

Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment Study in Khartoum State: A Review of Indicators, Strategy and Profile

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ملخص

مقصد هذه المقالة ، هو مراجعة الملامح النظرية و المنهجية و التطبيقية الرئيسية ل " دراسة تقييم الفقر الحضري السريع " الميدانية ، التي أجراها الباحث ضمن تكليف استشاري لصالح مشروع " الترقية الحضرية ومحاربة الفقر " في ولاية الخرطوم خلال الفترة يونيو- نوفمبر 1998. فهي تستعرض ثلاثة وجوه : أولا مؤشرات قياس الفقر الحضري الصغيرة ، وثانيا استراتيجيات التقييم السريع للفقر الحضري ، اللتان تم تطويرهما وتطبيقهما ميدانيا في إطار الدراسة المذكورة ؛ وثالثا مختصر نتائج المسح الميداني التي تبين صورة مقطعية تقريبية للفقر الحضري الاقتصادي والاجتماعي في مناطق مختارة قصديا بالولاية . وبناء على ذلك ، لا تساهم المقالة في التأسيس المنهجي و التطبيق لهذا الحقل المعرفي المتطور لدراسات الفقر فحسب ، بل أيضا تقدم موجّهات ومؤشرات عملية ، يمكن استخدامها في إجراء الدراسات الميدانية ، واعداد سياسات وبرامج ومشروعات واقعية ، لمحاربة الفقر الحضري في المدن في السودان ؛ خصوصا في أحوال ضيق الوقت و نقص الأموال والخبرات.

Introduction

At the global level the Third World witnessed the setting of the World Bank's "Assault on World Poverty"⁴⁵ notably announced by Robert Mac- Namara two

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⁴⁵ World Bank, The Assault on World Poverty: Problems of Rural Development, Education and Health, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1975.

decades ago, and now living the rising of the *"First United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty 1997- 2006"*.

Although the Government of Sudan and various humanitarian agencies have made considerable efforts, there is a growing concern that mass poverty prevails among the large section of the internally displaced persons (IDPs) currently estimated at two million or 40 percent of the population of Khartoum State.²

The majority of the settled poor (*Fugra*), the indigents trodden down in dust (*Msakeen*), the orphans, the widows and the *"new poor"*, all constitute the bulk of the downtrodden sector of the population. The majority of them live in deprivation, deriving their sustenance from low-gainful occupations with inadequate or lack of access to minimum bases of social power.

In Khartoum, the State Government, prudently understanding of the plight and recognized will and sense of commitment, *"... is taking a very innovative approach to poverty alleviation, which recognizes that it should broaden its strategies beyond the traditional emphasis on income transfers and safety net approach [e.g. the conventional 'poverty line' approach], to one which also encompasses the need for training, capacity building and empowerment of the poor, increased availability of and accessibility to basic needs and services, and appropriate inter-sectors policy instruments and institutional support designed with the participation of the poor themselves . Consequently, a cornerstone of this strategy will be unique partnership arrangements with poor themselves as assets in their own communities, as well as coordinated strategic interventions with government institutions, [UN agencies], and other donor community"*.³

The Ministry of Social and Cultural Affairs, the leading vehicle of the campaign against poverty in Khartoum State, realized such integrated approach to reduce poverty through implementing two mechanisms:

- (a) The Social Development Foundation (SDF) which has embarked on poverty alleviation programme since its establishment in 1995 in selected poverty-stricken areas in Khartoum State, with planning to extend further.

November 1998, on which this paper is extensively draws, possible.

¹ World Bank, *The Assault on World Poverty: Problems of Rural Development, Education and Health*, The John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, 1975.

² Own calculation based on : UNDP, "Urban Upgrading and Poverty Alleviation Programme: Project Document", Khartoum, 1997, p.4.

³ Urban Upgrading and Poverty Alleviation Project (UPAP), "Newsletter 1st Issue ", Khartoum, 1998, p. 1-2.

- (b) The Urban Upgrading and Poverty Alleviation Project (UPAP), which was initiated in 1998 with the technical and financial assistance of, and in close collaboration with, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (UNCHC/HABITAT). UPAP, which has been expected to lead public action between the Government of Sudan and the United Nations (UN) family and the local people themselves, is based on participatory social development strategy seeks to enhance the living conditions and survival patterns of a group of people living at present in absolute poverty in designated areas within Khartoum State.

The Project focuses on the increased accessibility to social services and basic needs in particular capacity building and partnership arrangements for entrepreneurial endeavors and employment and income generating activities. The salient features of the Project include, *inter-alia*:

- (a) Integrated programme approach and increased capacity building.
- (b) Development of the informal urban sector.
- (c) Security of land tenure.

Nevertheless, Non-Governmental organizations (NGOs) and other UN agencies are also expected to participate in this endeavor and already the United Nations Fund Population Activities (UNFPA), among others, is supporting a number of complementary interventions.

In this connection, UPAP has prompted a *Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment Study* and Field Training carried out by the author⁴ in Khartoum State during the period June-November 1998. The decision to undertake this exercise arose out of three main reasons:

- (a) UPAP's dissatisfaction with the relatively narrow explanations of poverty taking into account little more than the amount of per capita

⁴ Abdul-Hai, S., "Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment Study: A Micro-Poverty Profile And Guidelines for Key Issues in Poverty Alleviation in UPAP Target Settlements- Khartoum State", Ministry of social and Cultural Affairs-Khartoum State in collaboration with United Nations Development (UNDP) and United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (UNCHS)", Khartoum. 1998.

monetary income within a given community (e.g., the conventional poverty line which have been heavily criticized).⁵

- (b) The belief that poverty is a dis-empowerment state. An alternative conceptual approach is proposed, whereby poverty is defined as: *of access, or denial of access, to the bases of social power; and the poor may be defined as those who lack the social power to improve their living conditions*".⁵⁰
- (c) Insufficient quantitative and qualitative data about urban Sudan, therefore the consideration of adequate statistical information concerning living conditions and levels of access to the bases of social power by urban poor is obviously essential.

Hence the significance of the development of indicators, innovative research methods and database to be used for assessing urban poverty, formulation targeted policies, monitoring and evaluation progress towards the objectives of poverty reduction and filling gaps in the prevailing anti -poverty information systems in Sudan, given resources limitations in terms of cost, time and skills. The overall purpose of the mentioned assignment is to inform coordinated policies and strategies for urban poverty alleviation in selected pockets of larger depressed settlements of internally displaced and poor households in Khartoum State, and to rationalize a programme of strategic interventions at the local level. However, the principal objectives of the assignment were to:

- (a) Develop measurable urban poverty indicators.

(b) Develop an innovative and workable rapid urban poverty assessment strategy; and accordingly.

- (c) Provide a preliminary micro- urban poverty profile level, as it demonstrated, and should so, by the survival conditions at the community and household levels, taken Khartoum State as a case study.

The study is based on the assumption that: poverty is a state of dis-empowerment, which stems not only from limited monetary incomes, but also from inadequacy or unavailability of, and lack of access, or denial to access to, the bases of social power".⁷

Conversely, the study has been based on a broad definition of the concept of "*poverty alleviation*". Which should includes not only the capacity to generate

⁵ See, for example, Sen, A., Poverty and Famines: An Essay on Entitlement and Deprivation, Clarendon, Oxford, 1982, chapter 1.

⁶ UPAP, op.cit., p. i.

⁷ Abdul-Hai, op. cit., p. 4.

adequate income and ensure accessible levels of consumption expenditure, but also the assurance of the increased availability of, and accessibility to, urban and social services within a specific location and a given time.⁸

Given the above background, this paper reviews the main conceptual and methodological aspects of the "Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment study",⁹ mentioned above, in terms of the micro- urban poverty indicators and the integrated rapid urban poverty assessment strategy developed and employed to generate a valid urban poverty profile of selected IDPs and poor settlements in Khartoum State, as well as briefly presents the preliminary findings of the undertaken fieldwork.¹⁰

I. Micro Urban Poverty Indicators

1. Concept and Significance of Urban Poverty Indicators

that points out or gives information, e.g. a pointer, needle, recording apparatus, on a machine etc. showing speed, pressure, etc.: litmus paper can be used as an indicator of the presence or not of acid in a solution.

However, urban poverty indicators can be operationally described as diagnostic tools or signs necessary for the measurement and analysis of urban poverty. They provide a guide to the development and current state of poverty, even if not are precise measures, and are useful in comparing the state of poverty in the same designated area or community at different times. Also, urban poverty indicators are necessary in formulating implementing minimum anti poverty standards or goals and in measuring progress in them (*i.e.* monitoring and evaluation) over time.

The policy orientation nature of the urban poverty indicators is obvious. This is stem not only from the crucial role that such indicators play in measurement and investigation of incidence of poverty, but also from their '*policy content*' as 'backbone' of any effective information system. In other words, the urban poverty indicators are key signs of the extent and distribution of poverty at national, regional and local levels. They facilitate location - specific identification and comparison of urban poverty and they can be used as sound measures in designing, monitoring and evaluation of urban poverty alleviation programs and

⁸ . Ibid.

⁹ . Ibid. pp. 14 -19.

¹⁰ Ibid. pp. 21-34.

projects. Nevertheless, urban poverty indicators are 'pointers' to identify serious information and anti-poverty gaps, which characterizes presently prevailing governmental, and agency information systems and policy measures. Strictly identification of such information and policy gaps is essential as taken as 'potential entry points' for formulating and implementing targeted anti-urban poverty policies and interventions which are economically feasible and socially sound. Ultimately, this is the Khartoum State - like case.

Within such setting, urban poverty indicators are essential and usually used by a number of different groups. However, with regards to this study, the indicators-user groups include, among others, Government of Khartoum State, donors, UN agencies require information, poverty profiles and policy guidelines to formulate informed coordinated strategic planning and policy decisions. SDF, UPAP, NGOs, Localities and the poor people organizations require location-specific socioeconomic data to describe and investigate poverty and identify possible economically viable and socially sound programme interventions to reduce urban poverty.

2. Classification of Urban Poverty Indicators

Historically, in the field of modern social sciences, acknowledgeable conceptual progress has been made in developing indicators due the growing understanding of the root causes that progressively lead to worldwide natural and human disasters.¹¹

But a recent worth mentioning, and maybe the present utmost progress in developing a systematic scheme of urban poverty indicators, is the UNDP/UNCHS (Habitat)/WORLD BANK joint source book, notably written by Moser and her colleagues¹². The mentioned work emphasized on indicators that can assess in conditions that hindering urban poor access to live decent human life. It proposed, however, two main types of urban poverty indicators: The *priority poverty indicators*, which that are a relatively small number of accessible

¹¹ See, for example, Maxwell, S., and T. R. Frankenberger, Household Food Security: Concepts, Indicators, and Measurements, jointly sponsored by United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), New York/Rome, N.D. section 1.

¹² Moser, C., *et.al.*, Urban Poverty Research Book, Module 11: Sub-city Level Household Survey, Urban Management Programme (UMP) Working Paper 5, UNDP/UNCHS (Habitat)/World Bank, Washington D. C., 1996.

poverty measured¹³. And the *key poverty* indicators, which are a number of indicators, quantify the consequences of poverty - as defined by low incomes or lack of adequate services, [which in turn] facilitate analysis, monitoring and comparisons of urban poverty.¹⁴

Bearing in mind that knowledge is a cumulative process. This section attempts a further step, though preliminarily, in the development of urban poverty indicators. The aim, however, is to identify, design and develop a *set* of reliable and effective investigation measures for assessing urban poverty, which we tried to employ and test at the local level in Khartoum State, through a rapid urban poverty assessment methodology.

To realize this aim, we follow workable, analytical and multi-dimensional pattern for classifying local urban poverty indicators. On the basis of these criteria, these indicators can be classified into two main indicator-groups, each is confined to specific level of analysis, which are:

Community Urban Poverty Indicators.

Household Urban Poverty Indicators.

Nevertheless, each of these comprises of, or built on two subgroups of indicators, which are:

Indicators of Elements.

Indicators of Determinants.

The notion of the multi-criteria classification of urban poverty indicators is illustrated simplistically in Figure 1. Hence a realistic and complete analysis of the different aspects of the poverty problem consists of three inter-linked principal concepts, which are:

Elements.

Determinants, and;

Indicators.

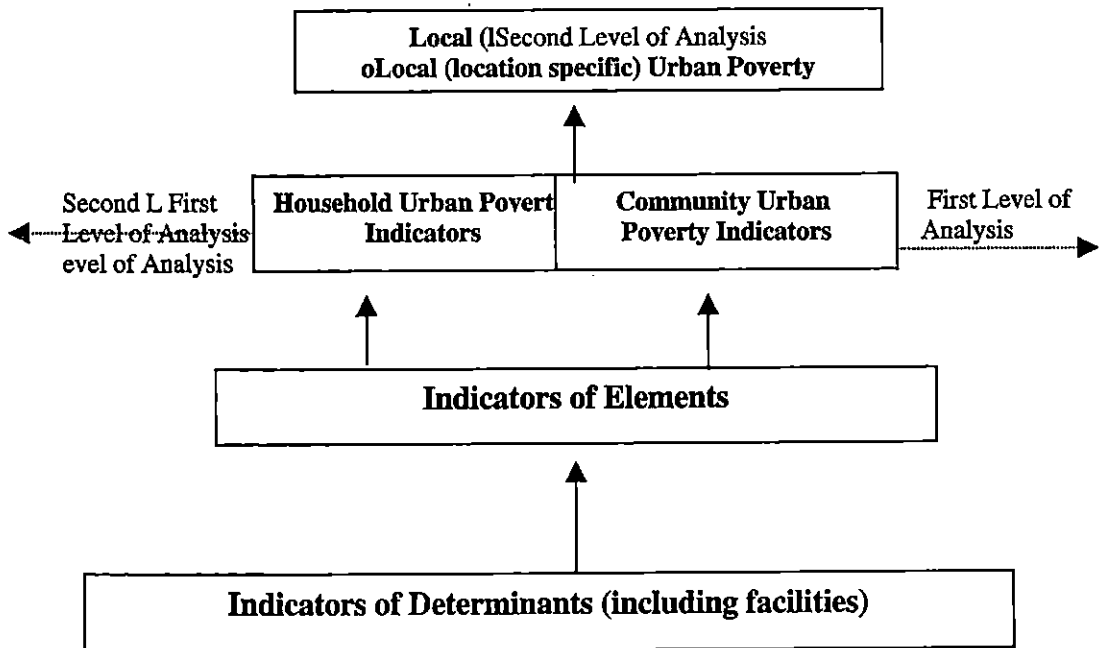
¹³ Ibid. p.8.

¹⁴ Ibid. p.9.

Within the context of this paper, these concepts can be described as follows: Elements are the 'ends' or 'goals' of anti-poverty policy as they imply direct effects and impact on enhancement of living standard of the poor.

Determinants or facilities are those 'conditions' which effect the size and quality of the policy goals (*viz.* elements), or they are the facilities by which these goals may be improved or satisfied. *Indicators* are those 'signs' or 'measures' capable for quantitative measurement and which are the scientific 'pointers' of forming judgement of the suitability or adequacy of a particular determinant or

FIG.1. PATTERN OF MULTI-CRITERIA CLASSIFICATION OF LOCAL URBAN POVERTY INDICATORS



Source: Abdul Hai, op.cit., Fig. 1.1, p. 18

element. Other indicators (*viz.* qualitative signs), whether of element, determinants or facility, which cannot be expressed in numbers (*i.e.* not capable for quantification), must be detected by informal research methods such as participant observation, group discussions and case studies.

To sum up, elements are anti-poverty policy goals (*e.g.* urban poverty alleviation). Determinants or facilities are the means of realization and/or verification of the policy goals. While indicators are measures or signs of suitability or adequacy of these goals and means.

Strictly, distinguish between these basic concepts is critical to provide valid and comprehensive profile of absolute poverty in a specific location and certain time. Such analytical profile is just as important to provide scientific bases for urban poverty alleviation programmes as is blood analysis and X - Rays test for doctors. Moreover, such poverty profiles facilitate designing and implementing effective (*i.e.*, economically viable and socially sound) anti-poverty policies and targeted interventions, and should reveal gaps in the present poverty information systems, which should to be filled before policy goals and interventions can be realized. These policy matters, is closely connected with UPAP focus on building capacities of government agencies deal with the reduction of urban poverty in general and SDF in particular, now embarking urban poverty alleviation programme in selected areas in the greater Khartoum with plan for further extension.

3. The Urban Poverty Indicators List

On the basis of previous conceptual and analytical background, the assessment of the state of urban poverty in UPAP designated areas in Khartoum State was based on two types of indicators. The community indicators and household indicators, correspond to two phases of evaluation process associated with two types of indicators - schedules at the community and household levels.

Community Urban Poverty Indicators were developed for the measurement of (15) poverty alleviation policy issues that can be identified as priority categories for UPAP, at the *community level*:

(a) *Basic Demographic and Socioeconomic Information*, include:

(b) Size and location and composition of community.

Short history of the community.

Social/cultural and political leadership.

Major employers within the community

(c) *Basic Services*, include:

Water use.

Mains electricity

Transport and roads

Environmental Health and sanitation.

(d) *Infrastructure* include:

Land and housing.

Health.

Education.

(e) *Community Development* include:

Community problems, needs and proposed solutions

Government and NGO programmes

(f) *Prices* include:

Prices of principal food items (of the poor).

Prices of livestock.

At the *household level*, significant household urban poverty indicators were developed for in -depth investigation of the conditions of survival as well as to provide *approximate* assessment of the impact of various factors and actors operating at the community level on the access to essentials of daily livings, basic services and social infrastructure by a group of people living at present in absolute poverty state within UPAP target settlements in Khartoum State; which covers (13) major issues :

- (a) Background and demographic characteristics of the household
- (b) Displacement or migration.
- (c) Household income.
- (d) Household expenditure.
- (e) Household Housing
- (f) Household Assets.
- (g) Household Daily activity.
- (h) Household Water consumption.
- (i) Household Food Security.
- (j) Educational Characteristics of children and youth under 18.
- (k) Health
- (L) Household borrowing; and;
- (m) Income generation activities and training needs.¹⁵

Based on such conceptual context, two comprehensive *micro-indicators-schedules* were specially designed for the field survey. The first was administered at the settlement level; the second was to gather information at the household level:

(1) *The settlement schedule:*¹⁶

The settlement indicators-questionnaire was designed on a sector basis, to generate information at the community level about the general historical and demographic backgrounds of the settlement; the basic services and social infrastructure available; the community development programmes including, community priority issues, and the on-going governmental and non-governmental programmes.

(2) *The household schedule:*¹⁷

¹⁵ For a systematic scheme of the developed *micro- indicators* at the community and household levels, see Abdul-Hai, op. cit., appendix A-1 and A-2 respectively.

¹⁶ See Ibid., appendix B-2.

¹⁷ Ibid., appendix B-3.

The household indicators-questionnaire complemented the community schedule. It was designed to gather all possible information on the survival conditions of the poor and vulnerable households living at present in absolute poverty in the surveyed settlements. The first purpose is to generate in-depth data on the demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of the poor households. Then the questionnaire provides data on the employment, income and expenditure sources and patterns of the poor; household housing conditions; household food security; educational characteristics of children and youth at the school-age; and household health conditions. Finally, the questionnaire generates data on the household borrowing patterns; income generation activities; and levels of community participation, as mentioned above.

II. Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment Strategy

1. Methodological Background and Rationale

Obviously, given the limited resources available for social development in Khartoum State compared to the wide spread poverty, all those indicators-user groups noted in the previous chapter requiring information and database on community and household urban poverty.

Hence, different indicators-user groups have different information needs require different types of data employing different methods of data collection and skills which should be in consistent with their research strategy of urban poverty diagnosis and alleviation.

Methodologically, social sciences research field in general, and poverty studies in particular; is characterized by three main types of research methods widely used for data collection and analysis:

Formal / Quantitative / Extensive / Outsider '*Etic*' Methods.

Informal / Qualitative / Intensive / Insider '*Emic*' Methods.

Informal / Formal Methods (*Combining Methods*).

(a) **Formal methods** are large-scale questionnaire surveys with sampling. Samples are classified into two major types:

(i) *Non-probability sampling* include accidental samples, quota samples and purposive sample.

(ii) *Probability sampling*, which includes simple random samples, stratified random samples and clusters sampling.

Although quantitative '*extensive*' methods tend to give more statistical significance, there is a kind of large consensus that purely quantitative methods have major disadvantages:

(i) The time lag required producing results.

(ii) The high cost associated with administering the survey; and

(iii) The non-sampling errors associated with wording of the questions and the lack of consideration of local context.¹⁸

(iv) Inefficiencies in misleading 'findings' associated with under-reporting or over-reporting and motives of respondents for exaggeration and concealment.¹⁹

(b) *Informal methods* are based on *Participatory Rapid Appraisals (PRA)* methodologies, include participant observation, semi-structured interviews, group discussions and case studies. Informal or participatory methods proved efficient to generate data on in-material conditions of living of the poor such as norms, values as well as biophysical and economic factors. The bridge the gap between exhausted long formal surveys and quick non-structured contacts. Nevertheless, PRA maximize knowledge of the large area with a minimum amount of time and resources.²⁰ But it has tendency to fall in the risks of quick and unstructured tourism surveys including: obtaining only a snap shot picture of the area or topic; relying heavily of previous assumptions; and working without framework to guide the collection and analysis of data.²¹

To summarize, Table.1 presents selection criteria for methods in broad sense. While Table 2 presents, within the context of urban poverty research methods, main uses and characteristics of formal versus informal methods. What can be deducted from the Table is that the choice of appropriate research method will depend upon user-group information needs and research and policy objectives. Level of secondary data available and the availability of resources in terms of money, time and skills.

¹⁸ Maxwell and Frankenberger, op.cit., p.112; based on: Mohnar, A., Community Forestry: Rapid Appraisal, Food and Agricultural of the United Nations (FAO), Rome, 1989.

¹⁹ Champers, R. Rural Development: Putting the Last First, Longman, London, 1983.

²⁰ Maxwell and Frankenberger, op.cit, p 115.

²¹ Ibid.

In fact, formal or extensive survey methods dubbed 'etic' reflect the 'information culture' of the 'outsiders', who are people involved in poverty planning and alleviation such as policy makers, field practitioners, agency staff, researchers, consultants and so on, using exhaustive, large scale surveys usually associated with high cost and inefficiencies regarding human cost for researchers, opportunity cost for research that might have better used, and inefficiencies in misleading 'findings', on the one hand. On the other hand, informal or intensive survey methods dubbed 'emic' express 'insiders' or the poor' viewpoint toward gathering information, based on the elements of rapidity, community participation and cost effectiveness.⁶⁶

(c) Informal / formal or Combining Methods emerged as a result of insider-outsider controversial methodological debate on understanding poverty, and associated deficiencies when is used in separation of the other. This type of methods advocates the use of a combination of research methods to investigate urban poverty. To reveal, however, the content of such advancement in urban poverty methodologies, let us borrow wisely prominent scholars in the field: *"any research project usually requires more than one source or method. Where this is so, research should be faced and organized so that the complementary contributions of data from different sources to understanding the breadth and complexity of social reality are used to their best advantage. It is advisable to collect and review secondary data at the outset of research, and subsequently to combine formal and informal methods so that each enriches the other. Informal data collection is frequently useful in developing hypothesis about the relationship between social and economic*

²²C.f., Champers, op.cit.,.

variables which can then be tested with more statistical rigor during formal research such informal preliminary reach also indicates which variables should be measured, and how. This results in questionnaires, which are shorter, simpler, and more clearly focused than would be the case without such preliminary research. During, and subsequent to, formal data collection, informal research has a role to play in providing dynamic, causal, social explanations of relationships, which have emerged from formally collected data. It may also be used as a sounding board for testing the plausibility of the researcher's conclusions and explanations with the informants themselves".⁶⁷

TABLE .1 SELECTION CRITERIA FOR METHODS

Criteria	Classification		
	A	B	C
Scale of Inquiry	Phenomena of Interest are rare and clustered	Community level specific site or institution.	Phenomenon of interest widely distributed throughout area.
Interview Type	Free ranging Unstructured	Open-questions Attitudinal studies	Closed or structured questionnaire.
Observations and Measurement	Technical requiring professional skill	Accurate and detailed .	Simple counts or measures.
Frequency	Continuous of very Frequent.	Multi-visit over year	Single visit

Source: Maxwell and Frankenberger, op.cit.,p. 112.

²³ Moser, et. al., p.5.

TABLE .2 FORMAL AND INFORMAL RESEARCH METHODS

Type of information	Formal	Informal
Type of data	Qualitative	Qualitative
Perspective of data	<i>Etic</i> (Outsider)	<i>Emic</i> (Insider)
Aggregate poverty indicators	High	Low
Aggregate social and economic Indicators.	High	Low
Intra-household processes	Low	High
Community Institutional profiles and histories.	Low	High
Local Priorities, attitudes, values, Perceptions	Low High if so designed	High
Describing change.		
Sampling error (i.e. inverse of statistical representatives	Low	High
Measurement error.	Low if closely supervised	Low
Time required for collection and analysis	Generally long	can be short
Required skills level for interviewers	Fairly unskilled	sophisticated
Training needs	Medium or high	Medium but Specialized
Cost of data collection	Medium or high	Medium

Source: Moser, *et. al.*, 1986, P. 4.

2. RUPA Research Strategy

The research method specifically developed and employed to assess urban poverty in Khartoum State at the local level is dubbed "*Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment Strategy RUPA, for short*".

Obviously, RUPA is of a *pilot* nature. It is a location-specific and integral approach to investigate urban poverty, distilled from the advantages of the informal and formal research methods noted above. In essence, RUPA is a '*synthesis*' of qualitative and quantitative research methods. It employs *Participatory Rapid Appraisal (PRA)* methods which are more cost effective, eclectic, inventive, adaptable, and open to unexpected information, allows timely analysis and reporting, and involving the poor people themselves as partners in research⁶⁸ as well as non-probability sampling theory in terms of *Purposive Samples (PS)*, to complement and enrich the PRA by permitting some statistical inference of the essentials of livelihood conditions of the poor households and vulnerable people. Thus, following Hussein⁶⁹, "*the survey made no pretence to the kind of statistical representivity which might be expected of a larger and more randomly selected sample*". The procedure, however, permits providing a valid and comprehensive, though not inclusive, urban poverty profiles in specific locations under investigation.

Figure 2. illustrates, in simple structural model, RUPA integral approach in terms of essential interactive relationships between informal and formal approaches to study urban poverty. The *key words*, however, are:

- (a) RUPA, in essence, is a synthesis of informal/ formal research methods.
- (b) The underlying assumption, which guides RUPA, is twofold:
 - (i) The *homogeneity* of respondents (e.g., project beneficiaries) and settlements to be assessed in terms of poverty status and conditions.
 - (ii) Urban poverty should be seen not merely in increased

⁶⁸ Ibid. p.47.

⁶⁹ Hussein. M., *The Assault that Failed: A profile of Absolute Poverty in Six Villages of Bangladesh*, Report No. 87, United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD), Geneva, 1987.

deterioration in the living conditions, but also in terms of unavailability and inaccessibility of bases of social power.

(c) RUPA is employed at two levels of analysis:

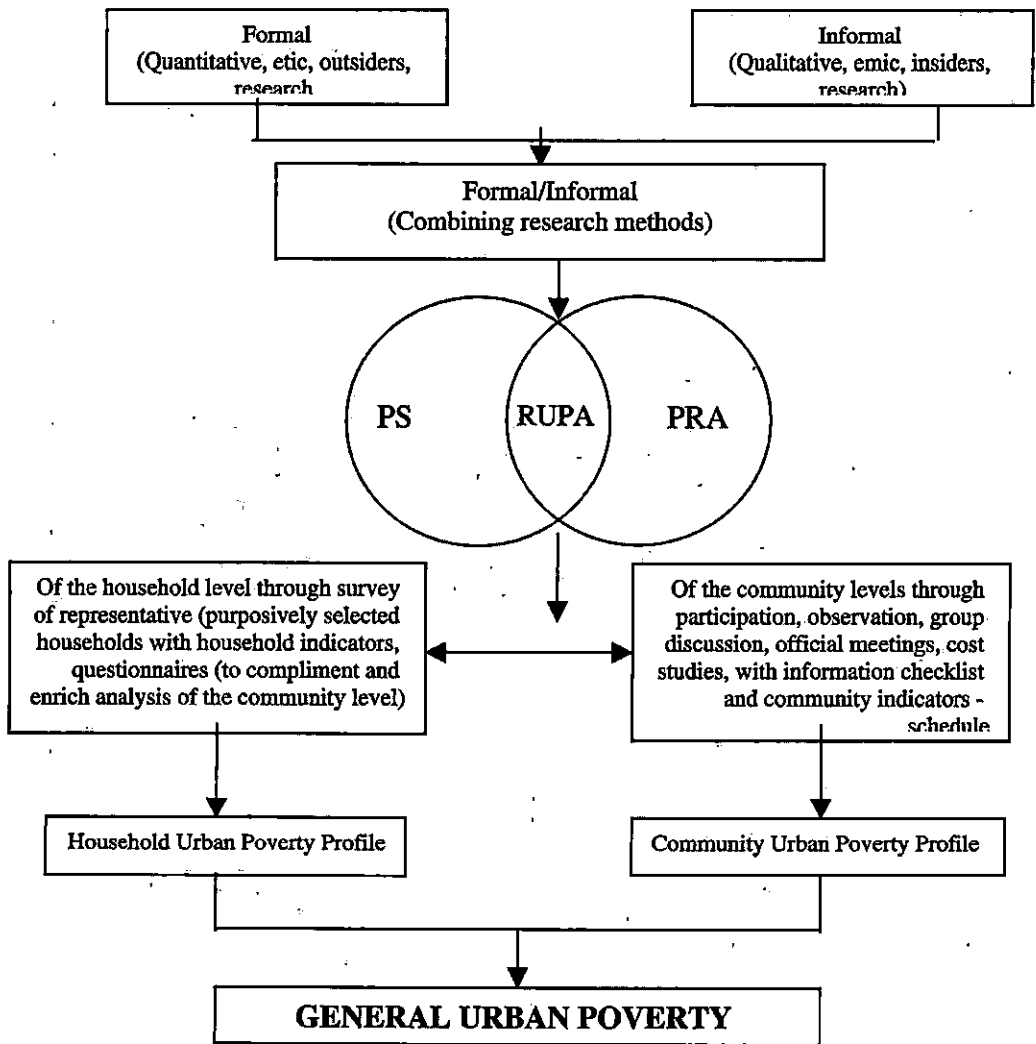
- (i) The community level uses PRA techniques such as participant observation and community study, case studies, with information checklist and community indicators schedule.
- (ii) The household level mainly uses PS technique with household indicators-questionnaire.

Accordingly, RUPA aims to provide location specific urban poverty profiles at the community and households levels, which in turn provide general and integral urban poverty profile of the survival conditions of the poor.

(d) RUPA is strongly valid in conditions where limited resources in terms of time, money and field research skills prevail.

At the final analysis, the essential methodological feature of RUPA is that it provides in- depth diagnosis of the survival conditions of a group of people living in absolute urban poverty. It is an integral approach to investigate urban poverty. It employs two types of functional methodology, which correspond to different phases of fieldwork and analysis, particularly the diagnostic study at the household level and the community study. The first serve as the basis for the gathering of information at the community level, the second enables the field team to arrive at an in-depth analysis of the livelihood conditions of the poor at the household level. Table .3 presents in detail sequential order the salient features of RUPA research strategy.

FIG. 2. RUPA MODEL: A COST EFFECTIVE AND INTEGRAL APPROACH TO INVESTIGATE URBAN POVERTY



PS : Purposive Sampling .

PRA : Participatory Rapid Appraisals .

RUPA : Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment Strategy

Source :Abdul Hai, op.cit.,Fig.2.1,p.29.

TABLE 3. RUPA RESEARCH STRATEGY (EMPLOYED IN KHARTOUM STATE, SUDAN, 1998).
(a synthesis of PRA/Purposive sampling rapid urban poverty assessment methodology)

PHASE	ACTIVITIES	TOOLS	PRODUCTS
1. Preparatory phase: conceptual and methodological research	Review of current scholarship i.e. (literature) On concepts and measurements of poverty, and poverty policies in general, and of urban Poverty in particular	Terms of reference: relevant research on poverty; and secondary data sources	Urban poverty conceptual framework
	Review of indicators and data collection methods used for assessing community and household urban poverty.	Terms of reference of methodological issues	combining quantitative/qualitative research methods in terms of <i>purposive sampling / PRA</i> elective integral approach to urban poverty
	Define and develop urban poverty indicators at the community and household levels, with strictly distinguishing between indicators of elements (i.e. policy goals / objectives) and indicators of determinants (including facilities(i.e., means of realizing and/ or verifying programme / project goals)	Urban Poverty conceptual and methodological materials, previous surveys and rapid assessments.	(2) comprehensive lists of community and household urban poverty indicators
	According to (3) define questions framework design and develop urban poverty information checklist and indicators-questionnaire	Background context material on PRA, questionnaire surveys and other experiences (including own in designing and implementing field surveys	-Urban poverty information checklist draft -(2) Indicators- Questionnaires drafts at the community and household levels

		related to poverty and hunger in Sudan).	
	Finalize confirmation of designated areas (i.e., localities) and target poor communities/ settlements.	Close consultation with CTA and project staff.	6 Localities comprise all UPAP present designated area throughout Khartoum State, with 13 target poor communities/ settlements.
	Define non-probability sampling technique and selection of purposive samples (representative households) depending upon experiences of the key informants, such as community leaders and local officials as well as UPAP Development Assistants working on site	Purposive sampling and community participation.	Purposively selected 70 (representative) households
2. FIELDWORK : Conducting RUPA	2. Participatory social mapping	Community / settlement transects with Community leaders	Spatial definition of target settlements
	3. Testing information checklist and indicator-questionnaires	Pilot visits to few selected settlements	Full check list and indicator questionnaire
	4. Community Rapid Assessment :	PRA techniques including ranking and scoring with information guide	Community urban poverty profile (for the database upon which the community profile was drawn
	a. Open group discussion: in most of UPAP target communities/ settlement, including community leaders, ordinary men, woman and children, supervised by project CTA and DPM and moderated by the development assistants.		

	a. Organized meetings: at all UPAP designated localities evolved local government officials including social development workers of the State ministry of social and cultural Affairs working at the local level; heads of localities and popular committees, selected community key informants; with general guidance of the researcher and located UPAP development assistant.	Organized d Community Consultation	
	1. Household Rapid Assessment : a. A pilot assessment of a sample of 70 representative households purposively selected from 7 poor settlements using household indicator- questionnaire b .Case studies with information check list.	Household indicator questionnaire information checklist	Household urban poverty profile.
3. Data processing , Analysis and dissemination of results	1. Data preparation	Data cleaning and editing Data coding	Clean raw data Data entry programme
	2. Data entry	Data entry programme	First data-set
	3. Data analysis : estimates	Statistical analysis package (simple averages)	Findings & conclusions
	4. Assessment report writing	The above products	Field study report draft
	5. Final workshop on: indicators and methodology used for assessing urban poverty (RUPA Strategy), findings and recommendations to inform urban poverty alleviation policies and strategic interventions at the local level.	Group discussions: UPAP management and field staff, SDF staff , local people and NGO working at the grassroots level..	Final rapid urban poverty assessment study report.

Source: Abdul-Hai, op. cit., Table 2.3, pp. 30 33.

III. The Urban Poverty Profile of Khartoum State 26

On the basis of the previous conceptual and methodological frame of reference, a rapid urban poverty assessment of a "pilot" nature was carried out in Khartoum State during June - August 1998 at two levels of fieldwork employing RUPA strategy.

The *community* level was carried out in *all* UPAP designated area comprises 6 municipals (localities)⁷⁰ holds 13 poor communities and IDPs settlements widely scattered throughout Khartoum State. This was to ensure full comprehensive knowledge of the *overall* socioeconomic context within which UPAP target urban poor survive. In connection, the *household* level, was carried out to generate a *complementary*", thoroughly in-depth, data concerning certain characteristics of conditions of survival for "*purposively*" 70 selected *households*, taken as a whole, as well as to assess the impact of the community context (*i.e.* the main level of analysis) on the access to basic services and social infrastructure and essentials for daily living by the urban poor households.

However, RUPA has generated a preliminary *profile* of urban poverty in Khartoum State at the community and household levels. This section summarizes the main findings of the undertaken fieldwork.

1. The Demography of Urban Poverty

(a) The estimated total population inhabiting UPAP target settlements at the time of our field survey (June-August 1998) were approximately 1,022,000 persons, or 20% of the Khartoum State total population. This alarming population size emphasizes the significance of the development of the institutional (including inter-agency and inter-sectoral collaboration)

²⁷ Nasar and White Nile localities in Jebel Aulia province; Al-Girafat & Um Dom and Al- Hag Yousif localities in East Nile province; Al-Bougaa locality in Um Badda province; and Omdurman South locality in Omdurman province.

structures and effectiveness for poverty alleviation. Moreover, because the above task constitutes essential component of UPAP anti-poverty package, it would be useful to several governmental, non-governmental and UN agencies as well as for the establishment of 'Poverty Alleviation Mechanisms Coordination Unit (PAMCU) at SDF.

- (b) Forty-seven percent (47%) of the population are displaced. such interesting demographic feature indicates that 'targeting' of beneficiaries, services and training, the successful poverty reduction.
- (c) Forty-three percent (43% of the displaced population had migrated to the Khartoum State in search for gainful occupations. This fact, in turn, should support the innovative small-scale 'credit for-poor' enterprise which UPAP intends to implement, on a pilot scale.
- (d) Another important finding of the assessment is that only 3% of the poor households surveyed reported labor availability within settlements their reason for living. The figure implies lack of employment opportunities within UPAP, settlements, and hence the importance of skill training and endorsement of self-help activities for urban poor in UPAP designated areas.
- (e) Moreover, it is noteworthy that the vast majority of the population intended to settle permanently in Khartoum State. Thus, such demographic trend will not only expected to pave the way for generating more "new poor", but also will put tremendous burden on the existing fragile social safety net at the locality level.
- (f) The average household size is 8 persons, which is higher than that of Khartoum State (6). This difference, however, is matching with the fact that in Sudan the poor families usually tends to have higher members than that of the well-off ones. A kind of demographic survival strategy which the poor recourse in face of relatively high infant mortality rate and low life expectancy.
- (g) In this connection, household structure data revealed a "*biased female-male*" ratio with "high dependency burden". Hence the significance of "*gender planning*" of poverty alleviation policies. Also the data confirmed

a "biased-single" community as indicative of prevailing unemployment associated with low income levels among urban poor, particularly men. Such low incomes act as a deterrent to young to marry at an early age, keeping at the back of their minds the social instability and fear of a future which characterized by the "*culture of poverty*".

(h) Finally, According to our data religion does not appear to constitute a significant source of social conflict among the urban poor in any of the known settlements, at the time of our assessment.

(2) The Fragility of Economic Survival

(a) The results of the assessment reveal an exciting fact the 47% of the population are "unemployed". In contrast, the labour participation rate of urban poor surveyed is only 13% mainly engaged in the service and informal sector with low gainful activities such as petty trade and casual labor, with an average monthly household income 6,100 Sudanese Dinars, or approximately 372 US Dollar per year. But, nevertheless, the income data show that urban poverty in terms of monetary income among the selected household, taken as a whole, is 'not' a gender-specific rather than a "class-specific" for it is the man-headed and woman-headed household have almost the same average income. Within such situation, cash assistance from *Zakat*, church and NGOs is notable for considerable proportion of the total income (35%) compared with incomes from enumerated sources (34%), on an average.

(b) As regards household expenditure the analysis show that the poor household spent some 44% on food alone (the prime expenditure pattern) comparable to 61% on urban and social infrastructure, of the total actual earnings. Moreover if we add percent of income spent on food to water to transport, the resulted percent will be 76% of the total income. Therefore, it is not surprisingly to find what is left (22%) is woefully inadequate to access to minimum standard of shelter, health and education.

(c) Moreover, the results show that the average poor household faces a budget"

deficit" of 29%. Hence filling a "budget gap" of some 30% is crucial to increase the household income to minimum level. However, the filling-gap figure can be used as indication for better "targeting" a minimum income standard for a poor household.

Finally, in face of substantial monetary deficits associated with lack of compensatory options such like income generating activities, 74% of the households were recourse to borrowing. This mainly for household consumption rather than productive purposes. Thus, for an urban poor or indigent the primary survival option is to be alive, needless to say, rather to produce. To balance this situation, however, the development of effective *credit-for-poor* mechanisms is crucial..

(3) Access to Basic services and Social Infrastructure

(i) Water and Environmental Sanitation

With respects to access to drinking water , several salient features can be mentioned , *inter alia*:

- (a) About 23% of the total population used hand pumps (the largest source of water in UPAP target settlements in terms of number). Sixty-nine (69%) depend on water tanks and just only 8% have access to piped water (i.e., stand pipes) the comparison between figures reflect general weakness of water service coverage in UPAP target settlements.
- (b) Nevertheless the association of piped water inaccessibility with poor health and sanitation conditions and considerable time lost in search for work, which in turn has reverse implications upon the poor, particularly woman and children.
- (c) Furthermore, in respects of "water quantity", the assessment reveals that 80% on an average, or almost all of urban poor targeted by UPAP can be considered as "thirsty" persons, with a range 80% - 97% of deficit.
- (d) But, as regards "water quality", 73% of water supplies from various sources meets Khartoum's State drinking water standard.
- (e) With respects to access to sewerage disposal and garbage disposal in UPAP designated areas. The results of the assessment show that 68% of the households have pit latrines, 5% depend on communal latrines and 27% are totally deprived of any kind of toilet facilities. On the other hand, 39% of households enjoy 'public' garbage disposal vis-à-vis 39%

who have no access to such facilities and some 23% depend on their own efforts in dispose wardens. Nevertheless to add the complete absence of the private sector and the community regarding a better environment.

(ii) Health

- (a) The results of the assessment reveal severe shortage in health services in regard of health facilities and personnel, with notable existence of NGOs' clinics, which represent the prime health facility, the major medicines supplier, of course on their capacity. But the valuable "health insurance" campaign led by the State Ministry of Social and Cultural Affairs and The Ministry of Health is worthy of mention.
- (b) Also, within such setting of poor environmental health and sanitation and inadequacy of health services target settlements are of community nature: Malaria, cough, TB , Asthma and Malnutrition. In this connec Failure, Blindness, and Night Blindness up to Heart Attack are reported.
- (c) In this connection the assessment also shows that about half of the entire households depend on their own sources to meet the medical care fees. Thus, it is not surprising to find some 59% of the households were prevented from any kind of medical consultation due to just economic reasons.

(iii) Education

Woeful inadequacy of schools, teachers and other school facilities as well as and vocational training characterizes UPAP target settlements. Illiteracy rate 32%: 24% of male compared with 40% of woman. "net enrollment" rate (NER) in primary and secondary schools accounting for 27% and 25% 25% corresponding with very high "drop-out" rates of 73% and 75% on an average, respectively. Thus, it is not surprising to found that the urban poor children are deprived of education because of economic reasons, which constitutes 86% compared with only 11% who left school for social factors.

(iv) Housing

The assessment results show that the priority of the population reside in private rented houses (62%). 23% in their own dwellings. But, mostly interesting is that at the time of our assessment some 15% occupied squatted tenures compared with 21% in 1997. This fact should be seen as obvious indication of advancement occurred in the Housing Public Policy notably directed by the federal ministry of Engineering Affairs in favour of the urban poor. Within such setting, 1-2 rooms mud-brick houses are predominant (68%). Kerosene lamp is widely spread used (71%) vis--vis 9% of electricity with 8-9 hours lost per day by power cut on average.

4. Community Development and the Role of UPAP

- (a) Several informal discussions at the settlement level and consultative meetings in all UPAP target localities reveal that the reduction urban poverty (including hunger and unemployment) and improve access to water sanitation and first top priorities of UPAP target communities, respectively. These were followed by access to housing and transport as third priority, and then education and health services as fourth priority.
- (b) Nonetheless, the results of the assessment show that some 65% of the entire households surveyed have some idea about UPAP, with variations between settlements according to length and level of community mobilization and empowerment.
- (c) Also, the community assessment reveals another interesting finding which is the level of involvement of international/national NGOs provision of community social safety net compared to that Governmental; accounting for 54%, 32% and 13% respectively.

(d) This fact emphasizes the crucial role, which UPAP can play in the *coordination* between the partners and the development of *the institutional capacity building* and strengthening *capabilities* of the governmental bodies working at the local level in general and of SDF in particular.

(5) Income Generation

(a) In this respect, the assessment provides essential information and policy fundamental necessary for the establishment and implementation of well-designed and economically viable income generating projects (IGPs); socially sound community participation and effective community based monitoring evaluation mechanism.

(b) As a reflection of dire poverty situation in terms of low income levels, lack of gainful employment opportunity and increasing dependency on informal borrowing, Ninety- tow percent (92%) of the entire population surveyed as for help in the form of IGPs.

(c) Needless to say, that policy and targeting implications as well as the human face of such alarming fact is straightforward. Moreover, the assessment shows that 'own labor' is the principal kind of participation in the IGPs proposed by the poor household accounting for 42% on average. Hence the crucial role that the conduction of skill training for the urban poor can play to upgrade their potentials and/or to generate new skills to prepare better self-help prospects.

(6) Community Participation and Empowerment

The assessment provides a profile of the general trends and features of the presently on-going community participation activities in UPAP target settlements. Mostly important is that about 56% of the entire households are involved in some kind of community-based participatory activities mainly through offering own labour and attending public meeting (i.e. community mobilization). Thus the main factor, which motivates the poor household towards participation, is of 'social nature' (63%) compared to just only 15% of economic reasons. Within such setting, the household's gain (benefits) from participation is just only 5% of each income raising or access to potable water! This fact, at the final analysis, advocates that the prevailing community-based mechanisms do little to reduce economic poverty and access to water as considered as the first top priority by all UPAP target communities.

Conclusion

Four principal concluding remarks are distilled from reviewing the "Rapid Urban Poverty Assessment Study":

- (1) The study revealed several interesting *realities*, which reflect, on the whole, a serious urban poverty situation regarding both economic and social deprivation.
- (2) The rapid urban poverty assessment indicators and strategy developed and employed in assessing urban poverty in Khartoum State at the local level, is based on the belief that urban poverty is a *multidimensional* problem. Hence, it is the *realization* of a complex *interaction* of various social, economic, cultural and political factors and actors. Therefore, effective measures and data collection tools should be developed capable to generate information of all aspects of phenomenon, necessary to investigate the survival conditions of the poor, as well as to assess effects and impact of different strategic policies, programmes and projects aiming at poverty reduction.

- (3) RUPA by its very nature is a *rapid* research method as it represents a *synthesis* be confined to conditions of resources limitations in terms of cost, time and skills, and when the *common* denominator between the target settlements and/or households is their poverty status, that is to say, despite their geographical backgrounds and cultural diversity.

- (4) In this sense, and in line with the scientific traditions of the field of rapid assessment research. It should be emphasized that although the rapid assessment approach reviewed in this paper provided a valid and comprehensive though not inclusive, urban poverty profile with some statistical inference of the living conditions of selected poor households assumed to be exit at settlement level. But it made no pretence to broader statistical representatively. Thus, figures are *estimates* and should be used as *orders of magnitude* and our urban poverty *profile* of Khartoum State is at best an *approximation* of complex reality as it undoubtedly must be, strictly speaking.

However the approach, data, and analysis presented in this paper has certain amount of relevance to poverty understanding and alleviation in the context of urban Sudan. To end, needless to add that the human face as well as the workable content of such concerns are straightforward, as far as they are essential and policy fundamental.

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