context of sustainable human development. Of particular interest is to help in the design of economically viable activities that reduce poverty and contribute to sustainable natural resource management, such as supporting agroforestry commodity chains.

2.2.1 Phase 1: Analysis of the Poverty Situation

A great deal of poverty analysis has been undertaken over the past decade. One may wonder whether we aren't in a phase of diminishing returns and whether it is worthwhile to invest additional resources in this pursuit. It is widely accepted that poverty stems from inadequate access to, or the perverse functioning of, various forms of capital. Further, it is generally accepted that poverty is multidimensional and that the precise weighting of its constituent elements is context specific. How to conduct a poverty profile building on qualitative and quantitative techniques is also well-established (see for instance Aho et al 1998). Poverty needs to be clearly distinguished from vulnerability (downside risk of falling living standards) and inequality between socio-economic groups in a given society (see Appendix 1). A wide range of empirical studies have detailed correlates of poverty including such variables as rural residence, geographical/spatial location, dependency ratios, educational levels, etc. In light of the above, it does not seem wise to channel additional resources to these sorts of issues which typically figure in a poverty profile.

We feel that what is missing is a better understanding of the ways that key variables cause, reduce or perpetuate poverty. In particular, there is a need for: 1) a better understanding of poverty dynamics and a causal analysis of poverty processes including research on vulnerability and risk reduction strategies of various household members; 2) a better understanding of the linkages between trade liberalisation, globalisation and poverty/vulnerability/inequality (PVI); 3) more socio-economic analysis of the linkages between HIV/AIDS and poverty; 4) more research on the relationship between poverty and child labour and in particular the identification of creative solutions to education/work tradeoffs 5) a better understanding of the relationship between poverty reduction and 'governance' issues including, political/institutional determinants of successful poverty reduction strategies, the poverty consequences of decentralisation and forms of participation, and the relationship between rights and poverty reduction, in particular the role of the law and conflict resolution in poverty reduction.¹

¹ These and other research areas are elaborated on in Appendix 2.

2.2.2 Phase 2: PRS Elaboration and Validation

In terms of the following phases of a PRS (elaboration and validation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation), research is much more recent (see for example Dessalien et al. 2001 and World Bank 2001), but is a must, especially in the context of PRSPs. Again some elements of how to proceed are pretty well established: a PRS must consider the macro framework, sectoral policies (such as SWAPS) and micro level programs and projects and their linkages; growth is a necessary, but not sufficient condition for poverty reduction; poverty reduction requires both economic and social interventions; participatory strategic planning techniques can be successfully used to identify a consistent set of strategic orientations and priority measures with a corresponding set of specific measurable objectives. However further research is needed both on technical and institutional issues.

Regarding the macroeconomic framework, more research is needed on 1) the linkages between growth and Poverty, Vulnerability and Inequality (PVI). In particular, can standard poverty reduction policies in most PRSPs deliver the kind of growth required to maintain macroeconomic equilibria, reduce national debt and create enough sustainable employment?; 2) the linkages between macro budgetary conditionalities contained in the PRSP policy matrix and the cost of achieving the specific measurable objectives of the PRS; 3) ex post and even more ex ante analysis of the impact of specific macroeconomic policies on poverty.

Regarding the international context, more research is needed on the linkages between trade and PVI. One needs to move beyond theoretical and ideological divides to identify empirically what are the options for a given country vis-a-vis globalisation and try to measure as rigorously as possible the PVI reduction impacts of various trade policies, in particular through their effects on specific agricultural commodity chains. CIDA has been supporting for a number of years the development of specific agricultural commodity chains and the PRU research could help design the next generation of CIDA projects in this area.

Regarding the access of the poor to financial capital, CIDA has supported for a long time the creation and development of microfinance institutions. More research could be usefully conducted by the PRU on 1) innovations in microfinance that can simultaneously increase institutional financial viability and the accessibility of financial services to poor and that could be incorporated in the next generation of CIDA's microfinance projects; 2) impact evaluation of on-going microfinance programs supported by CIDA on poverty reduction.

Regarding the access of the poor to health services, one of CIDA's priority areas is health and nutrition and within this area, an area of key concern is HIV/AIDS. Until now, CIDA has supported a relatively standard approach in supporting the fight against HIV/AIDS based on a combination of medical, epidemiological and community social work perspectives. It is now time to move to a broader perspective including socio-economic-financial variables as it is promoted now in many countries through the design of multisectoral strategies linking the HIV/AIDS struggle with the poverty reduction strategy. The PRU could usefully conduct research on the linkages between PVI and HIV/AIDS to help design the next generation of CIDA's HIV/AIDS projects.

Regarding the elaboration and validation process of a PRSP, one needs to move beyond the rhetoric about participation and ownership. The PRU could document how the process is actually conducted in the field in a number of countries from a political economy perspective, identify best and worst practices and advise CIDA program officers who are part of the policy dialogue around PRSPs on operational means and procedures to reinforce actual participation and ownership at national and subnational levels.

2.2.3 Phase 3: PRS Implementation

Few countries are yet at the implementation phase of the PRS. However, this is where the real problems arise because people are required to act and to modify their past behavior. Further budgets will need to be allocated differently from the past. On the technical side, research is required on how to better articulate the macro policy matrix, sectoral programs, SWAPs and the PRS. This latter is by definition the linkage between the macro and the micro and cuts across a number of sectors.

On the institutional side, much thinking is needed on the respective roles of the various actors in piloting and implementing the PRS and solving potential turf wars between key actors including ministries, national and local governments, NGOs, the private sector and international organisations. SWAPs and PRSP processes entail new modalities of coordination among donors, and between donors and host governments to ensure that principles of the program approach are respected. There are many aspects which remain to be worked out including disbursement, reporting, monitoring procedures and organisational arrangements. The ODI has undertaken some recent work on these issues (Brown et. al. 2000) but there remains scope to pursue these themes and in particular, to record Best and Worst Practice.

2.2.4 Phase 4: PRS Monitoring and Evaluation

Finally, the PRU can contribute significantly at the monitoring and evaluation phase. Let us underline that all these PRS phases work in a loop, so that the evaluation of past policies, programs and projects feeds into a new analysis phase and the design of the next generation of policies, programs and projects.

The PRU could start immediately participating along with the Operational branches/divisions and Performance Monitoring & Evaluation Division specialists in the assessment of the impacts of key CIDA programs and projects directly related to poverty reduction. It may for instance assess the impact on PVI of major projects oriented toward improving access to primary health and primary education in terms of their short run and long run potential impacts on PVI to help assess the sustainability of such actions. One may wonder if the impact on PVI might be greater and more sustainable to promote water sanitation rather than primary health care centres or mothers' education rather than children's education. Similarly, it may assess the impact of microfinance development projects on the sustainability of microfinance institutions and the accessibility of the poor to microfinance services. One may wonder if the impact on PVI might be greater and more sustainable if interventions are made on primary level microfinance institutions (MFIs) or second-tier organisations, new MFIs or established ones, etc. These types

of evaluation issues, as well as the analytical tools required to address them, figured very prominently in interviews with CIDA staff.

In addition to project-level monitoring and evaluation, there are broader issues of poverty monitoring which are quite integral to the PRSP process. In fact, there has been a rush to devise and implement 'poverty monitoring systems' within the context of the PRSP process. The objective of these systems is both to track poverty trends over time and to monitor performance in implementing poverty reduction programs and policies. A recent interesting development in Tanzania has been the development of systems of donor monitoring (Helleiner 2000). There has been one recent review of experience to date in developing these systems (Booth and Lucas 2001), but there is considerable scope for ongoing review of progress and recording of Best and Worst Practice.

2.3 PRU Methodological Approaches

While we do not believe that the specification of a rigid methodological template is appropriate since the methodology will depend on (i) the specific topic being addressed, (ii) the availability of existing data and of financial resources, and (iii) the required time frame, we feel that there are at least three methodological principles which should guide CIDA's PRU:

- It should be interdisciplinary, drawing on a wide range of expertise in the social sciences. It should have its economics straight, but not limit itself to economic approaches and variables. It should make use of different research methods and combine as much as possible qualitative and quantitative tools;
- It should be applied, and inform CIDA's policy or programmes on poverty and not serve the primary purpose of publication in academic journals. Models could be used to help understand and measure complex interactions, only if they really represent a value added and provide direct usable inputs to operational policy and program design. They should use a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods and strategic planning techniques.
- It should rely, when necessary, on original data collection and analysis. The PRU should take advantage of its access to operational specialists working in a number of countries to conduct/participate in field research, collecting and analyzing new data, and not simply synthesizing existing materials from other researchers. Having original research is critical if CIDA is to adopt an independent position on issues.

2.4 PRU Partnerships

A critical partnership is to be established between operational branches and the PRU. First, in the end, the justification for the PRU is to help improve CIDA's operational programs and projects. Second, operational professionals have a lot to contribute to orient research on more socially useful topics and to help interpret results given their knowledge of field realities. Conversely, applied researchers can help questioning past habits, inform about other actions and test new ones.

Here are several suggestions to help establish this win-win relationship between Operational Branches and the PRU:

- A formal linkage should be established between the Strategic Policy and Planning Units at Branch level to help design the workplan of the PRU;
- Several Operational Branch analysts and specialists could spend a small share of their time working with PRU members on specific research activities of relevance to the Branch. Time will have to be freed-up to allow them to participate in these tasks;
- Operational branches could contribute to financing part of the cost of specific PRU activities deemed relevant to them. Why not say that a given % of the budget of Operational Branches could go to PRU research activities?
- Informal linkages are also of paramount importance. In the end, collaborations are made between people and the PRU will be sustainable if the program and country officers see the benefit from working with the PRU members. This requires a proactive attitude of PRU members to reach out to their colleagues in Operational Branches where the ideas of programs and projects are formed. The existing discussion platform is the Poverty Reduction Network and other existing dissemination activities such as the annual roundtable on poverty reduction, the web site on poverty reduction, the speaker series should be continued and supported.

Second the PRU should develop selected partnerships with research and professional teams having similar interests and approaches. Given financial and human resource constraints and comparative advantage, the role of the PRU should be more to manage research and dissemination activities subcontracted to the latter and to be involved in some of them rather than conducting all research themselves.

These professionals may come from a variety of backgrounds in the North and, of necessity, in the South: international organisations (World Bank, IMF, UNDP, etc.), bilateral donor agencies (DFID in particular), other ministries (Ministry of Finance in particular), public research and private institutes, NGOs, consulting firms, other networks such as the future Poverty Reduction Learning Network (PRLN) for Africa and CIDA's microenterprise web network.. It is important to keep this networking as open and transparent as possible drawing on the widest range of competences available. Sub-contracted research activities should be allocated on the basis of open bidding procedures. At the same time, partners should have a value-added for the PRU, which means a solid research record on issues in the PRU research agenda.

2.5 Critical conditions for PRU's success

The PRU will be a success only if it is staffed and financed in an appropriate manner.

In terms of human resources, the PRU should ideally include senior staff with (i) adequate graduate training in social sciences; (ii) experience in dealing with applied research, (iii) practical field policy and program experience in developing countries (iv) knowledge of CIDA policies and procedures and (v) awareness of various international initiatives in the area of poverty reduction. It is of paramount importance that the researchers be "grounded" to connect with Operational Branch specialists. In reality, if such resource persons are not available, it is suggested (i) to put together a team of professionals which, together, combine those areas of

expertise (ii) to set a consultative committee to the PRU made up of high level poverty specialists.

The PRU requires sufficient funding to get significant results. Good applied research is not produced cheaply since it requires travelling in the field and some primary data collection. There is also a need for a critical mass of researchers to get the ball rolling and make a difference. As already mentioned, cost-sharing mechanisms between the PRU, Operational Branches and/or other funding agencies might provide further financial leverage.

In the end, the most important critical condition is a commitment of CIDA Senior Management to the importance of creating a PRU with adequate resources and making it play a crucial role in the Agency's poverty reduction action plan.

APPENDIX 1
ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK OF POVERTY AND
RELATED CONCEPTS OF VULNERABILITY AND INEQUALITY

Poverty means different things to different people. There is much debate about what dimensions of deprivation should be included in the concept of poverty. In addition, it is not infrequent to confuse or conflate concepts, causes and remedies for poverty. In light of this, it is important to clarify some of these issues by situating different concepts, causes and remedies for poverty within an analytical framework. The present section provides such a framework, schematically depicted in Figures 1,2 and 3 below, and constitutes the backdrop for the issues raised in the following sections. Clearly, the objectives of this report is not to provide a detailed and operational framework to poverty analysis. However, those figures outline basic concepts and broad issues.

Figure 1, below makes a preliminary distinction between conceptions of poverty (middle panel), strategies of chronic poverty reduction (top panel) and strategies of risk reduction/mitigation (bottom panel). It illustrates the basic point that the underlying conception of poverty drives the choice of concrete strategies or programmes to address 'poverty'.

The middle panel of Figure 1, as well as the third row in Figure 2, outline a number of different ways of conceptualizing poverty. There are three main points to note. First, the last decade or so, has witnessed a gradual shift from a physiological model of deprivation, evidenced by the income/consumption and basic needs approaches, to a broader social model of deprivation, evidenced by the human poverty, social exclusion and participatory approaches to poverty. Second, of late there has been a move to conceive of poverty in terms of the denial of basic human rights. Third, there has been a resurgence of interest in the concept of vulnerability and its relationship to poverty. Vulnerability is downside risk, or the likelihood of falling into poverty, however defined.

Figure 2 shows how the conception of poverty and choice of causal variables, or forms of capital, have consequences for the choice of poverty reduction strategies and interventions. The important point to note is the shift from a physiological model of deprivation associated with human and economic capital to a social model of deprivation associated with social, political, cultural and coercive capital. A number of different intervention types flowing from the different analyses are presented.

Figure 3 shows how the analysis changes if one's starting point is vulnerability. Vulnerability is a function of exposure to stresses and shocks, such as natural disasters, illness, employment loss, etc. as well as people's response, identified as coping or adaptive strategies. The important point to note is that measures to address vulnerability, or strategies of risk reduction/mitigation, may be very different than the strategies of poverty reduction identified in Figure 2.

There are two important points to draw from this analysis which bear on the present needs assessment. First, it is important to make a preliminary decision about the conception of poverty

under consideration as this will lead to different research agendas. Second, as explained below, we feel that it is more fruitful to concentrate research energies on issues related to causes and remedies for poverty (the top and bottom panels in Figure 1) rather than rehashing debates about dimensions of deprivation.

Figure 1 Poverty Concepts and Strategies

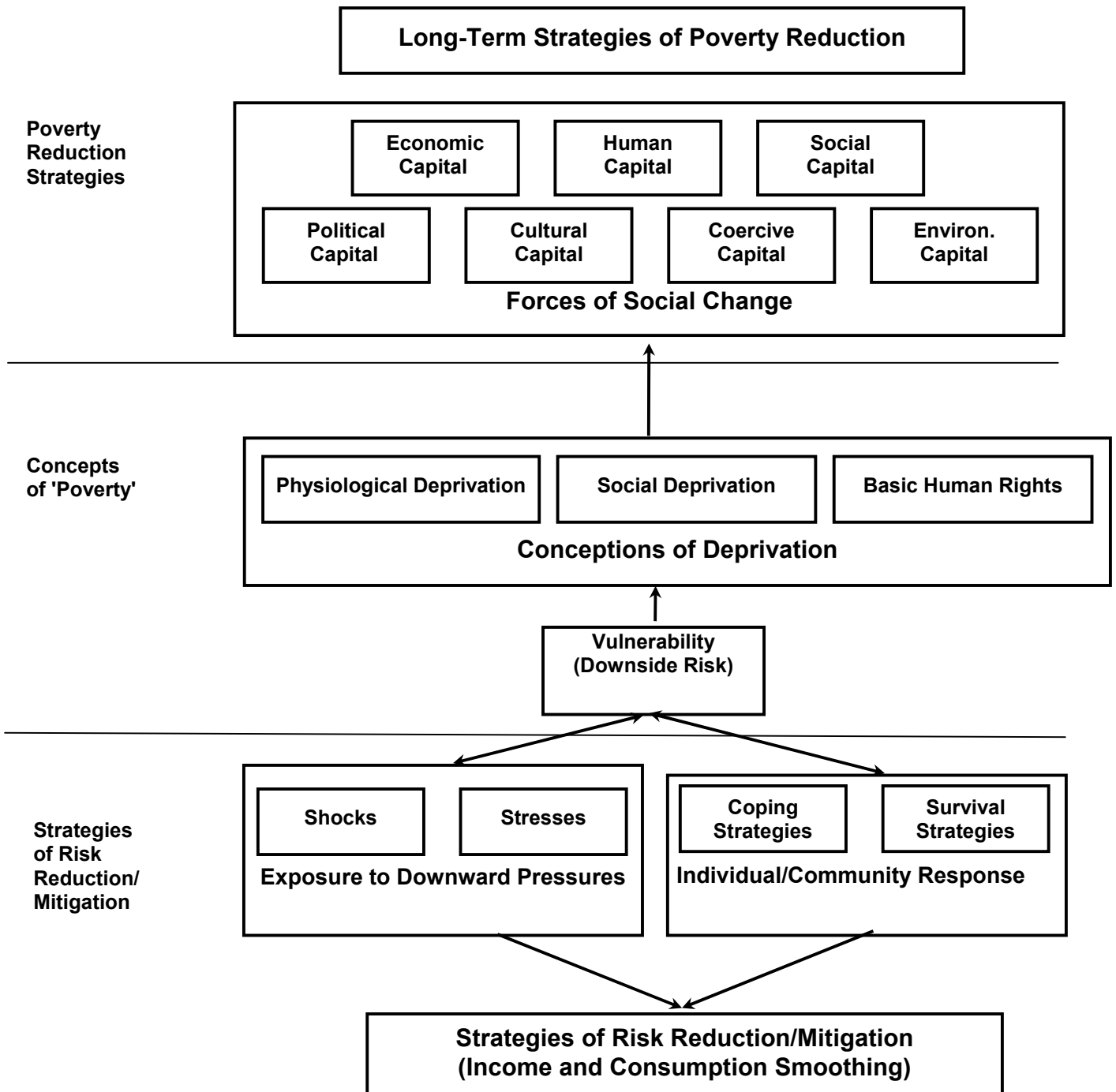


Figure 2 Poverty Concepts and Strategies of Poverty Reduction

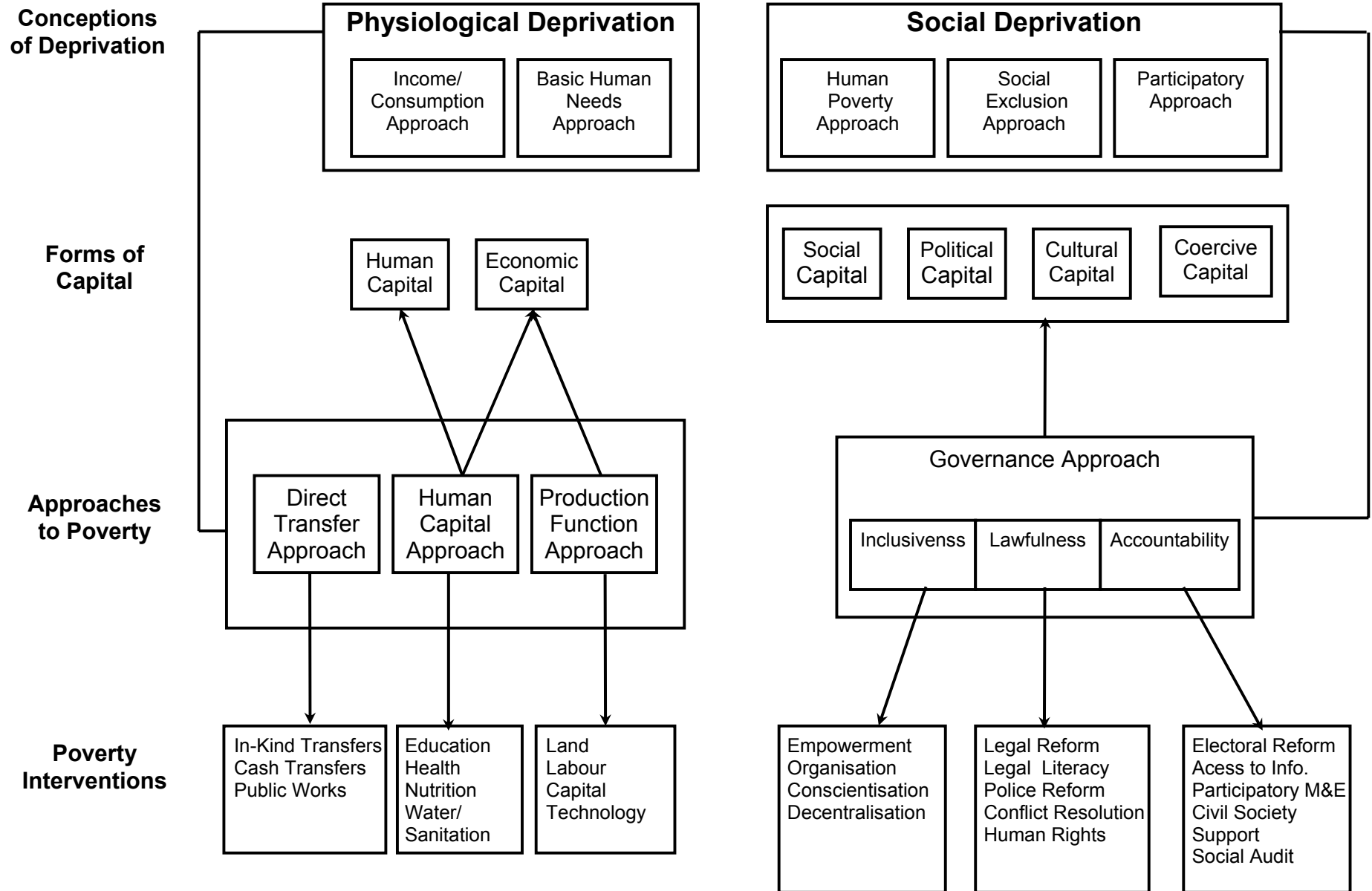
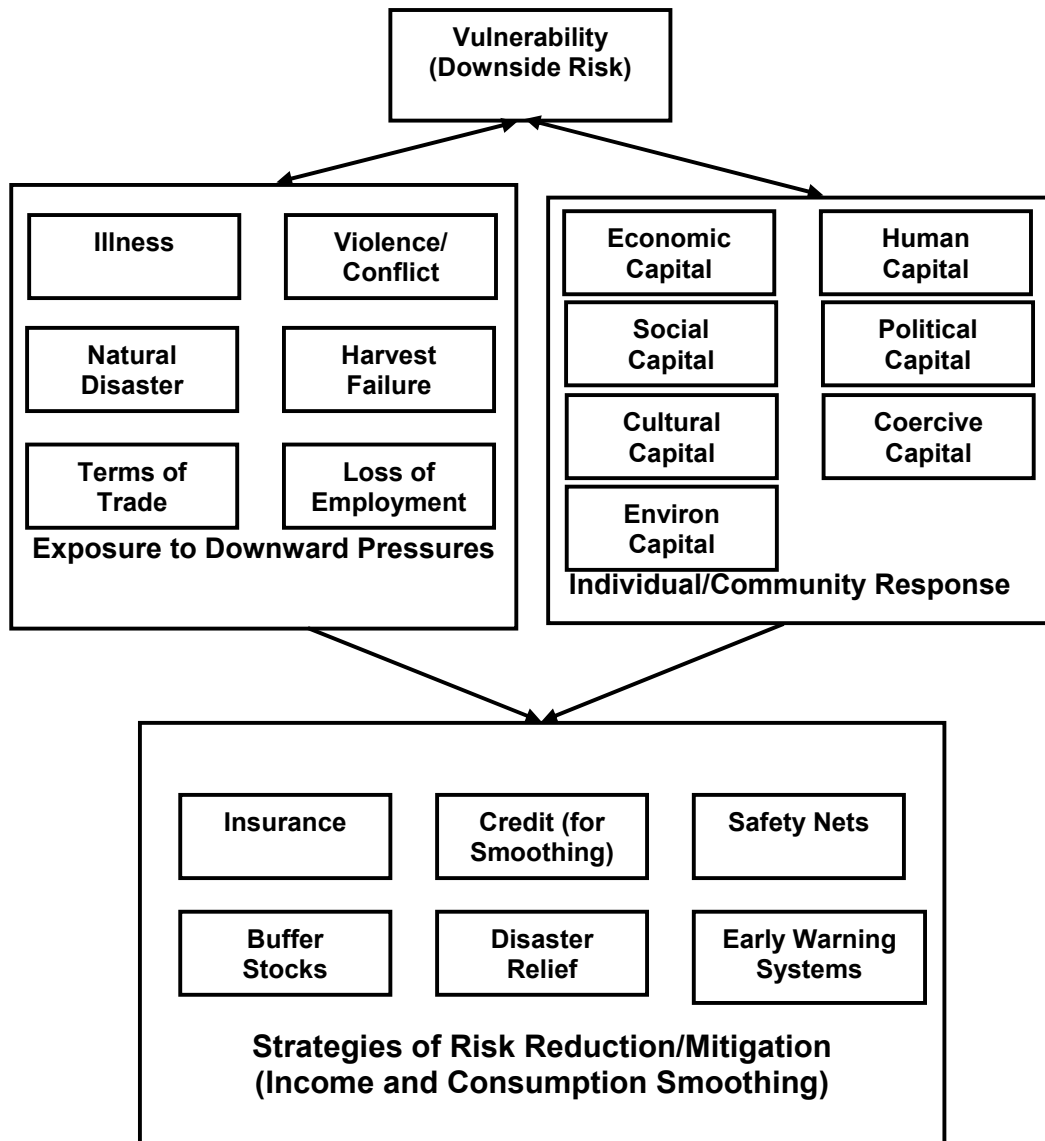


Figure 3 Vulnerability and Strategies of Risk Reduction/Mitigation



APPENDIX 2

POVERTY RESEARCH GAPS

As mentioned in Section 1.2, Appendix 2 provides supplementary information to Section 2.2 which specified a number of research areas for the PRU within the context of PRS processes. Specifically, it provides a justification and abbreviated literature review for the following research areas which are deemed to be priorities based on knowledge gaps as well as the primary criterion of practical relevance.

There is one preliminary point which bears repeating. We feel that the key overarching theme at the centre of CIDA's poverty research agenda should relate to causes of poverty to help improve poverty reduction policies, programs and projects. This area has been dubbed the 'missing middle' in poverty analysis, because it is the critical middle ground between the stages of identification of the poor and prescription of poverty reduction strategies and because it is usually the weakest part of national poverty reduction strategies and/or donor country assistance strategies.² Further, understanding the relative importance of different causal variables is one way of prioritising poverty reduction strategies/interventions and thus responds to a pressing operational concern of CIDA.³ This cross-cutting theme of causal analysis figures in all the research areas listed below, and is operationalised through conceptual and empirical analyses of causal links as well as through *ex ante* and *ex post* impact assessment of specific policies and projects.

1. Causal Analysis of Poverty and Poverty Reduction ('Dynamics of Poverty'⁴)

Justification

As mentioned above, good causal analysis is the 'missing middle' in poverty research, between the stages of identification and prescription. It is almost always the weakest part of poverty analysis at the national level. It is one way of informing the practical decision of 'what to do', i.e. which types of policies or interventions to pursue in a particular context.

Specific topics

i. *Determinants of Chronic vs. Transitory Poverty (Vulnerability)*. There are a very limited number of studies which have sought to determine whether the determinants of chronic and transitory poverty systematically differ.⁵ If so, this would have important policy implications, suggesting that different policies measures are appropriate for each. With the advent of more and more panel data, this type of comparison is now increasingly possible.

ii. *Integrating 'Sustainable Livelihood Analysis' with 'Econometric Analysis of Poverty Determinants.'* The sustainable livelihood approach to analysing poverty dynamics has received

² Booth et. al. (1998), DAC 1999, Hanmer et. al. (1997), IDS (1994) and Shaffer (19998).

³ Nichols 2000, Max 1999.

⁴ The dynamics of poverty often only refers to the determinants of short-term transitory poverty, though it is here being used in a much broader sense.

⁵ McCulloch and Baulch (2000), Jalan and Ravallion (1998).

increasing attention at both conceptual⁶ and operational⁷ levels. It enriches the analysis of poverty dynamics by including a wide range of causal variables and insisting on detailed contextual study of factors contributing to poverty. It has limitations, however, relating to causal weighting of variables, interregional comparisons, etc. when drawing policy conclusions, etc. Some of these limitations may be addressed in econometric analyses which model determinants of poverty in different ways.⁸ The real challenge, from a research point of view, is to better integrate these two types of analysis, which requires both conceptual and empirical work.

iii. Vulnerability and Risk Reduction/Mitigation. As mentioned in Section 2, there has been renewed interest in issues of vulnerability and risk in recent years. As discussed, strategies of risk reduction/mitigation may be very different from strategies of reduction of chronic poverty. There has been a considerable body of work detailing local strategies of dealing with risk (coping strategies). Less work has been done on Best Practice examples of effective and sustainable practice in particular situations. Specifically, it is useful to distil those types of local coping strategies which appear to be successful and may be generalized from those that are not. One way to do this is to develop typologies of situations where different types of strategies are likely to be most effective. This will entail undertaking interdisciplinary impact evaluation of different strategies in a comparative context.

2. Poverty and the Macroeconomic Framework

Justification

Economic theory and empirical evidence show over and over again the importance of the macro environment for economic growth and poverty reduction. The challenge in this area is to come up with useful approaches and empirical tools to address the real issues of decision-makers and help offer specific and contextual policy recommendations.

Specific topics

- i. *Linkages between growth and PVIA*, in particular, can standard poverty reduction policies in most PRSPs deliver the kind of growth required to maintain macroeconomic equilibria, reduce national debt and create enough sustainable employment?;
- ii. *Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) and PRS*, in particular to ensure consistency between the macro budgetary conditionalities contained in the PRSP policy matrix and the cost of achieving the specific measurable objectives of the PRS;
- iii. Ex post and even more ex ante *analysis of the impact of specific macroeconomic policies on poverty*, e.g. the effects of various fiscal policies and intergovernmental fiscal transfers on PVI in a context of decentralisation.

⁶ Chambers and Conway (1992); Chambers (1995), Scoones (1998).

⁷ DFID (2000).

⁸ Shaffer (forthcoming) reviews the literature.

3. Poverty and Trade

Justification

Even though the debate about export-growth strategies vs domestic market development is not new, the world context of liberalization and globalization puts this debate at the centerstage of poverty reduction. Current debates are often characterized by ideological preconceptions of theoretical expected impacts rather than solid empirical analysis of the distributional effects of trade and trade policies on improving living conditions, reduction in vulnerability and diminishing inequality except for a few exceptions (Dollar and Kraay, Rodrik, Rodriquez and Rodrik and Bhagwati/Srinivasan, Hoang Vu Quang et al. 2001). Governments in developing countries are usually ill-equipped to analyze the impacts of globalization on their economy and their population living conditions.

CIDA has been active for a long time in the area of export promotion and agricultural commodity chain support projects, mostly at a micro-meso level. In the context of the PRSPs and trade liberalization, it seems important for CIDA to move beyond traditional projects and into the design of innovative pro-poor export commodity chain support projects.

Specific topics

i. Impact assessment studies, be they ex post impact assessment of specific trade policies and CIDA's commodity chain support projects on PVI or ex ante impact assessment of specific trade policies on poverty

ii. How to design pro-poor agricultural commodity chain support project based on a review of best practices and conducting small-scale commodity chain analysis studies for selected CIDA's projects in this area.

4. Poverty and Financial Capital

Justification

CIDA has supported for a long time the creation and development of microfinance institutions. More research could be usefully conducted by the PRU to collect information on innovations in microfinance, best practices as well as assessing the potential of specific promising innovations which combine the two fundamental objectives of microfinance (institutional financial viability and the accessibility of financial services to poor people) that could be incorporated in the next generation of CIDA's microfinance projects.

Specific topics

- i.* How can *the design of microfinance interventions* (their institutional form, banking technology, the financial products being offered, other non financial services, etc.) be improved in order better to meet the needs of poor households and of microenterprises involved in economically viable activities?
- ii.* How can microfinance institutions best be encouraged to offer *financial services in rural areas*, especially in the agricultural sector, without at the same time compromising their viability?

- iii. How can a *small-scale, rigorous and inexpensive system of monitoring/assessment* be implemented in order to measure the impact of each microfinance intervention in the twin areas of poverty reduction and the improvement of microenterprise performance?

5. Poverty and HIV/AIDS

Justification

HIV/AIDS has moved from being a significant medical and health problem to become a major development problem for a number of countries, in particular in Africa. CIDA needs to move from a traditional medical/epidemiological/community social work approach to a broader perspective including socio-economic-financial approaches in the next generation of CIDA's HIV/AIDS projects (Barnett and Whiteside 2000a and b).

Specific topics

- i. Analysis of Conceptual Linkages and empirical evidence between poverty and HIV/AIDS in selected countries supported by CIDA;
- ii. Analysis of the articulation, conflicts and synergies between PRSs and HIV/AIDS reduction policies in selected countries;
- iii. Ex post and ex ante impact assessment of selected HIV/AIDS reduction policies on poverty and conversely of poverty reduction policies on HIV/AIDS.

6. Poverty and Child Labour

Justification

Child protection is one of four priority areas which CIDA has identified in the Social Development Priorities (CIDA 2000). Exploitative child labour is one of two specific areas which CIDA has chosen to focus on under the child protection banner. Child labour, and in particular the relationship between poverty and child labour, is one area where comparatively little systematic empirical research has been undertaken.⁹

Specific topics

i. Poverty/Child Labour Relationship. It is important to better understand the relationship between poverty and child labour. Anecdotal and case studies evidence point to low or variable household income as a key determinant of the decision to seek paid employment (Rogers and Standing, 1981; ILO 1992) but the statistical evidence is more mixed Ray (1999). For policy purposes, it is important to identify the types of child labour which are associated with poverty and to get a sense of their overall magnitude.

ii. Child Labour/Schooling Relationship. The relationship between child labour and schooling is mediated by a number of variables including, type of work, school quality, parental education,

⁹ Two recent contributions however, are the ILO's Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) (ILO/SIMPOC) which has piloted a number of specially designed household surveys of child labour in a limited number of countries as well as a recent edited volume of the issue (Grootaert and P.. 2000).

etc. There is no necessary trade-off between the two and the empirical evidence is quite mixed on the issue (Patrinos and Psacharopoulos, 1997; Ravallion and Wodon (1999), Ray 1999). For policy purposes, it is important to distinguish those situations where there is a trade-off between child labour and schooling from those where there is not and to determine whether poverty weighs heavily on those situations where tradeoffs exist.

iii. Best and Worst Practice Measures to Address Child Labour. Addressing the problem of child labour is exceedingly complex because it is essential to ensure that the remedy does not lead to a worse situation. Here it may be instructive to review different types of experience in combating child labour from outright bans to middle-ground solutions (e.g. combining schooling and work).

7. Poverty reduction, Governance, and Right-based Approaches

Justification

Over the past decade there has been a rediscovery of the close link between 'governance issues' and poverty reduction. Governance can be defined in many different ways, but in most, it embodies concerns of inclusiveness, accountability and transparency of governing bodies. Understanding the workings of governing structures has become increasingly important with the PRSP process whose success is dependent on high quality elaboration, formulation, implementation and monitoring of policy and programmes.

Very recently, a great deal of attention has also been devoted to right-based approaches to development and in particular, right-based approaches to poverty reduction. This development has been spearheaded by UN System Agencies, such as UNICEF and UNDP, which have sought to closely link the human rights agenda with human development and poverty reduction agendas.¹⁰ Part of this shift has entailed conceptual work on viewing poverty as the violation of basic human rights. As explained in the opening remarks in this section, we feel that the most promising research area in this area relates to analyses of the instrumental value of the language of 'rights' as a means to poverty of reduction, or as an explanation of the perpetuation of poverty (e.g. the causal relationship between rights and poverty).

Specific topics

i. Political Economy, Public Policy Processes and Poverty Reduction Strategies. Surprisingly, there is little research on the political economy of poverty reduction¹¹ and on Best Practice public policy making processes which lead to effective poverty reduction¹². This is exactly the type of information which is required in determining the sorts of institutional arrangements most likely to lead to effective national poverty reduction strategies. Research on Best and Worst Practice cases is required.

ii. Decentralization and Poverty Reduction. Decentralisation has widely advocated as a means of bringing government 'closer' to people. In this context it has been advocated as a vehicle for poverty reduction in so far as it is held to improve the responsiveness and accountability of

¹⁰ UNDP (2000).

¹¹ The classic text is Ascher (1984) and a recent contribution is Moore and Putzel (1999).

¹² A recent exception is Greeley and Jenkins (1999).

governing structures to the poor. Empirical evidence on this issue is exceedingly sparse and findings very mixed.¹³ Comparative research in this area on conditions for, and requirements of, successful decentralization is a promising area for further research.

iii. 'Participatory'/Citizen Monitoring. While participatory project monitoring and evaluation has been around for many years, a more recent trend has seen citizen monitoring of policies which relate closely to poverty. Examples include the right to information movement in India (Jenkins and Goetz 1999), citizens report cards pioneered in Bangalore, India, community-based monitoring, learning and action in the US, etc.¹⁴ This trend is important in that it links up closely with concerns of 'participation' and 'monitoring/evaluation' which figure centrally in the PRSP process. It is an area where further analysis and compilation of Best Practice would be useful for practical policy purposes.

iv. Poverty Reduction and the Law. There has been surprisingly little work done in the developing world on the relationship between legal processes and poverty as well as on the potential of using legal instruments to reduce poverty.¹⁵ It is important to document the mechanisms by which the legal system remains inaccessible to, unanswerable to, or actively discriminates against the poor. In addition, it is important to document cases where the legal system has been used to opposite effect, including campaigns of legal literacy, judicial reform, etc.

v. Poverty Reduction and Conflict. The relationship between poverty and conflict has been the subject of two major research projects conducted by WIDER and the World Bank.¹⁶ One subset of issues which requires further study involves concrete examples of the articulation of policies of national reconciliation/conflict resolution and poverty reduction. It may be useful to highlight Best and Worst Case examples of efforts to integrate these two objectives. Case studies may include countries such as Rwanda, Cambodia, etc.

¹³ Crook and Sverrisson 1999.

¹⁴ McGee and Norton (2000) provide a review.

¹⁵ One recent exception is Anderson (1999).

¹⁶ Stewart and Fitzgerald (2000) and Collier et. al. (2000).

APPENDIX 3

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APPENDIX 4

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