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PEP TALK

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A Few Words from the Co-Directors

It is a pleasure to distribute this inaugural edition of PEP TALK! We hope this bulletin will become an important vehicle to keep you informed of the recent and upcoming activities of the PEP network and its members in the true spirit of networking.

The Poverty and Economic Policy (PEP) Research Network has now been in activity for nearly four months and it is time to provide an update on its activities! During this start-up period, we have been busy setting up shop, advertising our calls for proposals, selecting research projects to support and organizing meetings. A successful meeting of the community-based monitoring system (CBMS) network was held in Hanoi in early January and a joint Poverty Monitoring, Measurement and Analysis (PMMA) – Modeling and Policy Impact Analysis (MPIA) meeting will be held – hopefully just as successfully! – in Manila in late February. The overwhelming response of researchers to our calls for proposals underscores the need and interest for a network of developing country researchers studying poverty issues. The PEP web site is also up and running with an innovative Intranet section for sharing documents and comments between researchers and resource persons.

We hope you find PEP TALK interesting and useful, and welcome your suggestions for improvement and contributions to future issues!!

Best wishes,

Celia Reyes and John Cockburn

A Successful Interim CBMS Meeting in Hanoi (January 6-10, 2003)

Member researchers convened in Hanoi, Vietnam last January 6-10, 2003 for the network's interim meeting and a training workshop on Data Collection and Processing facilitated by Dr. Louis Marie Asselin of CECI. The said gathering, participated in by CBMS researchers from selected countries in Asia and Africa, provided a venue for sharing of country experiences in the conduct of CBMS research work. In particular, participants from Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Nepal, Philippines, Senegal, Sri Lanka and Vietnam shared lessons learned and best practices in terms of CBMS development, operationalization, and institutionalization. Proposals for new CBMS initiatives in Benin, Cambodia, Ghana, Pakistan, and Peru were likewise presented for comments during the event. In addition, a session was held to draw out comments and suggestions from the network researchers, steering committee members as well as guest resource persons from IDRC led by Dr. Stephen McGurk on the proposed list of research and advocacy activities of the network presented by CBMS Network Leader, Dr. Celia Reyes. The convention was organized by the Socio-economic Development Center spearheaded by its CBMS Project Leader Dr. Vu Tuan Anh in cooperation with the CBMS Network Coordinating Team. Conference presentations and reference materials may be viewed in detail on-line at <http://www.panasia.org.sg/mimapph/cbmsnmeet.htm> (link on "meetings and workshops" of the [PEP web site](#)).

Huge Response to the First MPIA and PMMA Calls for Proposals

We are pleased to announce that the first MPIA and PMMA call for proposals was greeted with an overwhelming response. In total, 128 proposals were submitted from 39 countries. Among these, twelve teams (six PMMA and six MPIA) were invited to present their proposals at the upcoming (February 22-25, 2003) **interim MPIA-PMMA meeting in Manila**. A preliminary program for this meeting has been posted under "Meetings and Workshops" on the [PEP web site](#). Some other teams will be asked to revise and resubmit their proposals in the coming weeks. All other teams will be informed shortly of the decisions concerning their proposals.

New MPIA and PMMA Call for Proposals

In order to prepare the rapidly approaching general PEP meeting in Hanoi (June 9-13, 2003; more on this below), we send out a new, ongoing, call for proposals. Indeed, in order to allow us more time to absorb the large number of submissions and to provide feedback, proposals may now be submitted at **any time**. Proposals will be analyzed quickly by a pre-selection committee in order to determine whether they are complete and eligible for financing, to inform the researchers of the proposal's status and to provide some feedback on the proposal itself. Roughly two months before MPIA/PMMA meetings (generally held early-June and early-December each year), a selection committee will choose the roughly 10-12 best research proposals in terms of scientific contribution, policy relevance and feasibility. Furthermore, research teams are

requested to submit proposals and accompanying documents **directly on the PEP web site**, rather than by email. Details are provided in the guidelines posted under "Call for Proposals" on the site.

PEP is on the NET!!

The permanent **PEP web site** is now up and running at www.pep-net.org. It features both Internet (public) and Intranet (restricted access) components. The internet component provides public information on PEP research projects, information on PEP workshops and meetings, as well as a wide variety of research resources (bibliographic search tools, downloadable documents, training material, recommended readings, links, software, etc.) for PEP and other researchers from developing and developed countries alike. The web site also supports **discussion fora** for the different PEP networks with full archiving. As you will see, the PEP web site is designed to complement and link closely with the MIMAP web site (www.mimap.org). The site is designed to develop organically with contributions from all members. We encourage you to register on the site ("Subscription" on the main web page) and to provide suggestions on how it may be improved to better support your research activities. We hope to prepare a French version in the near future. The web site is designed for optimal use with versions 5 or higher of Internet Explorer.

Upcoming General PEP Meeting in Hanoi (June 9-13, 2003)

Following the February MPIA-PMMA interim meeting, the next major PEP activity will be its first general assembly in Hanoi from June 9th to 13th, 2003, bringing together for the first time all three PEP networks. As indicated above, new PMMA and MPIA proposals can be submitted at any time. In order to provide maximum time for feedback and time for revision, we encourage research teams to submit their proposals as early as possible. At the beginning of April, the MPIA and PMMA selection committees will choose 10-12 of the best proposals submitted for presentation at the general assembly. Invitees will be informed no later than **April 10th**. Ongoing PEP- and MIMAP-financed research teams are invited to submit reports they would like to present at the general assembly **no later than March 31st** and those selected will receive an invitation no later than April 10th.

CREFA Expands to become..... CIRPÉE

As many of you know, the Centre de Recherche en Économie et Finance Appliquées (CREFA) of Laval University's (Quebec) Economic Department co-hosts the PEP network with the Angelo King Institute (AKI, DelaSalle University, Philippines). Building on nearly 20 years of training and research activities in developing countries, CREFA has provided technical support to the MIMAP Network since 1997. We are therefore please to announce our affiliation with researchers at two other major Quebec universities: Université du Québec à Montréal (UQAM) and the École de Hautes Études

Commerciales (HEC). The new interuniversity research center has been named the Centre Interuniversitaire sur le Risque, les politiques économiques et l'emploi (CIRPÉE, or the Interuniversity Centre on Risk, Economic Policy and Employment). We encourage you to visit our web site to get to know us better: www.cirpee.org.

What is the Poverty and Economic Policy (PEP) Research Network?

The Poverty and Economic Policy (PEP) Research Network is a recently created network of researchers working to reduce poverty. Specific objectives are to:

- Better understand the causes and consequences of poverty.
- Propose alternative strategies, policies and programs to reduce poverty.
- Improve the monitoring and measurement of poverty.
- Develop local research (and training) capacity in these areas.
- Develop new concepts and methodologies through fundamental research.

The network is composed of three tightly linked constituent networks. The first – *Community-Based Monitoring Systems (CBMS)* – designs and pilots community-based monitoring and local development systems aimed at poverty in its multidimensional sense. The second – *Poverty Monitoring, Measurement and Analysis (PMMA)* – aims to develop and apply analytical tools to measure and monitor poverty, and to analyze a wide range of poverty issues. The third – *Modeling and Policy Impact Analysis (MPIA)* – uses economy-wide models and analysis as a "laboratory" to identify and analyse the links between specific policies and shocks and their eventual impacts on poverty.