Combining Participatory and Survey-based Approaches to Poverty Monitoring and Analysis*

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Summary

This background paper follows the PEAP Summary document in treating poverty monitoring and analysis as including the monitoring of intermediate factors influencing poverty outcomes, as well as tracking and analysing those outcomes themselves. It argues that a relative shift of attention from final outcomes to intermediate processes is called for in Uganda. This particularly affects the future use of the resources of UPPAP.

The paper reviews the respective strengths and weaknesses of survey-based and participatory methods. It looks first at this issue in general terms, and then focuses respectively on the monitoring of poverty outcomes and PEAP implementation. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the methods have different comparative advantages, and that the productive ways of combining them take this into account.

The range of actual examples of what Carvalho and White (1997) call *integration* of methods is found to be rather modest. Also, the evidence is stronger that surveys and PPAs can *enrich and/or explain* each other's findings than that they can *confirm or refute* each other. The latter formulation under-estimates the degree to which the two methods do different things well and generate findings that are non-comparable.

Survey-based approaches are more suited to monitoring outcomes in terms of readily quantifiable indicators such as household income and consumption, food availability, anthropometric status etc. In Uganda, the household surveys have established a consistent and credible series of data on consumption poverty which is well worth continuing.

Participatory methods share with other "qualitative" or case-study approaches the ability to investigate issues in an exploratory and holistic manner. This is useful for uncovering factors that were not anticipated, and in general for interrogating evidence in an open-ended way. It is not clear, however, that participatory approaches are well placed to confirm or refute findings from the surveys on consumption or income.

This could be dealt with by introducing greater a standardisation of technique. Alternatively, the PPA might be used for purposes other than measuring changes over time, capitalising on the strengths of its case-study methods. This combines well with our contention that PEAP monitoring now requires greater attention to be paid to intermediate outputs and outcomes from policy. UPPAP already works quite effectively at this level, and may well have reached the point of diminishing returns in illuminating fundamental issues in the nature of poverty.

An urgent issue for PPA2 is whether to maintain the purposive sampling that characterised the first UPPAP exercise or to use statistical sampling. We agree there is a case for using a sampling approach that selects sites and participants to reflect more closely the country as a whole. We do not have a unified view on whether that would be best achieved with random or modified purposive sampling.

Direct integration by using the UBoS sampling frame to select sites and compare data on the *same* communities with the two methods is attractive but completely impractical. That being the case, the option of using parts of the IHS questionnaire in the PPA sites, to "situate" them retrospectively, has some attractions and should be considered.

The paper gives most space to issues in poverty outcome monitoring. However, one of our main recommendations is that this should get less attention overall. Continued collection of data on monetary indicators and other quantifiable poverty outcomes such as weight-for-height and mortality indicators is important, for both monitoring and analytical purposes. However, more use could be made of the resources of the surveys for monitoring service use and other intermediate outcomes. The case for introducing a CWIQ survey on the grounds that it would focus on these variables does not seem persuasive on cost or coverage grounds.

On the other hand, a basic change-of-gear for UPPAP does seem to be called for. UPPAP work should, in our view, become more focused and should be scheduled in relation to important PEAP implementation initiatives. Its primary objective should be to pick up quickly evidence on whether the PEAP's intermediate targets identify correctly the key bottlenecks affecting progress towards poverty reduction goals in Uganda, and whether they look like being achieved in particular cases.

The paper argues that data *use* and the role of PEAP stakeholders in ongoing monitoring are important topics. Analytical use of survey data for Uganda is reasonably well developed, partly on account of the quality of the data. In this respect, continuing the panel of households surveyed in 1992 and 1999/2000 is a clear priority for future statistical analysis. Support to the institutional capacity in Uganda to participate in this work remains a priority.

Arrangements for encouraging the use of both survey and PPA information for policy improvement are needed, taking into account weak incentives in government service. Creating and keeping open avenues for the use of poverty-related information by PEAP stakeholders is a vital task in this connection. Relatedly, the discussion about the future of the PPA should take seriously the process achievements of UPPAP in the past period.

In this vein, PPA2 should be firmly viewed as (part of) a national dialogue process, rather than as the further application of a particular research technique. It follows from this that UPPAP reports and dissemination should draw on and internalise evidence on poverty and intermediate PEAP processes from surveys and other quantitative sources, as well as using information derived from local participatory processes.

1 Introduction

Uganda has been a leader in Africa in preparing a national Poverty Eradication Action Plan and using this as a basic instrument of national policy. Before other countries of the region began preparing Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers to meet the conditions for World Bank/IMF lending and HIPC relief, the PEAP was already undergoing is first revision. Unlike many so-called policy documents, it was already influencing the allocation and use of resources by providing guidance to the Medium Term Expenditure Framework and the formulation and execution of the national budget.

Uganda is well placed to take the lead, also, in the arrangements for monitoring its poverty-reduction plan. A basic vision and a number of essential elements are in place.

1.1 Monitoring and the PEAP: the basic vision

According to the PEAP Summary/PRSP document, the Monitoring Strategy of the PEAP has two purposes: "Encouraging a two-way flow of information between beneficiaries, service providers and policy makers" to enable design and implementation to build on what works and avoid repeating mistakes; and to help build accountability (Uganda, 2000b: 26-27).

Monitoring is visualised as a process at three main levels, with various institutional contributions, as follows:

- The monitoring of PEAP *outcomes*: progress in reducing income poverty, improving health, raising educational achievement and enhancing the voice and participation of the poor (based on household surveys and repeated exercises under the UPPAP).

- Monitoring actions or *outputs* intended to achieve these outcomes: tracking intermediate indicators identified for the purpose (sources to include both sample surveys and data from management information systems).

- Regular monitoring of *inputs* required for action against poverty: composition of public expenditure, studies of its benefit-incidence and tracking funds/basic physical inputs to institutions that actually deliver public services.

As an account of the purpose and scope of a PRSP monitoring system, this is exemplary. Clear and comprehensive, it compares very favourably the arrangement so far proposed in other countries of the region (Booth and Lucas, 2001).

Uganda also benefits from having in place several important institutional components of a monitoring system capable of meeting the above needs. These include the UBoS series of household surveys, the UPPAP, the Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit of the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic

Development, and (last but not least) the interaction between the line-ministries and the MFPED in the framework of the MTEF.

During the PEAP I years, a rich and substantial experience was built up, based on these elements. Highlights include an almost unrivalled series of comparable poverty monitoring surveys from UBoS and a first national participatory poverty assessment carried out by UPPAP. Drawing on these and other sources, the PMAU produced a first Poverty Status Report (Uganda, 1999b) as well as a series of analytical papers and – more importantly – contributed a regular flow of information and analysis to the PEAP revision and MTEF processes.

As discussed in the PEAP Summary and related documents,[1] several things remain to be done to turn these elements and this important experience into a working strategy for monitoring the PEAP. Some of these things concern the content of the PEAP itself, but are relevant to the design of the monitoring system because they will affect what it is that needs to be monitored and how. Other challenges are concerned with building a technical and institutional division of labour that is capable of fulfilling effectively the complete range of monitoring and analysis tasks generated by the PEAP.

1.2 Challenges ahead: monitoring for better planning

Through successive revisions, the PEAP needs to achieve greater clarity about the relations between the inputs, the outputs and the outcome objectives that have been set. This is a planning task rather than a monitoring one, as it involves articulating the causal linkages through which the actions are expected to *work* to reduce poverty. But it has an important bearing on monitoring, as it affects whether the intermediate indicators of progress that have been selected are the right ones or not.

Also, while monitoring is not a substitute for planning, a poverty monitoring and analysis system can help to improve plans. As visualised in the PEAP Summary, it can prompt new thinking about policy design by drawing attention to what is working and not working in current plan implementation and suggesting ways of filling out the "missing middle" between actions and final outcomes. The fact that monitoring has this potential contribution has implications for the set-up of the monitoring system, particularly for the arrangements for ensuring that the information generated is properly *used*.

1.3 Challenges ahead: the institutional framework

The other important challenge remaining is to establish arrangements that ensure that the right sorts of information are generated in a coordinated and timely way, so as to create the best opportunities for improved learning and accountability. This has a technical dimension – what are the right kinds of information for which purposes – and an institutional one: who should do what, when and how? There are two important things to bear in mind in approaching these matters.

[1] E.g. the Joint Staff Assessment on the PEAP Summary that supported its endorsement for the purposes of HIPC2 relief and further World Bank and IMF lending.

First, it is important to recognise that the institutional issues to be settled are quite wide-ranging. They include the question of how best to deploy and link the resources of UBoS and UPPAP. But they also include the way each of these relates to other suppliers and users of information in the system. These include, crucially, the information and planning functions in the line ministries and districts – but also the non-governmental stakeholders in the PEAP process, and *their* information and planning functions. It would be disappointing if this workshop were to restrict itself narrowly to particular issue of the bilateral relations between UBoS and UPPAP.

The second point that there is no one-to-one correspondence between the outcome, output and input *levels* of monitoring identified in the PEAP (and the kinds of information they require) and the *institutional components* of the monitoring system (and the kinds of information they are capable of generating). It is best, in fact, to visualise the ideal monitoring system as a two-dimensional matrix, with monitoring tasks on one axis and institutional roles on the other.

A matrix vision of PEAP monitoring is almost, but not quite, explicit in the PEAP Summary. As seen in the bullet list above, UBoS and UPPAP are indicated most explicitly as providers of information on poverty outcomes. However, it is also anticipated that intermediate outputs will be tracked, in part, by surveys; and it is argued that there is an under-exploited potential for using existing household survey data from UBoS to study trends in and determinants of service delivery (i.e. output level).

In practice, too, PEAP monitoring has involved the various institutional components in different monitoring tasks. The first round of UPPAP prompted new guidelines on conditional grants to districts because of what it found about the intermediate output level of PEAP implementation. In a rudimentary but quite wide-ranging way, the 1999 PSR covered PEAP implementation issues as well as final outcome trends. It drew on both UPPAP and a number of independent surveys for this purpose. In other words, quite a few of the cells of an ideal PEAP monitoring matrix have already been filled to some degree.

1.4 Scope and purpose of this paper

This “matrix” conception of the monitoring system that is needed in Uganda has influenced the form and content of this background paper. We do not see the agenda of the workshop as concerned with only the monitoring of final poverty outcomes. Nor should it be restricted, in our view, to a simple two-way dialogue between survey-based and participatory approaches. Least of all should the institutional stakeholders involved actively in the discussion be restricted to UBoS and UPPAP.

On the other hand, it is important to rehearse a number of basic points about the different strengths and weaknesses of survey-based and participatory approaches (and “quantitative” and “qualitative” methods more generally). Also, the experience of the UBoS surveys and UPPAP is particularly rich at the level of

poverty outcome monitoring. It is therefore justifiable to discuss this at some length.

Taking into account both sets of considerations, the paper has been given the following structure. The next section reviews the *generic* strengths and weaknesses of the two main traditions and variants within them. The remaining sections are then devoted to what seem to be the three most important clusters of PEAP monitoring tasks. They are:

- monitoring poverty outcomes and trends;
- monitoring the implementation of a poverty-reduction plan; and
- stakeholder roles and ensuring that information is used.

We exclude the level of input monitoring, even though it is correctly viewed as an essential – even the most essential – component of PEAP monitoring. This is on the grounds that it calls for expertise that we lack and anyway needs to be discussed in forum with a somewhat different focus and membership than this workshop.[2]

Inclusion of a specific section on stakeholder roles and information use is easily justified. This is not a distinct level of monitoring in the terms of the PEAP Summary. However, its importance is underlined both by the way the Government of Uganda has approached anti-poverty planning from the outset (Tumusiime-Mutebile, 1999) and by general considerations on the way real-world processes of PRSP monitoring are likely to play out in practice (Booth and Lucas, 2001)

In each, of these sections – but in different degrees of detail – we discuss the contributions that different methods can in principle make, or have in practice made, in Uganda or elsewhere. Specific institutional arrangements that might be applicable in the Ugandan case are not suggested. However, by distinguishing tasks, clarifying issues and drawing lessons from past experience in Uganda where appropriate, we hope to provide a solid structure in which the discussion of specific proposals can take place with a minimum of misunderstanding and maximum appreciation of the opportunities that lie ahead.

[2] An excellent review of the relevant issues is provided by Foster and Mijumbi (2001).

2 Survey-based and participatory methods: strengths, weaknesses and complementarities

2.1 The distinction between survey-based and participatory approaches

The government of Uganda has adopted two main approaches to poverty and analysis: survey-based methods, relying mainly on the output of the household survey programme, and participatory methods, of which the Ugandan Participatory Poverty Assessment exercise is the most prominent example.

The distinction between these two approaches is the method of data collection. The surveys are interviews of statistically sampled respondents based around questionnaires containing closed-form questions. The PPAs tend to sample communities and individuals purposively and to use a variety of techniques such as open interviews, participant observation, focus group discussions, etc.

The difference in method is associated with differences in the kind of data collected and the analysis it permits. The surveys provide numerical data that can be subject to statistical analysis. Such data is often described as quantitative, although many questions in the surveys are in fact qualitative (e.g. the sex of the respondent, the type of health facility visited etc). Participatory methods tend to provide non-numerical qualitative data that that is not easily subjected to statistical analysis.[3]

Box 1: Strengths and weaknesses of survey-based and participatory approaches

Carvalho and White (1997) provide the following list of the strengths and weaknesses of the two approaches:

Survey-based: Strengths: (i) makes aggregation possible; (ii) provides results whose reliability is measurable; (iii) allows simulation of different policy options. Weaknesses: (i) sampling and non-sampling error; (ii) misses what is not easily quantifiable; (iii) fails to capture intra-household allocation

Participatory approaches: Strengths: (i) richer definition of poverty; (ii) more insight into causal processes; (iii) more accuracy and depth of information on certain questions. Weaknesses: (i) lack of generalisability; (ii) difficulties in verifying information.

[3] However:
- Some tools used in PPAs do yield numerical data – for example, time trend analysis using matrix scoring – and the methods could provide more information of this kind. Conversely, surveys based around open-ended questions could provide non-numerical data similar to some of what is provided by PPAs.
- Surveys *could* in principle be applied to purposively selected samples and participatory methods to randomly selected samples.

2.2 Survey-based approaches

Surveys may gather a wide range of information. Household budget surveys focus on measuring household consumption and, sometimes, income. This is useful for *monitoring* living standards but also for the construction of other economic statistics, such as the national accounts or providing weights for the Consumer Price Index.

In Uganda, the Monitoring Surveys were, at their core, household budget surveys. Some Monitoring Surveys also focussed on selected issues – for example, MS-3 on labour and MS-4 on crop production. A common, but expensive, kind of survey is the integrated household survey, such as the IHS 1992 and UNHS 1999/2000, which aim to cover as many aspects of household socio-economic behaviour as possible. The Demographic and Health Surveys (1988, 1995 and 2001) are examples of household surveys that do not gather income and consumption data but other types of information on living conditions.

Households are the units most commonly used in surveys. This is partly for convenience – household dwellings are easy to enumerate. More importantly much consumption and – in developing countries such as Uganda – production too is organised at the household level. However, the focus on the household is often seen to be a limitation of survey-based approaches (see Box 1 and below).

Other kinds of survey that do not take the household as the unit of enumeration may also be informative. Uganda has benefited from a variety of other surveys – for example, surveys of schools and primary health care facilities in order to track public expenditure; a corruption survey; and a survey of manufacturing enterprises.[4] A range of types of survey are potentially valuable for monitoring the implementation of the PEAP.

For analytical purposes, being able to match quantitative data from a variety of sources is particularly valuable. Some but not all of the household surveys in Uganda have been accompanied by wide-ranging surveys of the communities (defined at the LC1 level) in which the households are located. The UNHS 1999/2000 collected information on the location of households, allowing them to be matched with corresponding Geographical Information System (GIS) data.

2.3 Strengths of survey-based approaches

A main strength of surveys is that they typically use statistical sampling in order to be able to make inferences about a general population, within margins of error that can be specified. This allows findings to be ***generalised***, which is essential for monitoring aggregate outcomes – for example, average incomes or consumption, or the incidence of consumption-poverty – over time. It also enables comparison of the findings of a particular survey with those from another, and with other data sources.[5]

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[4] Several of these varied data sources are used in the recent volume *Uganda's Recovery* edited by Reinikka and Collier (2001).

[5] In addition, there are advantages to having a "panel" aspect to survey design, that is, where some households and communities are re-visited over time. This risks undermining the

Carvalho and White (1997) rightly stress the advantage of survey-based approaches in aggregation. However, survey data are also useful for permitting ***systematic disaggregation*** of results. For example, simple cross-tabulations that answer the question "who are the poor in terms of household consumption?" are easily generated. This makes it possible to provide a simple statistical profile of poverty in a country – the basic element in the usual approach to a national poverty assessment. It is also straightforward to measure changes in the living standards of particular sub-groups of households – the poor, those in the Northern rural areas, those engaged in coffee farming etc.

Surveys aim at ***standardisation***. Although, like everything else this can be done well or badly, the questionnaires adopted in surveys are designed to obtain a common set of information, fix and make transparent the nature of the interview and avoid possible bias arising from interviewer-interviewee interaction. Enumerators are trained and supervised as rigorously as possible to ensure that the questionnaires are used consistently. It is this standardisation of data collection, along with representative sampling, that gives the survey approach its other advantages.

It seems true that surveys have a ***comparative advantage in obtaining quantitative data*** and participatory methods an advantage in obtaining qualitative data. Based on a comparison of the budget surveys and participatory-assessment methods in rural Zimbabwe, Scoones (1995) concluded that surveys do appear to be more accurate in obtaining quantitative measures of private information – for example, on personal assets or consumption. Certainly, there seems little advantage in participatory methods if all that is desired is obtaining simple numerical information specific to a respondent.

The ***"verifiability"*** of household survey results is also an advantage. With simple presentation of numerical results, it is straightforward to establish if the survey results support the summary of findings and conclusions derived from them. In addition, there is an increasing tendency for data to be available to other users, making the cross-checking of numerical results possible.[6]

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representativeness of the survey, due to what is called non-random attrition (particular households drop out or cannot be found, for one reason or another). For this reason, not all the sample should be a panel. However, a panel component is extremely useful for analytical purposes and also provides a cross-check on whether changes in sampling have unintentionally distorted the results. In this respect, it is reassuring that the rise in living standards observed in the Ugandan household surveys from 1992-2000 is shared by the subset of panel households.

[6] The commitment of UBoS in principle to making its household survey data "open access" is commendable in this respect. However, in practice, it might be possible to make access easier. The requirement of obtaining the permission of the Commissioner for Statistics and the charging of a nominal processing fee may be an obstacle to use of the data by outside researchers. Allowing access to the data via the internet is arguably a preferable way of providing open access. Several comparable data-sets (such as the Tanzanian Human Resource Development Survey) are available from the World Bank website, while all the DHS surveys can be downloaded from MacroInternational. The DHS example may be particularly attractive to UBoS, since there is a requirement for the user to submit a short research proposal but nonetheless access takes only a few days.

2.4 Some well-known pitfalls: attitudes and behaviour

There is a long tradition of obtaining data on attitudes from surveys. There is also an equally long list of possible pitfalls (see, for example, Annex 1). For this reason, the surveys used for monitoring poverty tend towards the "behaviourist" approach. That is, they limit themselves to enquiring about specific behaviours or factual matters rather than general perceptions or attitudes. For example, rather than asking whether respondents *think* poverty or food availability in general has got worse, they inquire in detail about the household's own food consumption in the last few days.

All sixteen welfare indicators used in the UNHS are "behaviourist" in this sense, based on essentially factual questions (e.g. "does everyone in the household have two sets of clothes?"). Only three of the twelve welfare indicators used in MS-3 and MS-4 had a subjective element (viz. could the household "afford" health care?; could they "easily" replace stocks of salt?; did young children have an "adequate" supply of milk?).

Although household surveys often have a "behaviourist" bias, it is important to note that surveys do not observe behaviour but at best record what respondents report about their behaviour. On some sensitive topics, more intensive research methods may be required to obtain accurate information. For example, it is argued that the National Sample Survey in India systematically under-reports the prevalence of tenancy relative to what is known from ethnographic research (Ron Herring, in Kanbur et al. 2001). This would be an example of what survey practitioners call "non-sampling error".

Under-reporting of income is widely acknowledged. Typically, income is under-reported relative to expenditure. This is perhaps because it is harder for respondents to reply "strategically" when questioned about a myriad of small purchases, and partly because there may be less sensitivity to such mundane questions. This is one of the reasons why poverty monitoring surveys typically limit focus on consumption, not income, as the measure of living standards. However, income data are potentially more informative in understanding why living standards have changed.

These debates – about attitudes versus behaviour, and more direct and indirect ways of getting at the truth about behaviour – are important for survey practitioners. They are also relevant to alternative, participatory approaches, as discussed further on.

2.5 Other limitations of survey-based approaches

Survey-based approaches are subject to a number of limitations, only some of which are listed in Box 1. Most important is that surveys are ***typically closed form***, meaning that they will not gather information that was not explicitly inquired about. An effective survey thus requires prior familiarity with the issues under investigation and the location(s) being studied. Where the survey is large-scale, covering many communities, it is perhaps inevitable that it will miss idiosyncratic but possibly important features of those communities.

One example of such an idiosyncracy is provided by the observation from an anthropologist in a Ghanaian village that the men departed for several months to hunt for diamonds in the village. It is hard to see how such an event would be identified or understood by analysts of a standard household survey. This is likely to be more of a limitation in using surveys for poverty *analysis* than poverty *monitoring* – the diamond hunt would be reflected in the consumption data, but not understood. The open-ended nature of participatory tools makes them less likely to be subject to this limitation, although this will depend on the skill and depth of the investigation.

Survey-based approaches are probably more suited to collecting data that is relatively simple or easy to quantify, and ***less suited to gathering information that is highly nuanced or covers "intangibles"***. For example, school-based surveys may be useful for establishing whether girls performed less well in educational examinations in Uganda or whether private schools performed less well than state schools.[7] However, they may fail to fully identify the variations in parental attitudes or school ethos that explain differences in exam performance.

It often stated that survey-based approaches to poverty analysis fail to adequately capture ***intra-household issues***. For example, McGee (2000) speculates that individual poverty may not have fallen as much in Uganda as the survey data suggest because rises in aggregate consumption have not filtered down to all members of households

This is a serious point. However, it is important to be clear that the weakness arises from the use of household consumption or income as a welfare indicator, rather than being a limitation of surveys in general. To a degree, the weakness is inherent in the use of consumption or income as welfare measures, since – to a greater of lesser degree – consumption is shared and income pooled within a household. It is possible within the normal survey design to measure some consumption that is either personal or specific to a particular demographic group (e.g. women's clothes), but these often account for only a small part of overall economic welfare.

"Workarounds" based on household expenditure patterns have had limited success – for example, finding gender bias in places none is believed to exist and

[7] Administrative data also provide such information, but surveys may be better in gathering information on control variables – for example, to see if there was a "pure gender" effect or a government efficiency advantage.

finding no gender bias in areas where it is believe to be pervasive (Deaton, 1997). However, it is possible to obtain measures of individual welfare through surveys – anthropometric measures of young children are perhaps the most common example. Attempts to measure individual food consumption require intensive research, but this can be of the survey type.[8] Time-use data may also be informative about individual welfare and is sometimes collected by surveys. In summary, issues of intra-household allocation are probably ones that require more intensive, research-driven methods of investigation – perhaps combining surveys and participatory or anthropological work – rather than standard household surveys.

It is sometimes argued by advocates of participatory methods that survey-based approaches are ***"extractive"*** and morally questionable, since they take respondents' time without giving in return. Some advocates of participatory methods require researchers to commit themselves to furthering the interests of the community being studied. However, surveys may be less time intensive for individual respondents than some participatory exercises and in principle remuneration can be paid to respondents.

Where the surveys are used to guide the policymaking of governments elected by respondents and committed to poverty reduction, it is not clear that there is a moral issue. To the extent that surveys are for independent academic research, it is not clear that "commitment" is conducive to scientific investigation.

A commonly cited weakness of surveys is their ***cost and the length of time*** required for analysis. By contrast, participatory methods are sometimes given the backhanded compliment of being "quick and dirty".

However, it is not clear that there is an intrinsic difference in either the time or expense associated with the two approaches. New methods – such as data entry in the field – have speeded up the time taken to release survey data. As they have gained official and donor support, participatory exercises have mushroomed in scale and consequent cost.

2.6 Participatory and other approaches: some important distinctions

Not all *quantitative* approaches are survey-based, and not all *qualitative* approaches are participatory. The discussion in the preceding pages has concentrated largely on the survey-based sub-type of quantitative methods. In later sections, we need to pay attention to data and procedures, such as censuses, administrative records and management information systems, that are clearly on the quantitative side – and are crucial for certain levels of PEAP monitoring – but do not employ sample-survey methods.

A comparable distinction needs to be made on the side of qualitative methods. The methods used in participatory poverty assessments are derived from rapid-

[8] Haddad and Kanbur (1990) use data on individual food consumption in the Philippines to assess the likely biases to reliance on household-level data. They find household data leads to a significant underestimate of the level of poverty, but does not bias estimates of the correlates of the poverty (e.g. landlessness etc.).

appraisal methods originally developed for project design in poor communities. This tradition has been enriched over the years with ideas about participation as a source of empowerment. The contemporary methodology now widely known as Participatory Reflection and Action (PRA) is a complex blend of principles and techniques from these different sources.

For the sake of clarity, it needs to be said that the PRA methods typically employed in PPAs are a sub-class of rapid-appraisal methods, which are in turn a sub-class of methods that conduct intensive local case studies using purposive samples. This matters because many of the arguments about the uses and abuses of participatory methods actually apply to the whole class of case-study approaches (including for example the typical form of anthropological fieldwork). Others apply to all rapid-appraisal work. And some apply specifically to PRA/PPA methods.

These distinctions not only help to avoid a confused discussion. They are also of practical significance, in that it is sensible to consider the whole range of possible methods available for meeting a particular information need, considering the comparative advantages of each sub-type of method.

Another initial distinction needs to be made before we go on to review the strengths and weaknesses of participatory and qualitative methods. As well as being widely used in project design and appraisal, and in assessments of country poverty profiles, participatory methods also have an established role in what was first called "systematic client consultation" and later participatory beneficiary assessment. This involves the use of similar methods to monitor the outputs and intermediate outcomes of programmes – e.g. utilisation of improved services – and contribute to the evaluation of their impact.

In other words, there is no reason in principle for the discussion of participatory methods and their uses to be restricted to the design stage of the planning cycle, or the diagnostic part of poverty monitoring and analysis.

2.7 Strengths of qualitative methods (in general)

The strengths of participatory methods derive to quite a substantial extent from the case-study approach that they share with anthropological field studies and many other branches of social science research. The generic advantages of such methods include:

- the ability to focus closely and in depth on a "case" that has a number of features that are of interest from an analytical point of view, and has been selected for that purpose;
- the possibility of being "holistic" – that is, looking at a set of relationships as whole, and not just a pre-selected set of attributes;
- the scope for paying attention – to a greater or lesser extent – to processes as well as "snapshots" of situations;
- the ability to go back immediately to data to interrogate it (with further interviews or more observation) to get to the bottom of a puzzling issue; and

- the wide range of resources available for "triangulation" (or systematic cross-checking) of findings by applying or reapplying different research techniques to the case.

The scope for studying process and triangulation of findings in a qualitative fieldwork context varies with the amount of time and resources that can be devoted to the case study. It can be argued that the type of case study that can be done in rapid-appraisal mode (participatory or not) is limited in both respects. The time available for the study is typically very short by anthropological standards, which means there is less scope for observation generally and observation of processes that are extended in time in particular. Results do rely more heavily, therefore, on testimony, with the difficulties discussed above.

However, the RRA/PRA tradition has devoted to considerable ingenuity to developing a toolkit of techniques and principles for getting the maximum results, while satisfying reasonable standards of validity and reliability, with limited resources. Opportunities for checking out the "stories" on which inferences about process generally have to be based are provided in principle by intensive triangulation. First-time observers of PRA sessions, including seasoned anthropologists, continue to be impressed by the power of the techniques to generate a rich field of information of different types and from different sources in a short time.

As a result, a case can be made that these methods provide a solid instrument for reaching an understanding of key relationships and processes. When fully applied, the principle of triangulation provides a guarantee on the robustness of findings and interpretations that is no less than that claimed for a well-conducted household survey (given the different purposes of the two types of investigation).

2.8 Strengths of participatory methods (in particular)

It is very important to be aware that the case made for participatory methods, especially in the context of a PPA, does not rest entirely, or even mainly, on the promise of better or different information. Producing good information is a worthy objective. But a major problem in most countries, especially poor ones, is that even the available information is not used to a significant extent for policy-improvement purposes. Public officials lack incentives to perform better. In particular, their accountability to poor people is very low. Organisations that might be using information to advocate pro-poor change are too busy fulfilling service-delivery obligations, and are not networked or organised for an information-processing role.

PPAs have been introduced to address these problems, as well as to enrich the understanding of poverty. Particularly in the so-called second-generation PPAs, where there is a strong focus on building a national process in which a variety of stakeholders engage with poor people and each other in a new way, the intention to foster new forms of information use is possibly the *dominant* one (Norton with associates, forthcoming).

Uganda's UPPAP process is clearly of the second-generation sort. But let us illustrate with a non-Ugandan case. Answering the question "what is a PPA?" the Fieldwork Guide for the current exercise in Pakistan says, among other things:

> A PPA is not just a new type of study of poverty and its causes. It aims to achieve four things:
>
> - better understanding of poverty
> - new constituencies for anti-poverty action
> - enhanced accountability to poor people
> - more effective policies and action
>
> (The full text is reproduced as Annex 2.)

The fact that PPA instruments are concerned with such a range of objectives sets them apart from household survey instruments. There is no reason why survey results should not be incorporated into a PPA process. Indeed, when it comes to the national or (in Pakistan) province-level synthesis discussions, it is essential that this should happen – it is a mistake to think that PPA reports should be based of PPA field information alone. But this cannot be a symmetrical relationship. Household survey operations are processes too, but these are, quite rightly, driven by a narrower range of concerns.

These features of the PPA philosophy, and the lack of symmetry implied in the relation between participatory and survey methods, need to be taken very seriously in considering the purpose and practicalities of combined methods. As required, we discuss below and in the following sections the technical possibilities for combination. But it may well be that it is the optimal integration of different sorts of information at the *process* level that has the greatest potential. We refer to this theme at various points in the succeeding argument.

2.9 "Objectivity": vital ingredient or red herring?

A general source of weakness of qualitative/case-study methods that tends to concern survey practitioners, especially those influenced by the "positivist" tradition in social science, is their lack of guarantees of "objectivity". The worry is that because the method requires the observer to engage closely with the subject s/he is investigating, investigator bias may fatally influence the findings. Whereas the training of survey enumerators and analysts is designed to maintain a distance between the subject and object of study, the method of both the anthropologist and the PRA practitioner requires a close personal involvement with a set of other people, who are themselves "subjects". Indeed, all the strengths of the approach as listed above derive from this quality of the fieldwork relationship.

This concern arises in part from a number of important issues. However, we suggest that these are best discussed without too much recourse to the over-simplified, and in many ways inappropriate, language of "objectivity" and "bias". Let us explain.

As self-conscious survey practitioners – and indeed researchers in the physical sciences – are aware, the mechanisms that are effective in the real world in

ensuring reasonably robust results from scientific research are not primarily based on the scientist being distant from and dispassionate about what s/he is doing. It is more complicated than that.

Putting a certain distance between researcher and the object of research may serve certain specific purposes, as in our discussion of standardisation in surveys. However, in a broader perspective scientific guarantees have relatively little to do with objectivity in this sense. They have much more to do with the "inter-subjective" relationships within a community of researchers – that is, with peer review processes of different kinds, in which errors are picked up, interpretations are questioned and researchers' "interests" in arriving at particular conclusions are compensated by the different interests of other researchers.

This is standard stuff from the study of scientific communities and in the modern history of science. It means that qualitative research that by its nature cannot but be involved, and even "engaged", with the subject of study is not on that account alone to be considered unscientific or non-rigorous.

This does not mean that there are no problems. For example, anthropologists have become increasingly preoccupied the "observer bias" problem (without necessarily calling it that) in recent decades. There have been famous examples of individual anthropologists reaching very different views of the essential qualities of the same communities. The main response in the discipline has been to deal with it in a way that is consistent with the fieldwork (case study) tradition, and builds on it rather than diluting it – which would lose its comparative advantage.

A stronger emphasis is now put in anthropological training on what is called "reflexivity" – that is a self-conscious awareness of the relationships on which the fieldwork experience is based. All findings are heavily qualified and carefully presented as the result of an interaction between the researcher and his/her subject.

PRA is in some ways better placed to address this problem, and in some ways less. Since it is typically undertaken by a team, and not by a lone individual, there is more scope for one investigator's perceptions to be checked against those of others. The process of information generation and "joint analysis" in PRA focus groups is observed by fieldworkers who are more or less deeply involved in its facilitation. In the best cases, practitioners are trained to be both critical and self-critical throughout the fieldwork process, and field reports are expected to include an evaluation of the process through which conclusions have been reached.

PRA is typically more exposed than anthropological fieldwork to the problems discussed above in connection with the handling of attitudes and behaviour in surveys. The problem that questions may elicit "strategic" responses is certainly as much a concern for qualitative methods as for surveys. Anthropologists are generally in the field long enough to learn at least as much about what people do as about what they say, with the further advantage that reported actions can be

checked by actual observation. The interpretation of what people say is mulled over long and hard (Booth, Leach and Tierney, 1999: 4-6).

Time constraints and other factors make the challenges greater for the PRA practitioner. There is little scope for direct observation. PPA exercises may also be perceived to be more closely tied to policy responses than household survey interviews, so the payoff to strategic behaviour is greater. It may also be easier to effectively dissemble when providing non-numerical data than when making detailed reports of household spending. Finally, the group nature of many of the tools used in participatory assessment may make strategic responses more likely to influence final reporting (one individual's answer in a survey would not have much influence on final statistics, but a group response may influence the conclusions of a PPA exercise).

That having been said, fieldworkers are trained to be particularly sensitive to the way testimony may be influenced by people's expectations and "strategic" calculations, as well as to other relevant factors (power-dynamics within the group, effects of poor facilitation, etc.). Triangulation – a luxury that the survey enumerator does not enjoy – can and should provide controls on errors arising from these sources. Also, contrary to the impression that may be given by the way PPA findings are being disseminated ("voices of the poor", "the poor say *x* about *y*"), PRA field techniques are generally designed to achieve what "behaviourist" surveys do – namely concentrate attention on specific points of information and not on mere opinions.

There may be, and in some cases undoubtedly are, problems arising from weak training and/or poor implementation in PPAs. Competent basic data collection is very often accompanied by insufficient (and therefore insufficiently critical) analytical capacity at the field level (Campbell, 2000; Brown et al., 2001). And there has indeed been a tendency to highlight the "opinion poll" dimension of PRA in the context of PPAs, which is a pity because this is clearly not its strong point.

But it is important to see these as practical issues (broadly analogous to sub-standard interviewing; poor cleaning of survey data; and the difference between good and bad questionnaire design) rather than deficiencies that are inherent in the particular method. Although it is important to be realistic about cost and other constraints, they do not represent inherent difficulties or reflect adequately the potential and real comparative advantage of these methods.

2.10 Other weaknesses of qualitative and/or participatory methods

The most obvious type of weakness of the case-study method in general is that it ***does not permit generalisation***, at least not in the ordinary sense. Purposive sampling is not undertaken with a view to reaching conclusions that can be generalised to a wider population.

It is ***not suitable, either, for providing definitive tests*** of hypotheses that apply to such wider populations. Case studies are typically undertaken to investigate particular puzzles that are not able to be solved on the basis of statistically representative data. They often play an important role in the social sciences in

generating *new* hypotheses or ways of conceptualising issues that may be worth testing.

In a more practical or policy setting, a series of case studies may agree in identifying a particular problem as important – e.g. child malnutrition arising from unequal gender relations within households, or unanticipated consequences of particular ways of earmarking public funds. Such findings are not generalisable, and cautious language has to be used in reporting them, taking into account the kind of purposive selection principle that has been used. The case study fulfils its proper function by drawing attention to the issues as worthy of further attention, in the form of either research or policy action. The "general" significance of case-study findings arises from this sort of logic, and not from the logic of statistical representativeness.

No systematic disaggregation of the sort surveys permit is possible. PPA tools usually centre around group exercises. Such groups should ideally be socially homogenous, and each exercise is supposed to be applied to several different groups for purposes of triangulation. In practice, however, an exercise is often applied only to a single group in each community. Thus, for example, matrix scoring of time trends indicates only what a group of participants regard as changes affecting their village in aggregate. Even when different groups are used (most commonly, men and women separately; or better off and less well off), the procedures are not sufficiently standardised to permit systematic comparison. There is also some danger that group exercises, as such, mask diversity in an effort to reach a consensus.

Lastly, participatory and qualitative methods ***lack the quality of simple verifiability*** noted in connection with surveys. Summary reports from PPA exercises are difficult for outsiders to verify by tracing the conclusions back to the evidence. Efforts may be made to improve and standardise participatory site reports that will reduce the severity of this problem. The process of analytical induction that leads from site reports to synthesis reports can in principle be undertaken in reverse (as McGee, 2000, did for UPPAP). But verification exercises of this sort are likely to remain time-consuming and tedious. Since the underlying data provided by PPAs is not numerical it is also harder to release in its "raw" state.

2.11 The value of combined methods

Combining quantitative and participatory methods is useful partly for achieving greater ***robustness*** of findings. The application of either method on occasion may fail for various reasons (for example, an error in survey design; a misperception by a participant observer etc), but it is less likely that both methods would fail in a given instance. An important limitation here, as illustrated in the next section, is the degree to which the different methods are actually dealing with the same variables.

Perhaps more importantly, the two methods will generate different types of information about a common problem generating ***complementarities***. Bourguignon (in Kanbur et al., 2001) likens the value of combined methods to the

advantage of seeing a mountain from two perspectives. By considering various perspectives, one can obtain a fuller understanding of a multi-dimensional subject.

Complementarities can be of different kinds. As discussed in connection with poverty outcomes, in the next section, the division of labour may involve different sorts of quantitative and different sorts of qualitative methods highlighting different substantive topics. There is also the relationship between ***induction and deduction***.

We have noted that participatory methods are more suited to exploratory research – being much more likely to uncover facts that the researcher had not anticipated. Survey-based methods are more useful for establishing or refuting simple general propositions – for example, that consumption poverty fell over time; that girls in Uganda under-perform in examinations etc. They may also be used for sophisticated statistical analysis, testing models that quantify the contribution of various factors to observed outcomes. However, more in-depth methods of investigation are required to identify the cultural or institutional factors at play.

In the current UK election and elsewhere, "focus groups" designed to be representative of voters (or, some times, subsets of voters, such as "swing" voters) are commonly used by politicians and commentators to ascertain the concerns and opinions of voters. Marketing agencies use similar techniques to discern products or advertising campaigns that would appeal to their potential customers. The results of such exercises are not used to make statistical inferences about a population but can subsequently be subject to such testing using follow-up surveys. Pursuing the UK politics analogy, focus groups may identify issues that are then tested for generalisability using opinion poll surveys. The fact that some insights from participatory work can be subsequently tested for generalisability using other methods, means that it is not essential that the sample used in the participatory work is representative.

Finally, in the light of the argument about the specific advantages of PPAs, the data and stakeholders associated with the two styles of work may be able to be integrated within a wider process of information generation and use. This may be expected to ***increase the influence*** that either type of results would have on its own.

Reflecting on experience with first-generation PPAs (mainly those carried out in the framework of Poverty Assessments by the World Bank), Carvalho and White (1997) suggested an agenda of issues to be explored from the point of view of combining survey-based and participatory methods. This is reproduced, as adapted in the Terms of Reference of this paper, in Box 3.

In the view we wish to develop, three things are striking about White and Carvalho's suggestions from the perspective of 2001:

> They are closely focused on the technical level of combination, and not on the possibilities for integration in terms of *process*.

A strong emphasis is placed on possibilities for integrating methods, which has probably not been justified by *actual experience* and reflection in recent years.

While sound in principle, the treatment of ways of using the two approaches to "confirm, refute, enrich and/or explain" each other's findings does not provide sufficient warning about various *pitfalls* that are certain to be fallen into if these terms are taken too literally.

Box 2: Approaches to combining survey-based and participatory methods

Carvalho and White (1997) distinguish the following approaches to combining survey-based and participatory methods:

INTEGRATING the two approaches in one methodology. This entails explaining how:

a. Surveys can be used to identify statistically representative individuals/ communities to be engaged by UPPAP in open-ended/participatory research;
b. Surveys can be used to design an agenda for participatory research;
c. Participatory research can be used to determine stratification of quantitative samples to be surveyed by UBoS;
d. Participatory research can be used to develop survey questionnaires;
e. Participatory research can be used to refine poverty indices.

Using the two approaches to CONFIRM, REFUTE, ENRICH and/or EXPLAIN findings from the other.

a. "Confirming or refuting" entails the use of participatory research to ascertain the validity of survey-based research (or vice-versa);
b. "Enriching" entails the use of participatory research to obtain information and understanding about variables and processes inaccessible to close-questioned surveys;
c. "Explaining" entails the use of participatory research to identify dynamics responsible for survey findings.

All this needs explaining with reference to examples. Carvalho and White are not concerned narrowly with any particular use of the methods they discuss. However, the practical examples and issues that need to be considered do relate to specific areas – poverty outcome monitoring on the one hand, and PEAP implementation monitoring on the other. We therefore consider the technical combination points under those two headings in the next two sections. The process questions are picked up in the final section.

3 Monitoring poverty outcomes and trends

The Ugandan government has set a target of reducing absolute poverty to 10 per cent by 2017. This is one of a set of poverty outcome goals set and reaffirmed within the PEAP process. Good data are needed both to allow monitoring of the degree to which the objectives are being attained, and to permit diagnostic analysis – the development of theories about why poverty remains or is reduced, and how policies should respond.

In this section, the main emphasis is on the data production side and on monitoring, rather than analysis. In our discussion of survey experience, we also dwell mainly on the surveys that have been used to monitor consumption levels, even though the measurement of non-income dimensions of well being (with other types of survey instrument) is in principle no less important. The main justification is that we know more about the first type of survey than about the others.

The thrust of our argument is rather negative about the prospects for combined methods. This is not because we are generally hostile to such combinations or to the contribution of participatory approaches – on the contrary – but because we believe:

- the technical apparatus of PRA is not particularly suited to outcome monitoring (although it is good for certain kinds of poverty *analysis*);
- the potential for PPAs in countries that have already had one round is mainly in the broad area of *implementation monitoring* – i.e. with a focus on outputs and intermediate outcomes from a poverty-reduction plan;
- the most needed form of integration between PRA-based poverty assessment and survey data is at the *process level of the PPA*.

We think these things can be justified on general grounds. They are also rather well illustrated by the experience in Uganda of trying to do certain things that we consider (with some advantage from hindsight) to be mistaken. The point of looking in some detail at this experience is not to rake over old controversies and stir up new ones, but to make the strongest possible argument for taking a different direction in the future.

3.1 Survey-based poverty monitoring in Uganda

The household survey programme in Uganda in the 1990s focussed heavily on monitoring poverty outcomes, with the four Monitoring Surveys being mainly oriented to that objective. This was thought to be a priority because there was concern over whether the substantial economic reforms introduced since 1986 would produce tangible improvements in the well-being of most Ugandans. As the 1990s progressed, macroeconomic indicators recorded strong performance, with Uganda at one time being amongst fastest growing economy in the world. However, there was still a concern that this growth was either illusory or not being shared by most of the rural population.

This unease was voiced, for example, in the *Uganda Human Development Report, 1997*:

> "the perennial concern is that the benefits of strong growth have yet to translate into measurable improvements in the standard of living for the majority of people" (UNDP, 1997: 2).

It appears from the household survey programme that the growth was indeed genuine and enjoyed by most Ugandans, including the poor. However, this finding does not obviate the need for continued poverty monitoring through household surveys. Economic performance in Uganda in the 1990s should perhaps still be viewed as "recovery" rather than "growth", with real national income per capita only now reaching the levels of the early 1970s. It is not obvious that growth will continue at the same rate or, if it is sustained, that it will be distributed across the population in the same manner as in the recent past.

If Uganda sustains high growth of living standards and poverty reduction in the next decade as well as the last, the possibility of its being adopted as a economic model by other countries on the continent greatly increases.[9] The success of the household survey programme in monitoring poverty in Uganda in the 1990s means that sustained investment in this kind of data collection would not only be valuable but relatively low risk (an instance of reinforcing success).

Poverty monitoring using the Ugandan household surveys has focussed on household consumption per adult equivalent as the welfare measure. The adult equivalence scales are designed to take account of the lower needs (e.g. calorie requirements) of children.[10] Household consumption begins with all spending on consumer goods and services, with no attempt to discriminate between components of consumption – for example, spending on health care and alcohol is treated in the same way. It is important to note that consumption is not limited to expenditures but includes consumption of own produced food, as valued in monetary terms by the household respondent.

One of the most involved adjustments to the consumption data is to report it in constant prices. This has at least three dimensions: to allow for inflation over time; to revalue home-consumed food to market prices; and to allow for regional differences in food prices.[11]

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[9] Such "demonstration effects" have been argued to have been important in economic reform and growth in East Asia with Japan offering a successful model to the four newly industrialising countries and that that these in turn influenced reform efforts in South East Asia and China.

[10] Although the calibration of these scales is still a moot issue in the quantitative literature on poverty.

[11] The estimate of inflation is the most important aspect when comparing changes in living standards over time, although the moderate inflation in Uganda in the period makes this less of a problem than in more inflationary economies such as Ghana. Poverty estimates for Uganda using the household surveys have relied on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the inflation estimate, but this is limited by the fact that the CPI is based on prices in major urban centres only. An attempt was made to compute a food price index based on the household survey data (Table 2 in Annex 3 refers). This suggested considerable variability in inflation between regions but gave a national rise in prices between the 1992 IHS and the 1999/2000 UNHS of 51 per cent, very close to the 52 per cent increase in the food component of the CPI.

The optimal frequency of further household surveys to monitor poverty is an open issue. Such surveys are expensive and arguably may tie up scarce capacity at UBoS. Although annual surveys may be ideal, a reduced frequency would not be very damaging or entirely disadvantageous. Annual economic growth rates are often within the range of possible (sampling and non-sampling) error in survey estimates, so comparisons over a wider time interval may yield clearer results. Against this, monitoring poverty only episodically runs into the problem of atypical "good" and "bad" years – for example, in terms of rainfall – dominating the impact of long run trends.

One possibility would be to have a baseline integrated survey (such as the UNHS) followed at two-year intervals by monitoring surveys, with a further integrated survey after eight years. A three-year interval between surveys would be another possibility.

Box 3: What did the household surveys find about poverty trends?

The Ugandan household surveys show large increases in real household consumption in the period 1992-2000 (Appleton, 2001). The increases are observed across the income distribution, implying a substantial fall in poverty (see Table 4 in Annex 3, and Figure 2 in Annex 6, below).

For the poorest 40% of rural households, mean household consumption per adult equivalent is estimated to have grown at over 4% per annum in real terms from 1992-2000. This implies that the real consumption of poor Ugandan households has increased by over a third in the period.

An absolute poverty line was devised consisting of a food poverty line and an allowance for non-food spending. The food poverty line is an estimate of the cost of obtaining sufficient calories given the average diet of the poorest 50% of the population in Uganda. Non-food spending is taken to be the average spending of those whose total consumption is just to the food poverty line. The rationale is that any non-food spending by households whose total spending is equal to the food poverty line is obtained by sacrificing calorie needs. Hence such non-food spending itself should be viewed as needed.

The surveys implied that 56% of Ugandans were living below this poverty line in 1992, falling to 35% in 1999/2000.

Source: Appleton (2001)

3.2 Too good to be true? the credibility of the survey findings on poverty trends

Comparability and internal consistency: It is important to note that the findings of the household surveys about changes in consumption over time are not definitive and may be subject to considerable error. Economic data is subject to a degree of measurement error that often seems surprisingly high to non-specialists. This problem is particularly acute in a developing country such as Uganda, where most people earn their incomes from small-holder agriculture and informal businesses. However, even in industrialised countries, large errors are common.[12]

Comparisons between surveys in other developing countries – for example, Tanzania – have often yielded dubious results, probably attributable to changes in either sampling or questionnaire design. By comparison, the wave of household surveys in Uganda since 1992 appears to have been successful in maintaining comparability, partly through keeping the sections of the questionnaire covering household consumption almost identical.

An example of the sensitivity of results to questionnaire design is the omission of a question about public transport fares in the 1992 IHS. Correcting for this raised estimated mean household consumption by 1.7 per cent.

Alterations have been made to the sampling of the surveys but this does not appear problematic, given the use of population multipliers to derive nationally representative statistics. In particular, the estimated rise in consumption from the surveys is similar to that reported in a subset of the panel households surveyed in 1992 and 1999/2000 (see Table 3 in Annex 3). However, arguably such problems of comparability exist when comparing the results from 1992 onwards with those of the 1989/90 Household Budget Survey (Appleton, 1996).[13]

The apparent success of the survey-based poverty monitoring is probably partly attributable to the fact that such monitoring was the main objective of most of the surveys (the Monitoring Surveys were essentially detailed budget surveys with some additions). By contrast, a comparison with the HBS 1989/90 was never an objective of the 1992 IHS in its design stage. The fact that the surveys were so frequent after 1992 – at one stage, fieldwork was almost continual – probably assisted further in maintaining comparability. With only periodic surveys, comparability may be jeopardised by turnover of personnel and loss of institutional memory about survey conventions.

[12] A striking example concerns the assessment of the UK economy in 1976, the year in which the UK became the first industrialised country ever to submit to IMF conditions in exchange for a loan. Growth was projected to be 1.5% and the balance of payments deficit £1,500m. By 1980, revised figures put growth in 1976 at an encouraging 3.7% and the deficit revised down to £842m (Huhne, 1990).

[13] Comparison of the Household Budget Survey 1989/90 with the subsequent surveys is problematic partly because of changes in the questionnaire design; and partly because of possible discrepancies in sampling (indicated by the unit fall in mean household size).

Trianguation: However, internal consistency is not sufficient for validity and so it is important to triangulate the results with data from other sources. This is difficult for precisely the reason why household consumption surveys are so important for monitoring economic welfare – there are few alternative sources of information about the living standards of most Ugandans. The most direct comparison is with the estimates of consumption included in the national accounts.[14]

These are largely based on production estimates that may be quite good for the more formal sectors of the economy but embody a large degree of judgement about small scale agriculture and other informal sectors.[15] Nevertheless, there is useful learning to be had from these two sets of data, as explained in Annex 3 (text and Table 1 and Figure 1).

Further work on triangulation would also be useful. Data on wages is perhaps the closest to income and consumption data, although it may be of limited relevance to rural farming populations. An additional useful cross-check would be with the anthropometric data collected both by the IHS and UNHS, and by the DHSs (1988, 1995, 2001).

In Vietnam, anthropometric data show clearly the adverse consequences of war on child growth and the benefits of recovery (Strauss and Thomas, 1998). However, a comparison of changes over time based on ten African Demographic and Health Surveys shows several instances of a worsening of child anthropometric status at the same time as indices of household assets improve (Sahn, Stiffel and Younger, 1999). Uganda is not one of these "perverse" cases, however, and shows improvements in welfare evident in both kinds of indicator between 1988 and 1995.

The usefulness of information on consumption-poverty: Household survey information is the main source of quantitative information on the income and consumption of rural people in developing countries. Although there are several sources of information on other economic activities in Uganda – customs information on trade; tax data on income and sales in the "formal" sector; production data on formal enterprises etc. – these tend not to cover most small-scale agriculture or informal business.

Reliable information of this kind on living standards is useful for policy purposes, but in a rather indirect way. That is to say, there is no automatic or direct action a

[14] This can only be used to assess estimated mean consumption rather than inequality or consumption poverty per se This limitation is less severe than it sounds given that changes in mean consumption will be very important in driving changes in absolute poverty over time. In the Ugandan case, it appears that general growth rather than any improvement in the distribution of income explains all of the fall in absolute poverty from 1992 to 1999/2000. Indeed, the distribution of consumption appears to have worsened over the period.

[15] The first household survey, the IHS, was used in devising the national accounts for 1992, consumption growth thereafter was not estimated from the Monitoring Surveys. According to private correspondence with UBoS staff, only fourth monitoring survey, MS-4, was used by the national accounts unit and this was only to "a very limited extent". Instead, the estimates of consumption growth in the national accounts were derived from production estimates. The national accounts estimates for 1999/2000 were made before the results of the UNHS were known.

government should take if it observed that living standards are rising at 4 per cent per annum rather than 1 per cent. However, sustained increases in living standards of the poor are perhaps the ultimate criterion by which economic performance is assessed.

The significant and broad-based growth in living standards implied by the household survey results for Uganda is generally reassuring about economic policymaking in the country. If growth were not being observed, it is likely policy would be reviewed and alternative measures to promote growth considered. If growth was observed but was restricted to certain groups of the population, then alternative measures to redistribute income might be considered.

More specific policy questions raised by the survey findings on poverty trends include:

- The distributional effects of pricing and taxation policy towards cash crops: the strong growth in living standards of cash-crop farmers during the period of the coffee boom suggests that liberalisation of the coffee sector, and avoidance of windfall taxation of coffee exports, had a beneficial impact on poverty.[16]
- The imbalance between agriculture and industry: the faster growth in living standards in urban areas, already less poor than rural areas, may have implications for government policy. It should strengthen the emphasis in the PEAP on implementing measures to improve productivity in agriculture in order to reduce poverty.
- Fiscal transfers between regions: the growing gap between the Central and Western regions and the other parts of the country, especially the North, imply there may be a case for compensatory central government financing and special efforts to provide growth in lagging areas.

As stated above, these specific implications are not direct, requiring further assumptions and analysis to be substantiated, but are illustrative of the possible usefulness of the survey-based evidence on living standards.

3.3 Participatory methods for poverty outcome assessment

In their origins, PPAs were closely associated with the construction of national poverty profiles in the context of Poverty Assessments that drew mainly on one or more household consumption survey of the type used in Uganda. It does not follow, in our view, that this is necessarily where the principal vocation of participatory assessment methods lies now and in the future, particularly in countries that have had at least one round of PPA-type exercises already. All the same, it is important to be clear about both the potential and the limits of participatory method for enriching poverty profiles.

In Uganda and elsewhere, PPAs have played an important part in getting recognition for the different dimensions of deprivation that matter to poor people. Participants in PPAs seldom report problems solely in terms of lack of income or

[16] Provision for a windfall tax on coffee exports was made, but the conditions for its levying were never met and so no revenue was collected.

consumption, instead drawing attention to a wide variety of dimensions of well-being. For that reason and others (e.g. the philosophical arguments associated with Amartya Sen) deserve to be taken seriously.

This does not qualify as a case of participatory work "refuting" household survey work, since the survey tradition is well aware that it adopts an unduly narrow concept of individual welfare for operational reasons. It even concedes that it cannot by itself satisfactorily resolve a couple of key questions that arise within this comparatively narrow sphere (known in the field as the identification problem and the referencing problem; Martin Ravallion in Kanbur et al., 2001). However, the PPA findings in this respect have provided a useful counterweight to the policy biases that might otherwise have been produced by the superior measurability and comparability of consumption-poverty (and the tendency of policy makers to be impressed by numbers).[17] In the terminology of Carvalho and White, participatory work can be said to have "enriched" the discussion of poverty trends by drawing attention to aspects of poverty and well-being neglected by simple consumption poverty indicators.

On the other hand, the ability to draw attention to potentially neglected poverty dimensions does not imply that PPA methods are well suited to *monitoring* poverty, either mono- or multi-dimensionally – that is, measuring changes through time. Some dimensions emphasised in PPA reports, e.g. insecurity, may be very difficult to measure by any method. Deprivation of basic human capabilities may be best measured by surveys other than household consumption surveys, in which case the function of the PPA is to draw attention to the need for a range of survey resources for monitoring, not to provide an alternative to these.

Something similar applies to the way PPAs have drawn attention to the importance of *assets* and of *vulnerability* to different sorts of risk in the lives of poor people (Booth et al., 1998). Neither theme was entirely new when it began to be explored in the first PPAs. It has since been picked up in policy work on social protection (e.g. that reflected in the World Development Report 2000/01) and in econometric work using panel survey data (Baulch and Hoddinott, 2000). The most important thing PPAs may do in this respect is to keep up the pressure on policy makers to pay attention to monitoring asset-growth and depletion, as well as the current consumption of households.

Again, some of this is extremely difficult by any method (e.g. social capital). Other asset monitoring work is done with household surveys and could perhaps be done more regularly and systematically. Particular assets, such as cattle stocks, are, of course, the mainstay of sentinel-site monitoring for food security purposes.

[17] In other words, these perspectives are useful counterbalances to a one-dimensional numerical target. In particular, there is a danger that setting a single quantitative target has a distortionary effect on government policy. Measures that would be worthwhile may be neglected if they are unlikely to impact on the target, whereas measures that may raise the target could conceivably be adopted even if they are undesirable due to adverse effects that would not register on the target. For example, a focus on consumption poverty could lead a cynical government to place a higher value on reducing taxation or promoting public services that raise private incomes rather than spending on money on public services that are intrinsically desirable.

All this ought to be uncontentious, but it probably is not. What helps to cloud the issue is the superficial similarity between some of the techniques used in poverty profiling by participatory methods and those used for outcome monitoring with surveys.

3.4 Uses and abuses of PRA tools for poverty monitoring

One key technique that has been generally used to tap poor people's perceptions of poverty and local systems of stratification is wealth- or well-being ranking. This engages individual informants or small groups in a practical sorting exercise around which a dialogue takes place about why households within the selected area are allocated to different strata.

It has been established that the sorting produces quite robust results in the local context, particularly when the efforts of several different informants or groups are combined. It also provides a fertile context in which to explore a range of issues to do with local livelihood patterns, constraints and risks, including critical "why" questions that lead on to policy issues.

Unfortunately, some PPA managers have also treated wealth ranking as something that it is not – namely a way of generating distributions that can be compared across communities and aggregated upwards to produce a national picture. The motive has been the apparent possibility of comparing such "national wealth rankings" with the distributions of household consumption and the poverty-line head-count estimates generated by national surveys.

If it is possible to use PPA wealth rankings to confirm national estimates of poverty incidence (as was claimed in the Kenya and Tanzania PPAs by the World Bank in the mid-1990s, for example), this suggests that wealth ranking might provide a participatory poverty monitoring tool. However, the premise is mistaken in our view. There is no reason to suppose that a wealth ranking conducted at one moment in one community is comparable – in the sense that the procedure followed is "the same" – with one carried out in another, even with the same sub-culture and facing similar agro-economic conditions, at the same time. Comparing results at different times, or under contrasting social conditions, would be even less appropriate.

Wealth ranking was never intended to be more than a means of facilitating the analysis of *local* stratification systems. It is very useful for that, and hence also as a means of generating serviceable local sampling frames, as discussed further on. Stretching such tools for new purposes is tempting but perilous, and bad for the reputation of PRA.

The same things apply to the field instruments that have been useful for generating pictures of local trends and fluctuations – time lines, decade matrices, seasonal calendars, etc. It should be elementary that people's perceptions of improvement and deterioration are not themselves reliable as indicators of actual changes. The techniques are designed in several cases to elicit specific numerical information and not just opinions. Nevertheless, their purpose is to

permit an exploring of the *relationships* between different changes (e.g. between the land base of the community and out-migration) and the *processes* that may underlie the more obvious changes and help to explain them (e.g. inheritance patterns and land fragmentation).

While it is normal and justified to report direct testimony, and numerical results from matrix scoring exercises, in PPA site reports, this information should always be treated for what it is. The synthesis of such information should not ever involve its representation in a putatively standardised form. It should also, of course, continue to be treated as case-study evidence and not treated as generalisable to the wider population.

Recent Ugandan experience has not avoided confusion on some of these points. As a result, a legitimate and useful contribution to enriching the poverty profile was compromised by appearing to contest survey results directly. We argue below that this was ill-considered, particularly where questions about aggregate trends are concerned.

Lest this discussion seem rather negative about the contribution of participatory methods, it needs to be repeated that, in our submission, a good deal of the valuable information generated by PPAs is not about poverty outcomes at all. It about the factors that may help to explain outcomes and trends in outcomes, including policy-implementation snags and other intermediate policy variables. We pick up these possibilities in the next section.

3.5 Confirming or refuting? the case of poverty trends in Uganda

Given the above, questions are raised about the ability of PPA analysis of poverty trends to "confirm or refute" survey-based attempts to measure the attainment of this goal. Clearly, if participants in a PPA were uniformly to report that their living standards are worsening, this would raise questions about any positive trends reported by household surveys. This hypothetical situation is one interpretation put on experience in Uganda in the 1990s with the findings from the UPPAP and household surveys. Consequently, we devote considerable space to this historical experience and to its implications for future efforts to combine survey and PPA-based information for poverty monitoring.

Carvalho and White identify "confirming or refuting" as one way in which survey and participatory methods can be combined. The UPPAP took place in 1998/9 after poverty trends from 1992-1998 had been assessed using five household surveys, but before the most recent 1999/2000 survey. This sequence implies that the UPPAP was placed to confirm/refute the findings of the first five household surveys, while the UNHS could be used to confirm/refute the UPPAP. An early report of the key findings of the UPPAP concluded that poverty trends were adverse:

> "In all communities consulted in all districts, the poor were perceived as getting poorer and the rich as getting richer" (Uganda, 1999a: 4).

This apparent disconnect between the findings on poverty trends of the household survey and the UPPAP was considered by several analysts (McClean, 1999; McGee, 2000). However, all evidence of this disconnect was excised from the section on poverty trends in the final report on the UPPAP, which concluded that participants recalled:

> "…the 1990s as a decade of improvement relative to the previous decade" (Uganda, 2000a: 29).

It seems likely that the survey-based evidence was one consideration in the change in the reporting of the results of the UPPAP on poverty trends. Although analysis of the Ugandan survey evidence and the UPPAP was conducted separately, both were ultimately reporting to the Ministry of Finance. This institutional arrangement encouraged attempts at reconciling seemingly conflicting evidence, since no credible government ministry would be willing to endorse and publish flatly contradictory findings.

The section on poverty trends of the final report on the UPPAP is instructive because – apart from the quote given above on improvements in the 1990s – it makes little attempt to establish a single aggregative conclusion: i.e. that poverty fell, rose or stayed the same. Instead, it reports trends in certain problem areas (e.g. food security or disease) as perceived in certain districts.

This modesty – of which we approve – highlights the difficulty in aggregation using participatory methods. To make a single aggregative conclusion about poverty trends, aggregation would be required in at least two dimensions – across problem areas (dimensions of welfare) and across participants. By contrast, the survey-based approach simplifies matters by focusing on household consumption as the sole welfare measure (aggregating goods and services using their prices) and aggregating across individuals using a particular poverty statistic.

The final report of the UPPAP and the household-survey based work on poverty trends represent extreme opposite responses to the aggregation problem. The UPPAP final report eschews attempts at aggregation while the consumption-poverty estimates aggregate mechanically. This raises the question of whether the PPA methods could be adapted to make them more aggregation-friendly. This might have the advantage of permitting a more genuine relationship of confirmation/refutation between the PPA and the various survey instruments.

The alternative viewpoint is that the difficulties are considerable; the losses, in terms of the ability of the PRA techniques to yield useful information of other kinds, would be large; and that the Carvalho/White suggestions are a little misleading in this respect. Box 4 highlights some of the difficulties

Box 4: Aggregation and standardisation in surveys and PPAs

Aggregation across dimensions of welfare

There is wide assent to the proposition that welfare and deprivation are multi-dimensional. Although individuals may reach global assessments of their well-being, the implicit weighting of the various dimensions of welfare is likely to be so subjective and perhaps complex, that there may seems little merit in analysts attempting to mimic this through mechanical indices. The survey-based practice of aggregating goods and services into total household consumption using market prices has some merit in that the weights (prices) are not arbitrary or subjective, but instead provide one measure of the value of the relevant good/service to the household. However, household consumption misses many aspects of well-being that can not be purchased in the market.

Weighting issues would matter less for monitoring poverty and identifying the poor if the various dimensions of welfare and deprivation were closely correlated. However, in practice, although different dimensions of welfare are usually significantly correlated, the strength of the correlation is often surprisingly low. For example, Appleton and Song (2000) find low correlations between consumption-poverty, lack of education and ill-health at the household level in six countries.[18] Sahn, Stiffel and Younger (1999) find evidence from repeated DHSs in ten African countries that anthropometric indicators may worsen despite improvements in asset-based indicators of welfare.[19]

An implication of this is that poverty and well-being should be considered, and monitored, in a number of dimensions. There is no requirement of aggregation across dimensions of well-being, although some simplification and reduction will be necessary in the construction of quantitative indicators.

In terms of the monitoring poverty trends through PPAs, there could be an argument for some standardisation in the dimensions of well-being considered. For example, all communities could be asked about food availability and about their cash incomes, two dimensions of well-being that should correspond fairly well to household consumption, the welfare indicator favoured in survey-based poverty monitoring. Efforts could be made to *consolidate* some of the problem areas identified by UPPAP participants in assessing poverty trends. For example, where respondents reported on availability of crops and fishing separately, they could be asked to also make an aggregative assessment of food availability.

Some problem areas identified by respondents could be legitimately regarded as not indicators of poverty outcomes. For example, destruction of crops by pests and availability of veterinary services were on occasion identified as problem areas by participants in assessing poverty trends. It would be legitimate to regard these as intermediate indicators whose impact would ultimately be felt on food availability and income.

Aggregation across individuals

Whatever overall poverty trends, it is inevitable that life for some individuals worsens while for others it improves. Aggregating trends in well-being across individuals is central to forming an overall assessment of poverty. Survey-based approaches perform such aggregation mechanically through poverty indicators. These implicitly embody

[18] For example, in the 1993 Welfare Monitoring Survey in Kenya, 21% of children under-five are defined as stunted by international standards and 20% of children under-five live in households spending less than a dollar a day. However, only 12% of all children under-five are both stunted and living below the poverty line.

[19] It should be noted that Uganda was studied but was not one of these "perverse" cases – the 1988 and 1995 DHSs showed improvements in both anthropometric status and an asset index.

value judgements, although efforts are made to keep these minimal through *dominance analysis*.

Dominance analysis is a simple, powerful and fairly recent tool in quantitative poverty analysis. It can be illustrated most simply by considering two samples, A and B, ranked in terms of household consumption per capita. The distribution of consumption in A can be said to dominate that in B if at any point in the distribution (e.g. at the median or at the 25 percentile etc.), consumption is higher in A than in B. Such dominance implies that, whatever the poverty line, poverty will be lower in A than B. This implication will be true for most commonly used poverty indicators (whether the headcount, the poverty gap, etc). In the Ugandan household surveys, the 1999/2000 UNHS dominates the 1992 IHS (and all Monitoring surveys). This implies that poverty fell, whatever the poverty line, for a wide class of poverty indicators. Dominance analysis can also be used to make inferences about the changes in welfare when welfare is multi-dimensional, although the practice of this is less well-developed.

Often the tools used in PPAs to assess poverty trends implicitly aggregate across members of a group. It was suggested earlier that this may be done too readily if the group is heterogeneous.

Aggregation over groups or communities is problematic if the output of the PPA tools is not numerical. Some statistical aggregation of qualitative is possible – for example, it could be reported how many interviewees who reported worsening food availability). Superficially, the outputs of matrix scoring exercises offer more potential for statistical analysis (for example, the number of stones placed to represent food availability could be averaged across sites etc). However, different communities are likely to implicitly use different scales in these exercises. For example, ten stones in a poor community may represent less than in a wealthy community.

Consequently, such exercises mean that any numerical representation of the information data gathered from a particular site is likely at best to be ordinal. That is to say, we could establish that a problem (say lack of food) was reported to have worsened in X sites and improved in Y sites but not how big the deterioration or improvements were.

Sampling and recall periods
Arguably, problems of aggregation would be the central difficulties in trying to use PPA evidence to triangulate the findings of the household survey programme on poverty trends. However, in the case of the first round of UPPAP, added complications arose from:

Different sampling – seven of the districts selected had United Nations Development Program Indicators below the Ugandan average. On the other hand, UPPAP included several areas, such as Kampala and Bushenyi, where material improvements might be expected. The question of alternative sampling approaches is addressed at the end of the section.

Different recall periods – participants never confined themselves to the period covered by the surveys (1992-2000) and often took a longer perspective, contrasting the present unfavourably with the pre-Amin period (in one case, beginning the reference period in 1915). The UPPAP final report includes a graph of time trend analysis conducted in a site in Moyo. Food availability was reported to have increased substantially during the 1990s compared to the 1980s, but was still felt to be below the level enjoyed in the early 1970s. This problem could be overcome by greater standardisation in recall periods.

It is clear that the UPPAP exercise was not designed in such a way as to be able to confirm or refute the findings on poverty trends of the surveys. Initial summaries of the evidence on time trends provided by UPPAP were mistaken in implying this was possible. Should future PPAs be designed with this objective more firmly in mind? If so, the box suggests some ways in which it could be done. But it is at least questionable whether the quality of the additional triangulation would be worth the very considerable effort that would be involved.

On the other hand, there would certainly be corresponding losses to the use of the PPA site studies as a flexible exploratory tool. The benefits on this side need to be carefully weighed in the balance. In the case of UPPAP round 1, even though the confrontation of the survey and PPA findings on poverty outcomes may be said to have got off to a bad start, the results of thinking-through why the results apparently differed was extremely fertile.

As summarised in Annex 4, various reasons have been proposed for why surveys may report rising consumption at the same time as people report lower welfare. Most of these reasons are capable of empirical investigation and, if the hypotheses are thought worthy of investigation, existing survey data could be used further in order to test them. This exemplifies the sort of relationship of complementarity that we emphasised in general terms in the last section, and further illustrate below.

3.6 The iterative combination of survey and qualitative findings

The above discussion does not suggest that there is substantial scope for *directly* comparing PPA and survey results, as a means of validating them. To a quite significant extent, while in Bourguignon's metaphor both are looking at the same mountain, they are looking at different features using methods that are non-comparable. That said, there are certainly opportunities for mutual learning that

takes proper account of these differences. The understanding of poverty as a whole is enhanced by using both methods, and the result is possibly a bit (but maybe not a lot) more than the sum of the distinct contributions.

Exploiting these opportunities may not require a close integration of the survey and the PPA exercises at the technical level. Technically, it may be sufficient to have an iterative sequence in which each exercise is informed and guided by the results of the previous ones. In terms of process, there needs to be an institutional set-up that allows such learning to occur naturally and without unnecessary acrimony, as discussed in our final section below.

The examples of successful iteration from PPA exercises to surveys and vice versa are modest in our perception, but need to be mentioned. We then consider the first item in Carvalho and White's menu of options for "integration" of survey and participatory methods: the use of the former to increase the statistical representativeness of the latter.

Using one research method to inform the agenda of another: Given that the different methods may provide complementary information, there is a potential benefit when setting the agenda for research within one approach in learning from the results of previous work using an alternative approach.

One example of this in the Ugandan context is that the results of the surveys about consumption poverty suggest that participatory research may be useful in understanding how consumption poverty fell. This might require some re-focussing of attention from the standard PPA concerns with people's existing or worsening problems, and onto their achievements and areas of progress. It would be consistent with our general suggestion that the comparative advantage of PPA instruments lies in probing the "why" questions rather than the "what" and "how much" questions. Understanding what some people have done to raise their material standard of living might be useful in learning what the government can do to assist these efforts and enable others who have not.

The agenda for future household surveys could probably benefit from close study of the results of the UPPAP. McGee suggests that food availability, risk and alcohol abuse are identified as important issues in the UPPAP. Some of these issues – notably food availability – can be studied using existing surveys. An effort was made to cover aspects of risk in the UNHS, but more work could be done here, particularly by extending the panel aspect of the surveys. Alcohol abuse may be one issue that is hard to study through surveys, due to its potential sensitivity. However, other types of qualitative enquiry might be worth undertaking.

Using participatory research to develop survey questionnaires: The UNHS was influenced by the UPPAP, with, for example, the welfare indicators being revised based on the UPPAP findings. However, it should be noted that there was a cost in this revision, since it prevented comparison with the welfare indicators in MS-3 and MS-4 which had revealed an intriguing worsening at the same time as consumption rose. This is an example of the general trade-off between perfecting survey instruments and maintaining comparability over time.

For monitoring and related purposes, there is some virtue in maintaining a consistent but imperfect instrument.

On the other hand, piloting new survey instruments in the context of a PPA exercise might yield insights that could allow the instruments to be refined before use in subsequent surveys. Where particular issues are to be investigated using surveys, there is a strong general case for them to be studied in advance using other methods. UPPAP might be able to play a useful role in this respect.

3.7 Integration in respect of sampling:

Discussions linking surveys and PPAs through the approach to sampling are typically rather sterile because participants happily sign up to what sounds like an eminently sound idea, but actually have quite different visions of what could be involved. There are number of possible reasons for promoting this type of linkage, which need to be distinguished.

One is the belief that if sampling is not representative, it is not worth having. In other words, the case for purposive sampling – and thus for inductive, exploratory research – is rejected or not understood. It is not clear that exponents of qualitative methods can have a practical dialogue with this point of view.

The ***second***, for which we more sympathy, is that case-study work to illuminate poverty might be more illuminating if it did not concentrate on very poor communities, but looked at a more "normal" range of situations, such as would be generated by a random or stratified random sample. Although it can be useful to present "the voices of the poor", it is not clear that a PPA need restrict itself to this. For poverty analysis, comparing the poor and the non-poor is useful for identifying factors that are associated with a greater risk of poverty; looking at how people have escaped or avoided poverty, may give key insights.[20]

There are two points about this.

> First, it is not necessarily a case for statistical sampling. It could be an argument for a different sort of purposive sampling – an extension of the reasoning that led UPPAP 1 to take a better-off community in Bushenyi as one of its sites. If the point is to study how some poor people manage to get ahead, sites should be selected where this is known to have happened for different sorts of reason, so that comparative analysis is possible. There is an element of this approach in the current PPA design in Pakistan.

[20] When discussing his switch from studying stagnating African economies to high growth East Asian economies, Richard Sabot (personal communication) gave the analogy that it was like moving from studying why a stone would not fly to studying flight in a bird. Moreover, working with the poor risks the familiar statistical problem of sample selection bias. For example, a factor X – say education – that reduces poverty will look less attractive when working a sample of the poor only since that sample will include only the educated who remained poor.

Second, it could be argued that the loss of this kind of analytical bite[21] would be a small price for satisfying the doubting Thomases, and that for this reason, some sort of representative sample should be preferred. But this argument depends crucially on whether a plausible sample design could be constructed at reasonable cost, a question pursued, with discouraging results, in the interesting paper by Lars Moller (2001).[22] As Moller also makes clear, there would be no point in going down this road unless it was intended to adopt in full the proposals for using standardising modes of enquiry as well.

Actually, this sort of proposal for setting a PPA up on the basis of a representative sample of its own is not what many people have in mind when they speak about linking PPAs to survey sampling frames. There are at least two other possibilities.

The ***third*** argument for linkage (of a different sort) is that if PPA sites can be selected to coincide with areas intensively covered by a household survey, there are rich possibilities for jointly analysing data from different sources on the *same communities and households*.

These possibilities were impressively exploited in the Tanzania PPA and social capital study in the mid-1990s. However, that study was able to make use of a Human Resource Development Survey that used quite a different sample design from the national household survey. In the case of Uganda, the regular national surveys work with samples consisting of small numbers of households drawn from each of a large number of communities (for example, ten households drawn from each of 1000 enumeration areas in the IHS). This is the case also in Pakistan and elsewhere.

By contrast, PPAs not only work with a relatively small number of villages, but involve a large number of people in each village. There are strong practical arguments for this different balance of the breadth and depth of coverage in a locality. "Linkage" is thus much less feasible than many people suppose.

Finally, there is the option of collecting a small amount of standardised information to "situate" villages selected for participatory research. Core quantitative information at the community level may be collected be compared with like information drawn from the household surveys to see where the

[21] The costs of switching from purposive to statistical sampling may be that certain groups of interest – for example, communities with a high refugee population – are not included in the final sample. There would be a danger of selecting a lot of rather homogeneous "typical" communities and neglecting interesting diversity. Conversely, it could be argued that discovering such homogeneity would itself be a finding and that it would be appropriate for more weight to be attached to observations drawn from a large homogenous group than a small minority. Also, a risk with purposive sampling is that preconceived notions of who the poor are and where they reside may strongly influence the result. Where prior understanding is limited, or such definitions are contested, it may be preferable to sample the entire population and examine these issues more empirically.

[22] Stratification would reduce the statistical inefficiency attached to simple random sampling but its success would depend on the information available for this purpose.

communities for the participatory work lie in certain dimensions compared to the estimated national distribution.

This was pioneered by Jesko Hentschel in Ecuador, who reports (in Kanbur et al., 2001) that gathering such information on around fifteen basic indicators can be very quick (relying on one or two key informants). In the Pakistan PPA, six questions extracted from the questionnaire[23] of the Pakistan Integrated Household Survey are being used for this purpose. While the indications from the pilot stage are that this is not an insignificant additional effort for the field teams, it seems worthwhile as a means of satisfying the hunger of officials to know what the study sites "represent" while not compromising the distinctive qualities of the exercise.

[23] It could be argued that using sections of UBoS questionnaires might provide other useful information for PPA researchers. It would assist them in selecting homogenous groups of participants or identifying suitable subjects for other investigations. It would also enable a direct comparison of consumption-based definitions of poverty with respondents' own definitions. This would shed light on the multi-dimensionality of poverty. However, PRA has other resources with which to guide the selection of focus groups – well-being ranking and social mapping. And to provide for these additional analytical avenues, a much longer questionnaire would be needed than for a "situating" exercise alone.

4 Monitoring the implementation of poverty-reduction plans

We have devoted considerable space in the last two sections to 1) the generic characteristics of survey-based and qualitative/participatory methods, and 2) the task of poverty-outcome monitoring. This can be justified in terms of the need to get an agreed framework of basic assumptions, and the fact that there is a rich experience to draw on in the area of outcome monitoring, especially on the survey side.

Although much less detailed, the argument of this section is no less important. It is that there are major opportunities to be exploited for using existing instruments, and iterative combinations of them, for monitoring the more upstream aspects of PEAP implementation. To recall the quotation in the Introduction, the monitoring arrangements of the PEAP are supposed to encourage "a two-way flow of information between beneficiaries, service providers and policy makers" to fulfil both learning and accountability functions. This sets the right tone in suggesting that it is the *whole* chain of actions linking policy inputs to results for poor people that needs to be watched.

Knowing whether final outcome measures are moving in the right direction or not, for different groups, has value for learning and accountability. But even with recent improvements in turn-around times (see below), poverty trend data become available rather late in relation to the policies and actions that influence them. Also, final outcomes change slowly and reflect the operation of many factors, only some of them related to policy. It is notoriously difficult to attribute movements in final outcomes to specific decisions, actions and people.

There is therefore a strong and urgent need to develop means of getting feedback on changes that are known, or strongly suspected, to influence poverty outcomes and which both change quickly and are easily attributable. In the literature, these are variously termed outputs or intermediate outcomes.[24] An example of a PEAP output indicator would be the annual number of new trained primary-school teachers. Intermediate outcomes would include primary enrolments or examination passes at different levels.

4.1 Targets and indicators

The PEAP matrix contains a range of intermediate indicators and targets. There is an important discussion that needs to be continued about these listings. One question is whether the targets are sufficiently selective, and whether they identify well the things that most need to change in order for the PEAP's final outcome goals to be met. Another is about how well they are linked to real performance

[24] Rather confusingly for poverty-analysis specialists, the Monitoring and Evaluation profession has the convention of calling what we have been calling poverty outcomes "impacts", and using the term "outcome" freely for "specific results and the utilisation of means/services by beneficiaries". To avoid further confusion, we will always qualify the latter as *intermediate* outcomes, distinguishing these from *final* (or poverty) outcomes.

incentives within the public services, given the current status of budget and civil-service reform.

To the extent the targets *are* being taken seriously, there are also a range of concerns about possible distortions. In any action plan, care must be taken not to adopt overly reductive targeting, which would create perverse incentives to act to improve the targeted indicators at the expense of untargeted dimensions of quality. Monitoring can be useful, also, to compare the performance of different facilities – to provide information on best practice and help identifying those that are under-performing.[25] Again, however, this must not be done mechanically, as chance or special circumstances may explain variations in performance.

These issues are very important. However, our focus is on the somewhat narrower question of how different qualitative and quantitative methods might be best used to meet the information needs of such a monitoring system.

In theory, implementation monitoring is generally seen as the province of the internal reporting systems and management information systems (MIS) of different line ministries and public agencies. In practice, usable evidence from these sources is generally hard to come by in developing countries. Reporting is generally incomplete and unreliable, and the so-called "denominator problem" prevents the effective calculation of rates of production or usage wherever census data are not up to date.

Most seriously, the internal character of administrative data systems limits their role in generating a new "politics of information", where information in the public domain becomes a source of external pressure on government to improve performance. The place of independent information, of both survey and participatory sorts, arises from this consideration as well as from worries about data quality.

4.2 Information sources for implementation monitoring

It would be useful for this workshop to discuss means of improving the quality and use of administrative statistics. Both the MIS of line ministries and the data needs and resources of districts are central topics for PEAP monitoring. However, we lack specific information with which to take this discussion forward. Also and more importantly, there may be for some time to come severe limits to what can be done in these regards. That implies that there is good sense in asking whether either survey instruments of different kinds, or participatory methods or both, could provide interim solutions that would be effective.

The answer is a definite yes. Both existing and new instruments on both sides of the basic methodological divide can and should be deployed for this purpose. In the case of UPPAP, we argue that this should become the *principal* focus of its work. In the case of the surveys, specific tailor-made surveys may have a place alongside participatory beneficiary assessments, once the key implementation

[25] It is sometimes argued that peer competition is one of the most effective means of creating incentives and hence one of the most resisted. A common example of this in action is the use of examinations to motivate student learning.

bottlenecks in particular service-delivery or governance-reform areas have been identified. However, we are doubtful of the wisdom of replacing the regular poverty monitoring surveys with CWIQ surveys, on the grounds that the former already collect most of the required information.

4.3 Re-orienting UPPAP

The case for turning UPPAP decisively in the direction of implementation monitoring is a mixture of negatives and positives. The burden of the last section is that the first UPPAP generated rich new material for poverty analysis, but was not suited to detecting outcome trends. To become better at the latter, it would need to become more like a survey, which – although it has some attractions – is probably unwise because the comparative advantage of case-study and participatory methods lies elsewhere.

In addition, there is the question of whether any national PPA process can be expected to go on generating new insights into the nature of poverty after the first round. An overview of international experience with PPA suggests the point of diminishing returns may already have been reached in this respect:

> "… the early PPAs were remarkable for the new substantive insights they offered on the nature of poverty, whereas 'second generation' PPAs … are less noteworthy for new findings than for fostering and enabling new institutional characteristics, protagonists, owners and processes. The lesson for PRSPs is that … fresh participatory research might unearth less new information than new and more effective ways of applying the lessons of participatory assessment to policy formulation, implementation and monitoring, especially through the exploitation of new spaces and relationships offered by the participatory research process" (McGee with Norton, 2000: 34).

This is partly about valuing the PPA as process, which we take up in the next section. But it is also recommending a relative shift of attention from final outcomes to implementation.

Stated more positively, PPAs in general and UPPAP in particular have already shown that they can do this. As we have argued, the main comparative advantage of the case-study method lies in the ability to explore in holistic fashion the factors and the causal stories behind local situations, events and trends. These generally include a mixture of natural and social resource issues and institutions and relationships that are directly policy-dependent. In the case of very poor communities, PPA exercises have proven themselves adept at identifying and documenting ways things can go wrong from the perspective of a poverty-reduction strategy (Bird and Kakande, 2001, especially the table on Findings and Policy Responses). Were the case studies to include more example of successful disimpoverishment, as has been suggested, there might also be examples – symptomatic rather than representative, but nonetheless useful – of how things can work better.

It would not take a major reorientation to apply UPPAP working methods more systematically to the assessment of specific policy initiatives or efforts to improve facilities or services in particular areas. The beneficiary assessments that are undertaken regularly in other countries, usually in relation to externally-funded projects and programmes, do precisely that. In this case, it would be important for the PPA work to be both developed in close association with the appropriate sector stakeholders, and independent of them so that the exercise is able to build a critical dialogue in the framework set by the PEAP as a whole.

The timing of such exercises should be worked out in relation to the timetable of PEAP implementation and the development of sector programmes, as the critical question is whether there is something new that is worth monitoring. PPAs could be sectorally focused or multi-sectoral. But the idea that PPAs have to focus on *everything* that is relevant to poverty, and need to do so in a regular, three, four or five year cycle does not any longer seem appropriate – if it ever was. On the other hand, PPA synthesis work, and the PPA as a process, could well be expected to be continuous, drawing on a wider range of evidence than in the past. This is argued in the next section.

4.4 Surveys and CWIQs

Are new tools needed to allow Uganda's survey-based resources to play an effective part in PEAP implementation monitoring? It seems possible to us that a wider range of relatively small special surveys might be commissioned, by line ministries and other stakeholders, particularly if UPPAP case studies throw up policy conundrums that cannot be answered or effectively acted upon without more systematic data. It is possible that UBoS might consider undertaking more of these surveys itself, or at least supervising them.

But the big question is not this but whether the argument for a relative shift of attention to the monitoring of intermediate variables such as service usage and quality implies a different approach to major surveys. For example, should there be fewer consumption surveys, and the introduction of the cheaper, quicker CWIQ surveys, which pay particular attention to service use and assessment?

The Core Welfare Indicators Questionnaire (CWIQ) provides one survey-based method of monitoring the access, usage and levels of satisfaction with public services such as health and education. It can be supplemented with additional modules and coupled with anthropometric measurements of children. The advantages of the survey are claimed to be its modest cost (due to a short questionnaire), quick processing rate (due to optical scanner technology) and low demand for analytical capacity (the production of basic tables is automated). The CWIQ was first applied in Ghana in 1997, drawing on a large sample of 15000 households.

It is not clear that the advantages of the CWIQ survey outweigh its limitations. The cost saving over a conventional household budget is not overwhelming – it is estimated to cost a little over half as much. As a result, it is unlikely to be undertaken much more frequently than conventional household surveys. In Ghana, a follow-up to the 1997 survey was only planned for 2000 or 2001. On

the other hand, not only does it not attempt to gather data on expenditure and income, but it provides no information that could not be gathered by a conventional survey.[26]

The existing household surveys for Uganda, coupled with the accompanying community surveys, provide richer information on service delivery than would be provided by a CWIQ. Given that Uganda has established a credible series of household surveys to monitor expenditures that could be easily adapted to provide any information in the CWIQ, it is hard to see what would be gained by diluting that series in the future by substituting CWIQs for conventional surveys.

That insufficient use is made of the results of the existing surveys as they apply to intermediate variables is beyond doubt. However, surely the way to address this is to stimulate more information-based policy making and hence analysis of existing data (see next section), not to introduce a new survey instrument.

That is not to say that some technical innovations developed by the CWIQs – for example in data input by optical scanning – might not provide lessons for Uganda. However, the turn-around of surveys in Uganda does seem to have already quickened, with preliminary poverty estimates from the UNHS 1999/2000 being available only six months after fieldwork was complete.

One limitation with the CWIQ is that the information gathered on public services is rather simple. Information on access to services and usage at a point in time can be provided by conventional baseline surveys (and in some cases administrative data) may provide better indicators of progress between household surveys. For the reasons given earlier about surveying behaviour rather than attitudes, it is not clear that general survey information on respondents' satisfaction with services and reasons for dissatisfaction is the best way of monitoring progress in improving quality.

Satisfaction is relative and may depend strongly on respondents' expectations. In a period of recovery and reform, it is possible that quality rises but this is outstripped by expectations. (This has arguably happened with the National Health Service in the UK in the last twenty years.) Monitoring performance by such indices of public satisfaction runs the risk of encouraging politicians and administrators to focus on marketing and/or dampening expectations.

Canvassing users' satisfaction (rather than the general public's satisfaction) with the particular service they have received is entirely legitimate and potentially a powerful means of improving performance. However, it is perhaps better done at quite a local level – perhaps even facility level – where specific complaints about particular institutions can be voiced, investigated and responded to. This may be where UPPAP comes in. Some standardised information could still gathered and

[26] Much has been made of the ability to proxy consumption using correlates measured through CWIQ-type surveys based on the experience of Ghana (Fofack, n.d.). However, work for Uganda has found disappointing results. Although the correlates predicted the right direction of change in consumption, they were very inaccurate regarding its magnitude (McKay, 2001). Similar work by Oxford Policy Management in connection with the Pakistan PPA has produced results that are comparable with those for Uganda (Martin Rimmer, pers. comm.).

collated centrally (whether nationally or at the district level, or both) to permit central monitoring of local or institutional performance. However, it is likely that the bodies overseeing performance should give greater weight to objective indicators of performance (for example, examination pass rates in education or death rates in hospitals) rather than opinions.

5 Stakeholder roles and information use

There is obviously no point in generating good data if it is not used. Uganda has a better record in this respect than many countries, but it remains a central topic and one that must not be neglected in a workshop such as this. Information use is linked, we believe, to the question of how PEAP stakeholders are involved in poverty monitoring and analysis. The incentives to use information for policy improvement are weak and are likely to remain so for some time within the government system. Involvement of PEAP stakeholders in accessing and using the information generated by UBoS, UPPAP and other sources is a possible interim solution to this problem.

There are obviously various ways information can be used for policy improvement. They range from prompting minor but worthwhile adjustments in administrative rules (e.g. releasing Kalangala from the obligation to spend earmarked funds on roads); through drawing attention to inconsistencies between policy declarations and implementation in a particular field and advocating for a radical change of direction in policy or the law (e.g. women's land rights); to uncovering previously unsuspected links, or the lack of them, between intermediate variables and poverty reduction (e.g. primary education is less effective than supposed in reducing poverty in Africa).

It is not the case that all of these uses call for the same sort of institutional infrastructure. In the case of policy-oriented econometric analysis using survey results, the set-up in Uganda seems to be functioning well (not forgetting the points about improving data access made earlier). On the other hand, the use of both quantitative and qualitative data for advocacy and policy improvement may have further to go, and certainly calls for an extended discussion.

5.1 Analytical use of survey data

Existing household survey data has actually been quite widely used by analysts inside Uganda and outside. Academic papers have been written using the data studying education, health, agricultural productivity, female-headed households, taxation and labour markets. The data has also been used as to calibrate a Computable General Equilibrium model of the Ugandan macroeconomy.

Most of the microeconomic work has used only the cross-sectional aspect of the data, although attempts are being made to take advantage of the repeated nature of the cross-sections using cohort analysis (that is to say, looking at how a particular age cohort have fared over time). However, the most exciting prospect for research is the panel of 1400 households surveyed in both 1992 and 1999/2000. This panel appears to have enjoyed a similar rise in consumption to that observed across the surveys as a whole and can be used to investigate what determines the extent to which households did or did not benefit from this growth (for a preliminary investigation, see Deininger, 2000).

In order to maintain and extend these possibilities, which could be very important for guiding policy in the medium term, a number of things are important, some obvious and some not. First, there needs to be capacity in Uganda to both

participate in the analytical work and enable its intelligent passage into national policy debates. The importance of continued support to national research centres and think tanks such as EPRC, and of ensuring that at least a substantial part of that support comes from the national budget, follows from this.

Second, it would be helpful if the results of this sophisticated analytical work were made more accessible to the general public and PEAP stakeholders. This sort of intermediary role is already played by the Poverty Monitoring and Analysis Unit. We do not know whether the potential is yet being fully exploited.

Lastly, there may be opportunities for disciplinary combinations in this type of analytical work that are not yet being explored. Econometric work and social/institutional analysis in the anthropological tradition are alternative and potentially complementary ways of enquiring into the causal processes of poverty and poverty reduction. We have argued that panel surveys are more powerful than ordinary surveys for studying the causal processes of poverty reduction. Something closely parallel is true about the relationship between long-term anthropological fieldwork and PPAs. Experience from neighbouring countries suggests that the combination of panel-survey econometrics and restudies of anthropological field sites are a peculiarly powerful combination for feeding fundamental thinking on poverty-reduction strategy (e.g. Francis and Hoddinott, 1993).

5.2 A framework for learning and advocacy

For the broader purposes of information-use for PEAP monitoring, the important thing is to have an institutional set-up that keeps stakeholders mobilised for monitoring, and gets them involved in both soliciting and getting relevant information. We are not well informed on the degree to which the PEAP revision process has both engaged with the same stakeholders as the original drafting process, and managed to commit them to an ongoing monitoring role. Either way, this clearly has a place in the present discussion.

It also needs to be part of the context in which the future of UPPAP is discussed. In Section 2, we argued that a PPA is not just a distinct data-collection method, but a process designed to increase the influence that information has on policy, by engaging poor people and the makers and implementers of policy in a dialogue, preferably with an ongoing character. This is actually quite close to the way the PEAP Summary describes the role of a PEAP monitoring system. In turn, that implies that the discussion on UPPAP should focus at least as much on the arrangements for advocacy and networking for policy influence that have been built, as on the focus and frequency of further UPPAP field studies.

We do not know enough to make specific proposals in this area. But we conclude with the general plea to take seriously the process achievements of UPPAP. That approach would see UPPAP not just as a partner of UBoS, with each taking account of the other's findings in designing further investigations, but as a more active *user* of data from UBoS to enrich and render more robust its dissemination and advocacy efforts on behalf of Uganda's poor.

There is no direct comparison to be made between the institutional set-up of Uganda's "second generation" PPA (nationally owned, strong focus on stakeholder partnership, etc.) and the series of Poverty Assessments and PPAs carried out by the World Bank in the 1990s. On the other hand, some of the findings from Caroline Robb's study of the impact of those processes seem intuitively to be applicable to the design of UPPAP's second phase. Robb found that the impact of the PPAs was strongly related, inter alia, to their degree of linkage with the PA – that is, with the main exercise based on household survey data (1999: 35).

Some other national PPAs currently in progress have drawn the lesson from this that the exercise should be defined as participatory mainly at the level of the national process. From the district level upwards, synthesis reports are expected to combine PPA field site evidence with other relevant research, including quantitative data. The national PPA report is expected to draw heavily on the integrated household survey as a means of contextualising and situating the local evidence and "voices" (Pakistan, 2000). There might be some merit in considering this sort of institutional and data-use relationship as the basis for the second UPPAP.

6 Conclusions

We have approached the Terms of Reference for this paper (Annex 5) in a broad way. While focusing most of our attention on UBoS surveys and UPPAP, we have tried to place this discussion in the context of a broader concern with monitoring the PEAP. Following the PEAP, poverty monitoring and analysis have been taken to include implementation issues and intermediate factors influencing poverty outcomes, as well as tracking and analysing those outcomes themselves. This is important, because part of our argument concerns the need for a relative shift of focus in the efforts of the UPPAP and the household survey (in the latter case mainly at the level of data *use*) from final outcomes to intermediate processes.

6.1 Concentrating on what you do best

We began by setting out what we think the generic strengths and weaknesses of survey-based and participatory methods are. The obvious point is that they are different, and that the productive ways of combining them take this into account. There are also other distinctions that are important: not all qualitative work is participatory, and vice versa; and the case for PRA and PPAs does not rest only or even mainly on the power of the research tools.

In principle, we have suggested that there is value in combining survey and participatory methods arising from:

1. using each to check for errors in the other;
2. complementaries of substance – getting evidence on different aspects of the same thing (e.g. poverty);
3. the complementarity of deduction and induction; and
4. the association of each with the other to achieve greater influence on policy.

However, we have found the range of actual examples of what Carvalho and White (1997) called *integration* of methods rather modest. Also, the first bullet point above seems rather more questionable than it appears at first sight. In the terms used by Carvalho and White, the evidence is stronger that surveys and PPAs can *enrich and/or explain* each other's findings than that they can *confirm or refute* each other. The latter formulation under-estimates the degree to which the two methods do different things well and generate findings that are non-comparable.

We do not suggest that either method is generally superior, since such a claim would be almost as unproductive as claiming that one discipline (say, anthropology) was superior to another (say, economics). Nonetheless, while it is important to be sensitive and respectful of alternative approaches, it is clear that some are more suited for certain tasks than others. Part of any effective means of combining the techniques will be to apply them to tasks for which they are suited and not to those for which they are unsuited.

We have argued that survey-based approaches are more suited to monitoring outcomes in terms of readily quantifiable indicators such as household income and consumption, food availability, anthropometric status etc. In Uganda, the household surveys have established a consistent and credible series of data on consumption poverty.[27] Since monitoring is an ongoing requirement, we recommend that the household survey programme be continued.

The suggestion has been that participatory methods share with other "qualitative" or case-study approaches the ability to investigate issues in an exploratory and holistic manner. This is useful for uncovering factors that were not anticipated, and in general for interrogating evidence in an open-ended way. PPAs have played a useful role in highlighting the different dimensions of deprivation that matter, and the importance of a range of assets in livelihoods and the way poor people cope with risk. Participatory methods have also raised institutional and policy issues that affect poor people, and it may be that this is where the main focus of innovation will be in the future.

It is not clear, in contrast, that participatory approaches are well placed to confirm or refute findings from the surveys on consumption or income, or that this is where their comparative advantage lies. The problems are well illustrated by the information provided on poverty trends from the UPPAP, which generated wildly varying summary assessments. That the same process can support such different summaries is indicative of the problems in aggregation faced by participatory approaches. However, it can be argued that such hiccups in the relationship between the surveys and the PPA in Uganda arise from fundamental misunderstanding of the purpose of the PRA tools employed, of which this is not the only example.

6.2 Future options for UPPAP

There are different ways of responding to these observations. One option would be to try to overcome the aggregation problems presented by PPA site reports by introducing greater a standardisation of technique (for example, tie scoring matrices to common time periods and dimensions). This might need to be accompanied by introducing statistical sampling into UPPAP.

Another would be to focus the PPA on purposes other than measuring changes over time, capitalising on the strengths of its case-study methods rather than making it more like a survey. This combines well with our contention that PEAP monitoring now requires greater attention to be paid to intermediate outputs and outcomes from policy. UPPAP already works quite effectively at this level, and may well have reached the point of diminishing returns in illuminating fundamental issues in the nature of poverty.

We have recognised that the tool used to collect data – survey, PPA etc. – is not inextricably linked to one particular form of sampling, or even type of data

[27] It is important not to be over-emphatic here: consistency and credibility may justify believing the survey findings. However, given the lack of much other hard information on the living standards of the millions of Ugandans depending on small-holdings and the informal sector, it is always possible that the survey findings may subsequently be refuted.

gathered (numerical/non-numerical, etc.). An urgent issue for PPA2 is whether to maintain the purposive sampling that characterised the first UPPAP exercise or to use statistical sampling. We recognise that PPA case studies are unlikely to be able to benefit from the formal statistical inferences permitted by random stratified sampling. Despite this, there may be a case for using a sampling approach that selects sites and participants to reflect more closely the country as a whole.

We do not have a unified view on whether that would be best achieved with random or modified purposive sampling. The workshop is an appropriate forum for discussing the desirability and practicality of these options.

Introducing a statistical sampling approach would seem to conflict with the desirability of revisiting selected sites. Two possibilities exist for trying to obtain the benefits of both types of sample. First, the two kinds of sub-sample could co-exist, with the panel sites being an unrepresentative add-on to a new representative sample. Or alternatively, the panel aspect could be omitted for PPA2 and introduced only for future PPAs.

In any case, the question of achieving greater linkage between future PPA site studies and the survey results is not restricted to the nature of the PPA sample. Direct integration by using the UBoS sampling frame to select sites and compare data on the *same* communities with the two methods is attractive but completely impractical. That being the case, the option of using parts of the IHS questionnaire in the PPA sites, to "situate" them retrospectively, has some attractions and should be considered.

6.3 Refocusing on PEAP implementation

While we have devoted most space to issues in poverty outcome monitoring, one of our main recommendations is that this should get less attention overall. Continued collection of data on monetary indicators and other quantifiable poverty outcomes such as weight-for-height and mortality indicators is important, for both monitoring and analytical purposes. However, especially in view of the continuing weakness of administrative statistics, more use could be made of the resources of the surveys for monitoring service use and other intermediate outcomes. The case for substituting a CWIQ survey for those presently used on the grounds that they focus on these variables does not seem persuasive on cost or coverage grounds.

On the other hand, a basic change-of-gear for UPPAP does seem to be called for. UPPAP work should, in our view, be more focused and should be scheduled in relation to important PEAP implementation initiatives and does not need to be set up as a strictly regularised activity, as it would need to be if the detection of outcome trends were its task.

The focus should be on picking up evidence on whether the PEAP's intermediate targets identify correctly the key bottlenecks affecting progress towards poverty reduction goals in Uganda, and whether they look like being achieved in particular cases. Findings should feed straight back into sector and national policy processes, or – if needed – into the design of special surveys to confirm results.

UBoS might consider undertaking or at least supervising one-off surveys for this sort of purpose.

6.4 Process issues

If it is to be useful data needs to be *used*. While monitoring measurable indicators is clearly one role of surveys, they can also be used for analysis. In this respect, continuing the panel of households surveyed in 1992 and 1999/2000 is a clear priority for future statistical analysis. For similar reasons, there may be a case for PPA2 revisiting some of the sites used in the first UPPAP exercise and possibly setting up records that would allow individual participants to be identified so that they can be contacted again the future. Fruitful opportunities for combining panel survey work with long-term anthropology may also exist.

Institutional arrangements encouraging the use of both survey and PPA information for policy improvement, in a context of weak incentives in government service, is a key issue. Creating and keeping open avenues for the use of poverty-related information by PEAP stakeholders is a vital task. Relatedly, the discussion about the future of the PPA should take seriously the process achievements of UPPAP in the past period.

In this vein, PPA2 should be firmly viewed as (part of) a national dialogue process, rather than as the further application of a particular research technique. It follows from this that UPPAP reports and dissemination should draw on and internalise evidence on poverty and intermediate PEAP processes from surveys and other quantitative sources, as well as using information derived from local participatory processes. It is in this sort of combination of the efforts of UBoS and UPPAP that the best hope for the future lies.

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Annex 1: Pitfalls of collecting attitudinal data

Experimental evidence has revealed a number of common problems in trying to collect attitudinal data (Bertrand and Mullainathan, 2001):

- *ordering effects*: given alternative responses, respondents choices tend to be sensitive to the order in which the alternatives are presented (first and last choices are favoured). For example, a General Social Survey asked respondents to list the most and least desirable qualities that a child may have out of 13 qualities. Respondents tended to rate the first or last listed qualities, whatever they were, as most important.
- *wording effects:* given alternative responses, respondents choices tend to be sensitive to the language used to express an alternative. For example, in one experiment, when asked the President should permit speeches against democracy, most respondents said yes. But when asked the President should ban speeches against democracy, most respondents said yes.
- *scaling effects*: where alternatives are given as a scale (very satisfied, satisfied etc), respondents choices tend to be sensitive to the particular scaling used.
- *respondent fatigue*: respondents may cause respondents to select choices without consideration or even at random
- *interviewer effects*: respondents may choose responses perceived to be those expected or approved by the interviewer
- *non-attitudes*: respondents may not have an opinion on an issue, but be obliged to express one in a questionnaire. For example, in two surveys, spaced a few months apart, the same respondents were asked their views on government spending. 55% of subjects reported different answers. This suggests that the attitudes supposed to be measured may not in fact exist in any coherent form.
- "*wrong" attitudes*: respondents may have errors in their understanding. For example, in one experiment subjects were asked to try to tie two ropes together that were hanging from a roof but spaced far apart. Most subjects could not see how to tie the ropes, as they could not reach both ropes simultaneously. Consequently, an investigator deliberately bumped into one rope, setting it swinging. Subjects then realised they could connect the ropes by setting one rope swinging and catching it as it neared the other rope. When asked subsequently to explain how they solved the problem, most respondents did not mention the role of the investigator.
- *cognitive dissonance:* this is refers to the situation in which behaviour and attitudes are inconsistent, leading to a revision of attitudes in order to achieve consistency. For example, in one experiment, subjects doing repetitive tasks reported higher interest in the task than subjects who were paid to perform the task. Cognitive dissonance would interpret this as the unpaid subjects taking a more positive approach to the task in order to justify their having willingly performed it without pay.

Annex 2: What is a PPA?

A participatory poverty assessment, or PPA, has been defined as *an instrument for including poor people's views in the analysis of poverty, and in the formulation of strategies to reduce it.* A PPA is a process that starts with grass-roots participatory analysis and dialogue, and culminates in better policies and more effective action for poverty reduction.

A PPA is not just a new type of study of poverty and its causes. It aims to achieve four things:

- better understanding of poverty
- new constituencies for anti-poverty action
- enhanced accountability to poor people
- more effective policies and action

Better understanding

First, a PPA contributes a better understanding of the nature and causes of poverty in the country. This is based on a participatory process at the local level in which poor people analyse their own realities and share their views and priorities. PPAs use the methods of PRA (participatory reflection and action) to facilitate an enquiry in which poor people take the lead in developing understanding of their situation.

From the point of view of policy makers, PPAs provide vivid case-studies of the situations in which poor people live. Experience has shown that such studies complement and deepen the statistical information that governments normally rely on in designing and monitoring policies to combat poverty. It has been found that PPAs provide a range of useful information for policy-improvement in a rapid and cost-effective way.

Building new constituencies

Second, a good PPA stimulates wider public debate on what needs to be done to reduce poverty. Organising the PPA involves a wide range of stakeholders, at different levels, in cooperation and dialogue. As the findings and recommendations from the participatory analysis are discussed and reported, these relationships are typically consolidated and broadened to include wider forces. In this way, a PPA can help to build new constituencies and coalitions in support of anti-poverty action at the local, provincial and national levels.

Increasing accountability

Third, a PPA has the potential to enhance the accountability of officials and organisations to the poor. Experience shows that when poor people find a "voice" – when they express their problems in their own way and in their own words – they are less easy to ignore. In a good PPA, relationships are changed. Policy makers who are concerned about poverty get fresh ammunition to use in arguments about priorities. Service providers in governmental and non-

governmental organisations, and others in positions of power, are able to be held more accountable for their actions, or lack of action, towards the poor.

More effective policies

Finally, in each of the above ways, a PPA can lead to more effective policies and actions for reducing and eventually eliminating mass poverty. This refers to the whole range of public policies and private or non-governmental actions that are relevant to the poor.

(Source: Pakistan's PPA, Fieldwork Guide, Draft 2)

Annex 3: Triangulating household surveys with other data

According to the national accounts, real private consumption per capita grew by an average rate of 5.3% per annum from 1991/92 to 1999/2000 (Table 1 refers). This rate of growth is the same as estimated from the surveys. Figure 1 plots real consumption per capita against the midpoints of the surveys or fiscal years. The national accounts estimate higher levels of real consumption per capita than the household surveys (28 per cent higher consumption in the case of both MS-4 and the UNHS).

To focus on a comparison of changes rather than levels, we scale the two series to be equal at the mid-point of the IHS (we linearly interpolate a value for the national accounts at this point). As the graph shows, the national accounts predicted the same overall increase in real consumption per capita between the IHS and the UNHS as was found in the surveys. The different time path of consumption in the two series between 1992 and 2000 confirms that one estimate is not a mere duplicate of the other (as do the different levels of consumption).[28]

[28] The household data show more consistent growth throughout the period and there are falls in real consumption per capita being reported in two of the fiscal years of the national accounts. These falls are rather implausible and are sensitive to price deflation – the national accounts do not show a fall in real consumption per capita if the GDP deflator for private consumption is used rather than the CPI.

Table 1: National accounts and survey estimates of nominal consumption

1a. National accounts estimates

Fiscal year	Monthly consumption per capita	CPI	Real consumption per capita
1991/92	12094	195	6204
1992/93	16167	253	6381
1993/94	16948	270	6275
1994/95	19585	287	6834
1995/96	22295	308	7238
1996/97	23296	332	7010
1997/98	28295	352	8047
1998/99	31856	351	9075
1999/2000	34802	373	9338

1b. Household survey estimates

Survey	Monthly consumption per capita	CPI	Real consumption per capita	Start date	End date
IHS	11981	243	4933	Feb-92	Mar-93
MS1	14748	263	5610	Aug-93	Feb-94
MS2	16643	283	5871	Jul-94	Mar-95
MS3	18568	310	5999	Sep-95	Jun-96
MS4	21976	349	6289	Mar-97	Feb-98
UNHS	27173	373	7295	Aug-99	Jul-00

Notes: Consumption data are in Uganda Shillings per person per month (1989 prices for real values). National accounts data are for fiscal years (1st July to 30th June). CPI figures average monthly figures for relevant period (for surveys, this is survey period plus preceding month). Household estimates exclude Bundibugyo, Gulu, Kasese and Kitgum. Household estimates adjust IHS figures to account for omission of public transport fares

Source: Household data author's calculations from UBOS survey data. National accounts and CPI data are unpublished figures supplied by UBOS.

Figure 1: National accounts and survey estimates of consumption

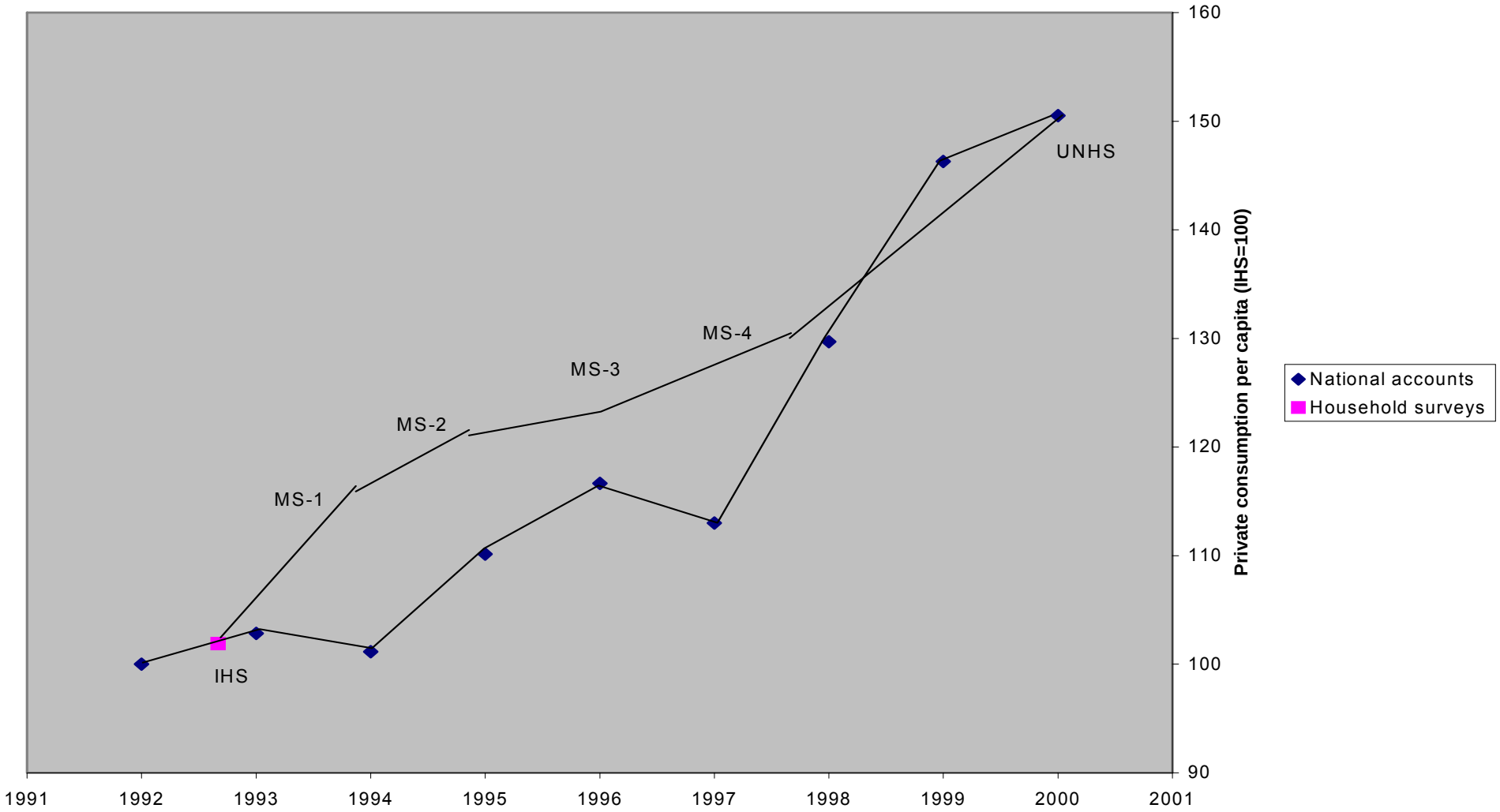

Table 2: Alternative food price index based on survey unit values

	IHS	MS-1	MS-2	MS-3	MS-4	UNHS
central rural	112.9	123.9	127.9	134.8	180.5	169.3
central urban	135.8	134.3	149.6	151.3	186.7	189.1
east rural	96.0	87.5	106.6	108.1	165.0	142.5
east urban	115.0	108.0	125.5	114.9	176.8	150.8
west rural	88.6	83.3	93.0	99.6	144.7	143.4
west urban	104.7	90.5	102.1	112.7	156.2	164.8
north rural	83.6	84.7	92.2	90.6	128.7	128.6
north urban	94.7	93.4	98.8	99.3	143.4	125.3
national	100	98.8	109.8	113.2	159.9	151.0
Memo item:						
CPI food	100	100.0	113.0	120.1	150.9	152.1

Note: national food index is a population weighted average of the eight regional indices
Source: author's computations from UBOS survey data.

Table 3: Comparison of nominal consumption per capita in full samples and sub-sample of panel households				
	Nominal consumption IHS	Nominal consumption UNHS	Overall rise in nominal consumption	Implied annualised real growth rate
Full sample				
All	11786	27089	130%	5.45
Rural	9675	21375	121%	4.92
Urban	26697	64350	141%	6.10
Panel sub-sample				
All	10279	23478	128%	5.37
Rural	9824	21262	116%	4.64
Urban	21315	49941	134%	5.71
Memo item: CPI	243	373	53%	

Note: consumption is per capita per month (Uganda Shillings).
Source: author's computations from UBOS survey data.

Table 4: Poverty and inequality indicators for Uganda, 1992-2000

	Poverty indicators			Inequality indicators		
	P0	P1	P2	Gini	Theil	Atkinson
6.1: National						
IHS	55.7	20.3	9.9	0.364	0.251	0.111
MS-1	51.2	16.9	7.48	0.354	0.25	0.107
MS-2	50.2	16.3	7.25	0.365	0.252	0.111
MS-3	49.1	16.4	7.64	0.366	0.247	0.11
MS-4	44.4	13.7	5.91	0.347	0.217	0.098
UNHS	35.2	10.5	4.5	0.384	0.295	0.125
6.2: Rural						
IHS	59.7	22	10.81	0.326	0.186	0.087
MS-1	55.6	18.6	8.27	0.291	0.141	0.068
MS-2	54.3	17.7	7.9	0.321	0.187	0.085
MS-3	53.7	18.1	8.49	0.326	0.18	0.085
MS-4	48.7	15.2	6.56	0.311	0.171	0.079
UNHS	39.1	11.8	5.09	0.322	0.197	0.088
6.3: Urban						
IHS	27.8	8.3	3.48	0.395	0.292	0.129
MS-1	21	5.5	2.02	0.394	0.316	0.133
MS-2	21.5	6.3	2.69	0.398	0.274	0.127
MS-3	19.8	5.6	2.23	0.375	0.264	0.117
MS-4	16.7	4.3	1.65	0.347	0.205	0.097
UNHS	10.3	2.2	0.72	0.406	0.297	0.133

Notes: Atkinson index has a median (0.5) value for the inequality aversion parameter.

Source: author's computations from UBOS data.

Annex 4: Could consumption haven risen while welfare fell?

From within the participatory approach, McClean (1999) and McGee (2000) argue that there is a disconnect between the findings of rising consumption in the household surveys and the perceptions of increasing poverty by participants the UPPAP. Although this disconnect is not reflected in the final summary report of the UPPAP, some tantalising evidence consistent with this is provided by two household surveys, MS-3 and MS-4. These surveys included various questions designed to provide simple indicators of welfare. Between the two surveys, these welfare indicators deteriorated at the same time as consumption rose and poverty fell.

McClean and McGee suggest various reasons why consumption may rise but perceptions of well-being worsen.

1) **Declines in purchasing power.**
   a) the rise in consumption may not match the rise in prices (this was an observation in a poor community in Bushenyi, a district where growth is believed to be strong.)
   b) the rise in consumption is offset by increased marketisation of goods and services. Examples given were increasing purchases of firewood, due to degradation of natural resources, and charges for toilet facilities in Kampala. There was also concern that the increases marketisation of food would tend to overstate the rise in consumption.
   c) the rise in consumption is funded by a drawing down of assets rather than an increase in income.
2) **Perverse increases in consumption:** Some of the rise in consumption is spent on goods and services that are not associated with higher welfare.
   a) Higher health spending is often associated with lower health status and thus possibly lower welfare.
   b) Higher spending on alcohol may have adverse effects on the welfare of other household members.
3) **Worsening food security** due to declining yields and rising insecurity
4) **Gender issues:** Rises in household consumption may not lead to rises in the consumption of certain household members, for example, women.

It is argued that participants' perceptions as reported during the UPPAP provide some support for each of the above explanations. However, it is probably best to regard them as hypotheses to be investigated rather than established "facts".

Most of these factors are amenable to quantitative investigations using household surveys and other sources. Often existing survey data is adequate for such investigations. A starting point would be further investigation of the deterioration in the welfare indicators in the household surveys between MS-3 and MS-4. Further progress in integrating survey and participatory work could be made by further quantitative work aimed at testing these hypotheses.

In particular:

1) Declines in purchasing power:

a) the poverty statistics control for the rise in the CPI due to inflation. However, the CPI is based on inflation in urban areas only. A food price index base on the survey data validates the nationwide increase in prices reported by the CPI but there may still be value in considering poverty statistics adjusting for regional differences in inflation.
b) the surveys impute values for consumption of own produced items, notably food. Own consumed food is valued at lower prices than purchased food and so an increase in marketisation could lead to a spurious increase in nominal consumption. However, the poverty estimates from the surveys do revalue home consumed food so as to be in market prices.
c) the rise in consumption is funded by a drawing down of assets rather than an increase in income. Most quantitative analysis has focussed on consumption; there would be benefits from examining data on income and assets. These are generally reported in less detail and with less consistency in the household survey data. For example, in the monetary surveys, there assets are often not inquired about while questions on income are often highly aggregative (e.g. asking for total household wage earnings). The reintroduction of questions on individual earnings (first present in the IHS) in the UNHS is welcome.

2) **Perverse increases in consumption:** It would be straightforward to consider the increase in some subset of total consumption, for example, food consumption or consumption net of spending on health and alcohol.
3) **Worsening food security:** survey data would reveal whether food consumption is estimated to have increased or not. The food share has declined, although this is consistent with a rise in income (Engel's law). An analysis of farm productivity based on the survey data for 1992 and 1999/2000 implies a *rise* in yields. The rising consumption of food crop farmers is also consistent with this.
4) **Gender issues:** The conventional focus on household consumption in the survey-based approach does not lend itself to examining gender issues. However, statistics on the rise in expenditure on women's clothing relative to men's clothing, on women's share of earned income and on women's time allocation would be informative.

More generally, although the parallel is not drawn, the above debate is in some ways the mirror image of "Jodha's paradox" – the finding that falls in income over time in India went alongside local people reporting higher welfare. Jodha's (1988) paradox was explained in terms of improvements in non-monetary aspects of welfare. Conversely, any disconnect between rising consumption and perceptions of increasing poverty in Uganda could conceivably reflect a deterioration in these non-monetary aspects. Progress in integrating survey and participatory work could be made by further quantitative work aimed at testing measuring progress in these non-monetary dimensions:

Health: A fundamental non-monetary dimension of welfare is health, although this in itself is likely to be multi-dimensional concept. The household surveys, and even more, the Demographic and Health Surveys have a wealth of information on health status. It is anticipated that some aspects of health improved in the 1990s – as witnessed, for example, in the improvement in child survival rates and anthropometric status. However, the AIDS epidemic is one factor working to reduce adult health.

Public services: the availability and quality of public services may also affect individuals' perceptions of well-being. The household surveys do have information about utilisation of public services, while the matching community surveys have some information about their quality. However, it seems hard to argue that public services on aggregate worsened during the 1990s given the substantial real increases in government spending (the government sector grew faster than the private sector).

Insecurity: although in general, the 1990s saw less conflict than the 1980s, parts of the country did experience worsening security during periods of the 1990s. The available surveys do not have much information on this, although questions were asked in the 1999/2000 Community Survey. It is notable that, while no districts had to be omitted from MS-1 in 1993 due to insecurity; by the 1999/2000 UNHS, four districts were omitted for this reason. To the extent that insecurity is a major concern, periodic "crime surveys" together with administrative information from the police may be useful in providing quantitative data for monitoring.

Time allocation: if higher incomes and consumption came largely through an increase in time spent working, failure to place a value on leisure would overstate the increase in welfare. The household surveys have a considerable amount of information on time allocation that could be used. Examining wage rates (or returns per period of work) rather than total earnings or consumption would also address this issue. The omission of data on earnings from MS-3, which focussed on labour issues, is regrettable in this respect.

Finally, there is a possibility that perceptions of worsening poverty may ***reflect rising expectations*** rather than worsening absolute living standards. This could be tested by in-depth research investigating both the material living standards of the subjects and their perceptions. Ideally, this work would be longitudinal, although recall questions about material living standards may be sufficient.

Figure 2: Poverty headcount in Uganda, 1992-2000