

Methodological Report

Pluralistic Memories Project – Island wide Survey
Sri Lanka 2017

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1. Sampling strategy

The Pluralistic memories Project (PMP) survey included a multi-stage stratified probability sample with unequal selection probabilities. The territory of Sri Lanka is administratively divided in 9 provinces, 25 districts, 331 Divisional Secretariats (DS divisions), and 14,022 Grama Niladharis (GN division) at the time of survey in 2017.

The PMP survey with the target sample of 1,200 respondents was conducted in all 25 districts, with a variable number of respondents per each district. The sampling was conducted in three stages:

- *Stage 1*: Selection of DSs (target 50 DSs with 24 respondents in each DS);
- *Stage 2*: Selection of GNs (target 100 GNs with 12 respondents in each GN);
- *Stage 3*: Selection of respondents (target 1200 respondent).

1.1. Selecting survey areas

In *Stage 1*, DS areas were randomly selected with the following procedure. First, we defined the number of DSs to be selected within each district. The goal was to optimize the final sample based on three criteria: (1) *ethnic composition* of districts (the goal was to oversample districts (choose more DSs) with higher proportion of minorities), (2) *war exposure* of districts (the goal was to oversample districts (choose more DSs) with stronger exposure to war violence), and (3) *population size* of districts (more DSs were chosen in the main urban districts, with the highest population density). Ethnic composition and population size were estimated on the basis of 2012 census, while war exposure on the basis of the Uppsala Conflict Data Program. On the basis of these three criteria, a variable target number of DSs within each district was specified, ranging from 1 to 4 (with the higher number of DSs in districts that were more strongly exposed to war, which are ethnically heterogenous or have highest population density).

To over-represent ethnic minority populations, we have further stratified districts with more than one target DS by the ethnic composition of DSs. Specifically, we broke down the districts with more than one target DS in as many strata as DSs needed to be sampled (2,3 or 4); next, we created the strata in a way as to over-represent areas where the ethnic minorities - and Muslims in particular - are more frequent than in the district overall. This resulted in 50 strata (i.e., as the target DS number).

Finally, we carried out separate probability proportional to size (PPS) selection of exactly one DS within each of the 50 resulting strata (based on the list of all DSs and their population size). Due to the PPS procedure, the final selection consisted of 47 DSs (as 3 DSs were selected twice, and their sample size was doubled).

Next, in *Stage 2*, we have selected 2 GNs per selected DS with the PPS selection (based on the list of all GNs and their population size). In three DSs that were selected twice in the previous step, we have selected 4 GNs in each. The final selection consisted of 100 GNs.

Because it was unsure whether the survey agency will be able to obtain the necessary administrative permissions to conduct research in the selected DSs and GNs, we have created a back-up list of DSs and GNs by carrying out the second PPS selection. If a

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problem in a DS or a GN occurred, the survey agency was instructed to replace them with the corresponding replacement DS or GN from the back-up list. The encountered difficulties are described in the next section.

1.2. Selecting respondents and fieldwork procedure

A specialized fieldwork had to be organized through KCG to randomly select respondents for the 1200 sample, orchestrated through the multi-stage stratified probability sampling methodology with unequal weights. Voters lists that include all people registered and eligible to vote (age 18 years and above) are not publicly available in Sri Lanka and obtaining such voters list through the elections commission would have incurred huge costs and unnecessary publicity to the pluralistic memories project in general. Hence the most feasible option available was to take use of the voters' lists that were accessible at divisional secretariat offices under the prevue of their respective divisional secretaries. These DS offices contained voters' lists of all GN divisions that came under their administrative authority.

The process started off with a letter addressed to the relevant divisional secretaries by Dr Ramila Usoof and Dr Mario Gomez on behalf of the International Centre for Ethnic Studies. This letter explained the nature of the survey and requested permission and cooperation in carrying out the survey within their administrative regions (GN divisions) and also seek permission to access voters list. Letters were sent out to 47 DS divisions on the 20th of March 2017, out of which 3 DS divisions provided written confirmation that assistance would be provided. 2 DS divisions called hotlines established by the local PMP team and acknowledged the receipt of our request granting permission to progress our filed work. The only divisional secretariat to refuse access to the voters list was the Mahara DS, which was replaced by the Kelaniya divisional secretariat. The divisional secretariats from Valikamam East in the Jaffna district, Poonakary in the Kilinochchi district and Musali in the Mannar district requested permission to be obtained from their superior administrative officers who are district secretariats. As a result similar letters requesting permission and cooperation from district secretariats in Jaffna, Kilinochchi and Mannar districts were sent. None of these district secretariats acknowledged the receipt of letters. At the same time none of them prohibited fieldwork from taking place. Despite having considerable administrative power over their administrative regions, the actions of the divisional secretaries are quite understandable provided the complexities associated with the post-war Northeast.

Despite not receiving any acknowledgment from majority of the DS divisions, a decision was taken to proceed with fieldwork in collecting respondents to the random sample as relevant government administrative officials had been notified.

A training was carried out on the 23rd and 24th of March 2017 at KCG premises for two groups of enumerators recruited for the specific task of accessing voters lists and selecting respondents to the sample. They comprised of 8 Sinhalese (5 males, 3 females) 2 Muslims (2 males) and 4 Tamils (2 males, 2 females). The task to be carried out by them was as follows. The enumerators were instructed to meet the relevant Grama Niladhari officer (who is the responsible official at the smallest administrative level, the Grama Niladhari (GN) division) and request access to the voters' list of the relevant GN. A copy of the introduction/permission letter sent to the

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divisional secretariat and in specific cases a copy of the letter sent to the district secretariat were provided to the enumerators.

Once access granted by the GN officer, enumerators had to perform the following. They had to determine the length of the voters' list, which is the total number of registered voters. Since the sampling methodology required 12 respondents to be recruited from each GN, the enumerator was required to calculate the sampling interval (SI) by dividing the total number of registered voters by 12. Next, a random starting (RS) point was required to be selected through the use of a mobile phone app (Random Numbers Generator). Since all enumerators weren't smartphone users, all of them were instructed to call KCG at this point of time. They would provide the sampling interval and a KCG staff member would provide them with a random starting point using the mobile app. The first respondent selected to the sample would be the person corresponding to the random start number. The next would be the person corresponding to random start summed to the sample interval ($RS + SI$). The 3rd would be $RS + 2*SI$. 12 individuals would be selected to the sample by repeating this process. To mitigate the unavailability of a selected respondent in the field, 2 other reserve lists were created in a similar manner described above. When enumerators called KCG for a random start, they would be provided with 3 random starts for generating the three lists. The initial list would be the primary list. The second and third lists were combined to a reserve list of 24. In the absence of a respondent in the main list, a substitute will be chosen from the reserve list during fieldwork. The substitute will be chosen using the mobile app corresponding to a random number between 1 and 24.

In case of large GNs with multiple voter lists, enumerators were instructed to choose the 12 respondents for each of the 3 sampling lists proportionate to the number of respondents in each voting list. Dividing the number of people on one voter list by the total of all people in all of the voters lists corresponding to a particular GN, multiplied by 12 provides the proportionate number of individuals to be selected from one particular voter list (in the case of multiple voting lists). The three sampling lists would subsequently be selected in a similar proportionate manner.

The enumerators were asked to utilize the latest voters' list possessed by the GN officer. The latest was the 2016 voters list at the time of sample selection. Some GNs only had the 2015 list as their most recent. Apart from meeting the GN official initially and obtaining the voters list from them, some enumerators had directly met the divisional secretariat. Since DS offices have voters' lists pertaining to all GN divisions under their authority, it proved to be a more convenient means of obtaining voters' list limiting the number of trips to different GNs within the same DS division. However this practice wasn't encouraged by KCG as the familiarization with GNs prior to actual survey administration was omitted by doing so.

The voters' list contains the residential address of the potential respondents selected into the sampling lists. The enumerators recorded these details when creating the 3 sampling lists for each GN and brought them back to KCG.

1.3. Poststratification weights

Two poststratification weighting variables have been added into the database. The purpose of these variables is to compensate for unequal probability of selection of respondents. Whenever the aim of an analysis is to compute estimates which are relevant at the population level, the data need to be weighted by one of these variables.

The weights have been computed in order to correct for different selection probabilities within survey strata. Population weights (“pop_weights”) have been computed by dividing the population size in each stratum by the final sample size in each stratum. Design weights (“des_weights”) have been computed by multiplying the population weights with the final sample size and divided by the overall population size. Population weights should be used whenever the goal is to extrapolate the absolute numbers on the level of populations; in all other cases when using weights for inferential purposes, the design weights should be used.

2. The questionnaire & Translations

2.1. Questionnaire

The following documents were used during different stages of data collection in the field.

1. Sample list
2. Interviewer instructions
3. Contact sheet
4. Questionnaire
5. Questionnaire cards
6. Network matrix
7. Life calendar
8. Vignette pre-test
9. Community paradata 1
10. Community paradata 2

Sample list

The sample list included an organized list of 12 respondents that the enumerator should pursue in the field and a reserve list of additional 24 names. These lists were carefully matched between enumerators and respondents in terms of the first language spoken and the ethnicity of both parties.

Interviewer instructions

The interviewer instructions contained guidelines for field staff in approaching survey respondents and introducing themselves and the survey.

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Contact sheet

The contact sheet recorded details of the recruitment efforts made by the enumerators.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire for the island wide survey included 224 items distributed among 6 sections spanning across 20 pages. It included questions on respondent life events, personal information, social networks, short vignettes on memories of conflict, living conditions, community life, social identity, transitional justice, collective victimhood, minority rights and collective action.

Questionnaire cards

The questionnaire cards included pictorial diagrams corresponding to different likert scales used throughout the questionnaire.

Network matrix

Involved a matrix measuring the strength of relationships existing among members of the respondents' social network.

Life calendar

A historic record of events that are important for the respondent.

Vignette pre-test

The vignette pre-test was a document utilized during a pre-fieldwork pilot test of the questionnaire and evaluated whether respondents clearly understood and freely responded to the questions associated with vignettes of conflict memories.

Community paradata 1 & 2

Both community paradata 1 & 2 recorded supplementary information relating to the Grama Niladhari divisions in which data collection took place. Paradata 1 recorded information on infrastructure whereas paradata 2 recorded information regarding the presence of military, religious institutions, destruction caused by war and signs of commemoration relating to conflict taking place within a particular GN division. Due to the sensitivity of the project, the data collected through the survey instrument and the areas in which data was being collected, the local PMP team, KCG as well as the enumerators agreed that carrying paradata 2 in the field posed significant and unnecessary risks. Hence enumerators were instructed to familiarize themselves with the items in paradata 2 and be vigilant of aforementioned information in the GN divisions while traveling about. Once fieldwork was completed in the relevant GN, KCG would call each enumerator working in each GN and administer

the paradata 2 on them, collecting supplementary information about the respective GN division.

2.2. Translation

The local PMP survey project team held the responsibility of translating these documents. Hence documents numbered 2 to 10 were translated from English to Sinhalese and Tamil. Translating the island wide survey documents posed less complications compared to the translation process involving the PMP Sri Lankan pilot survey back in 2015. Most of the documents were relatively similar and the experience gained both in translating and the feedback received from enumerators administering the pilot survey were immensely helpful in shaping the more recent island wide survey document translations. The standard process of translating the English versions of the documents received into Sinhalese & Tamil, doing a back translation and comparing in order to ensure that both the versions communicated to respondents what was meant in English, were carried out. A huge effort was taken in translating and contextualizing the questionnaire so that it sounded more vernacular when administered to respondents. The use of vernacular language had proven during the pilot to make respondents more engaged, more interested and lower risks of questionnaire rejection arising due to loss of interest and possibilities of interviewee fatigue. The lack of restrictions with regards to questionnaire formatting was immensely helpful in making the questionnaire more vernacular and respondent friendly.

However, the complexity of the translation process cannot be undermined due to the complex, cognitively challenging, and lengthy nature of the questionnaire. It contained items ranging throughout a diverse set of fields requiring a clear contextual flow to be maintained during the entire length of questionnaire administration, which in most cases exceeded sixty minutes.

One complication that arose with regards to translations was the different dialects of Tamils that are in use in different parts of Sri Lanka. The dialect spoken in Jaffna and throughout the northern areas of the country (often referred to as Jaffna Tamil) tends to be more formal and closer to formal written language and language used in literature. As a result the questionnaire containing less formal dialect spoken mostly in the southern parts of the country posed issues relating to distancing and prejudice arising among respondents in the North against the enumerators who were mostly from the South. The vignettes, which are short, but represents itself as small works of literature were also presented in more formal written Tamil during questionnaire translations. This was indicated by enumerators during feedback sessions to have broken the flow in the use of vernacular language throughout the questionnaire.

During the pilot survey in 2015, most of the translation work was performed in house among the local PMP team. However due to immense workloads, time constraints and the possibility of getting new perspectives within the translation process, translations were outsourced to an external third party discovered through known contacts. Sourcing translators through known contacts was essential especially for Tamil translations due to the scarcity of skilled translators willing to work at reasonable rates, the difficulty in finding translators having knowledge of context in

terms of the socio-political landscape of the country and the lack of professional translation services that ensure privacy and confidentiality provided the sensitive nature of data collection through the project. Even though third party translators were involved, the local PMP team closely followed the process ensuring contextualization and vernacular language.

2.2. Difficult items and modifications

Following translations of the questionnaire, an initial training for a pilot fieldwork session (prior to actual fieldwork) was carried out on the 22nd of May 2017. Potential supervisors and experienced enumerators to be utilized during actual fieldwork were recruited for this pilot fieldwork and the questionnaire training session. Their presence during the pre-training, pilot fieldwork, and subsequent debriefing sessions were anticipated to take the form of focus group discussions between experienced supervisors, enumerators, KCG staff and members of the local PMP survey team. As predicted, the pilot fieldwork session produced valuable insights and was utilized to modify items that posed difficulties in presenting questions to respondents in the field. Some major sections on which feedback was received include the following.

Section C regarding identity characteristics was considered by all parties (supervisors, enumerators, KCG staff and the local PMP team) to be the most challenging in explaining and obtaining responses from respondents. Even though the table seemed logical and straightforward in English, its translated version in Sinhalese and Tamil were not equally functional. Even though examples where certain identity characteristics would match certain statements mentioned in columns within section C were thought of, and shared during trainings, this was not practically possible with respondents during questionnaire administration. For instance, it would create selection bias, and examples weren't adequately available to cover all combinations of characteristics and statements. This boils down to a language issue and these types of questions do not function well within the Sri Lankan context. In English the questions tend to be quite straightforward and easy to administer. It is understood that the current C-section was a condensation of the previous identity characteristic section in the pilot survey, which functioned quite well. However, compressing it due to its repetitive nature in the pilot study, called for proper adaptations when administered during the island wide survey.

In section D, the direct translation of item number 5, "In my community, every person is as much in the right place as others" did not express a clear meaning. Its direct translation was even incorporated within the pilot survey in 2015. This previous experience supplemented by pre-fieldwork feedback resulted in a translation of the item to Sinhalese and Tamil, which gave out the meaning "everyone in my community are of equal worth".

Similarly, items 21 to 25 in the D section require respondents to think about the periods of violence and then reflect on the community in which they lived during such period of violence and answer questions based on such reflections. It was agreed during the pilot feedback process that some respondents had actually left conflict areas when conflict escalated. Some had moved abroad, some had moved to the South, which was relatively stable, and some had being living in areas, which weren't

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affected by the conflict at all. Hence this kind of respondents required a not applicable response for items D 21-25 which was included later on.

3. Fieldwork

3.1. Fieldwork network

Pluralistic Memories Project's Local (Sri Lanka) Survey Team

Dr. Ramila Usoof – Co-investigator

Dr. Ramila Usoof is a co-investigator as well as a member of the steering committee of the Pluralistic Memories Project. She is also the anchoring figure coordinating and overseeing scientific research conducted through the project here in Sri Lanka. Dr. Usoof is also the main point of reference in communications taking place between the Kandy Consulting Group the survey agency in charge of field work in Sri Lanka, the PMP central team as well as the local Sri Lankan PMP survey team.

Sumedha Jayakody – Doctoral Researcher

Sumedha Jayakody is the quantitative doctoral researcher working for the Pluralistic Memories Project in Sri Lanka and coordinates the operational aspects of various surveys carried out by the project. Being a native Sinhalese speaker, Mr Jayakody is heavily involved in the Sinhalese translations of the survey instruments and is in charge of conducting trainings for field staff regarding survey instruments and certain aspects of survey methodology. Mr Jayakody is also responsible in organizing survey debriefings and is also the main author of this report.

Kandy Consulting Group (Pvt) Ltd. (KCG)

Senior Project Manager

The senior project manager Mr. Dammika Herath of KCG overlooked the overall project and was responsible in implementing the field survey on behalf of the PMP local team. Dammika was greatly responsible in the successful organization of all training programs that were carried out during different stages of data collection. His expertise on random sampling was greatly utilized in conducting trainings for field staff in bringing in sample lists from all around the country. Dammika is also a co-author of this methodology report.

KCG Research Assistants

Four KCG research assistants working for the survey project were responsible in preparing filed documents, keeping track of all field activities, coordinating with

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filed supervisors, enumerators and data entry operators. One of them was also involved in the process of running a final logical check using STATA and scanning all survey documents obtained from the field. They also were the main point of reference for KCG with regards to the PMP survey providing communication links between the local PMP team and the administration of KCG. Three of them were native Sinhalese speakers and one a native Tamil speaker.

Field Enumerators

A total number of 41 enumerators were used in collecting data during different stages of the survey (collecting sample lists, pre-fieldwork pilot, main field work and extra field work stages). This included a total of 30 males, 11 females, 23 Sinhalese, 10 Tamils and 8 Muslims. The responsibilities of the enumerators included closely following instructions and guidelines, and the collection of data in a safe and efficient manner. They were instructed beforehand to never take decisions in the field and in the face of unexpected field outcomes to inform the research team, which included their immediate supervisors, KCG research assistants, KCG senior project manager, the local PMP Sri Lankan team and finally the central PMP team in Switzerland. The enumerators responsible for administering survey interviews were given clear instructions in terms of finding respondents, explaining the survey project and collecting data. They were to answer all necessary questions from respondents and provide background information if required. Additional information was to be taken down as notes. The enumerators had been instructed by KCG to complete all questionnaires with a blue pen and include signatures where required prior to submitting it to a field supervisor for further comments and checking. Once an interview was completed they were to offer a small gift to the respondent as an appreciation of their valuable time and effort. The gift offered during the island wide survey was a rechargeable torch.

When recruiting enumerators for academic research, KCG maintains a minimum educational qualification, which is to be an undergraduate, graduate or a postgraduate student. Even though this criterion was fulfilled when recruiting Sinhalese speaking field staff, an exception had to be made when recruiting Tamil speaking field staff. This saw the recruitment of Tamil speaking enumerators who are bilingual and with high levels of field experience.

Filed Supervisors

A total number of 11 supervisors were used by KCG for supervision during different stages of the survey (pre-fieldwork pilot, main field work and extra field work stages). This included a total of 7 males, 4 females, 5 Sinhalese, 4 Tamils and 2 Muslims. The main responsibilities of the supervisors were to oversee field enumerations, guide enumerators in finding respondents during the initial stages of fieldwork and constantly ensure enumerator adherence to given guidelines. In a nutshell they were to ensure that enumerators fully understood the sampling methodology and adhered to it. They performed a 100% check on questionnaires submitted to them by enumerators. They were to randomly check on field attendance and timings of completed questionnaires. Once a questionnaire is checked 100% it was their task to deliver it to KCG's project office. In their 100% check, they looked for clarity, cleanliness and completeness. In instances where errors are found they

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note them down with black ink and send them back to the enumerator for corrections. All of these are done based on precise deadlines.

Temporary Research Assistants

Two temporary research assistants were utilized by KCG for translating comments noted down in questionnaires, and answers given to open ended questions in Tamil, to Sinhalese during data entry. A native Tamil speaker (ideally a supervisor or an enumerator) who is familiar with the instrument read and explained what was written in Tamil and what it meant in Sinhalese. Then the Sinhalese RA re-wrote the text on the instrument itself to ensure Sinhalese data entry operators understood the completed questionnaire. This complication arose due to the unavailability of native Tamil speaking data entry operators who were competent both in excel and English within given time constraints. Hence in order for the native Sinhalese speaking data entry operators to understand and convert the total data set into one language (English), this additional step of translation was introduced. A similar procedure was adopted by KCG during the 2015 pilot survey. Even though KCG had taken measures to recruit bilingual data entry operators, unavoidable circumstances (obtaining permanent employment) prevented them from working for long.

Data Entry Operators

Once questionnaires had been checked and scrutinized by field supervisors, they were handed down to seven data entry operators. Sinhalese data entries were performed by a 2 male, 3 female native Sinhalese speaking team and Tamil data entries were conducted for a brief period by a 2 male native Tamil speaking team. As the Tamil enumerators resigned early, the subsequent Tamil questionnaires were also entered by the native Sinhalese speakers following a translation of all open ended questions and notes to Sinhalese. The data entry operators were provided with PSPP templates and codebooks along with a one day training. This training took place on the 22nd of September 2017 at KCG and was conducted by one of KCG's research assistants. The local PMP quantitative doctoral researcher was also present throughout the training explaining aspects of the questionnaire. They were responsible in entering data from field instruments following given instructions. Once completed the data entry operators were instructed to provide a soft copy of the dataset in the form of a PSPP dataset after a 100% recheck of their entries. Subsequently this PSPP document would be sent for STATA checking.

3.2 Pre-fieldwork pilot questionnaire training and pilot study

A pre-fieldwork training and a pilot test run of the questionnaire were carried out prior to actual fieldwork. There were several intentions behind such pre-fieldwork training and questionnaire administration. One was to obtain feedback with regards to the newly translated questionnaire. The second was to familiarize a set of supervisors and enumerators with the questionnaire who would eventually be a resource and share their initial experiences in the field with many other newly recruited enumerators during the main training of the questionnaire. Thirdly it was essential that the waters

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be tested prior to the island wide survey administration. Back in 2015 the pilot survey was administered only in Ampara and Matale. However in 2017 the survey was to be administered throughout Sri Lanka. As a result a pre-test was required especially with the newly formatted questionnaire.

The training took place on the 22nd of May 2017 at KCG premises, and was attended by 14 field staff. 6 of the attendees were Sinhalese (5 male, 1 female) where 3 of them were supervisors and 3 of them enumerators. Out of the 3 Tamil field staff present (1 male, 2 female) 1 of them was a supervisor while 2 of them were enumerators. The remaining 4 of the team were Muslims (2 male, 2 female) comprising of 1 supervisor and 3 enumerators. The lead role of the training was taken by the quantitative doctoral researcher of the PMP who introduced the research project and the questionnaire to the field staff in Sinhalese. Even though the majority of the Tamil and Muslim field staff were bilingual, for the benefit of the minority who didn't follow Sinhalese, a translator was present, and each and every item and instructions for them were translated to Tamil. The translator present was the same translator responsible for questionnaire translations. This made last minute changes to the questionnaire possible during the training itself.

Following the training, the field staff were provided with an updated survey instrument and were sent to the field the following day. Among the materials taken to the field included the vignette pre-test. Fieldwork took place within the Kandy district. By this time, KCG and the local PMP team had received the sampling areas and sampling lists had been created. Hence the field staff were specifically instructed to stay clear of the sampling areas that had been selected for the main survey fieldwork. The data collection of the Sinhalese field team occurred in the Yatinuwara DS, within Dehigama and Mangalagama GNs. The Tamil field team collected data in the Delthota DS, within the Perawatta GN. The Muslim field team collected data from the Yatinuwara DS within the Dehianga GN. Designated enumerators were instructed to administer 4 questionnaires. The supervisors were instructed to administer 2 questionnaires and to check all questionnaires of enumerators who were under their purview.

A total of 40 questionnaires were administered during the pre-fieldwork pilot study and the fieldwork was completed within two days. Field staff arrived at KCG on the 25th of May 2017 and while handing over completed questionnaires, they engaged in a mini debriefing session regarding their pre-fieldwork experience. There was an initial discussion between KCG and the central PMP team that the collected data would be entered, STATA checked and handed over to the central PMP team in Switzerland via a pre agreed data entry template. However due to complications arising in the field and due to a significantly long time lapse, the data collected during the pre-fieldwork pilot study never reached the stage of data entry at KCG.

3.3 Main fieldwork questionnaire training and fieldwork

Following a rigid translation process and a pre-fieldwork pilot study, final modifications were made to the questionnaire and other supplementary documents to be taken to the field during the main island wide fieldwork. These modifications mainly involved typographical errors and grammar corrections. Major modifications done to the questionnaire are stated in detail within section 2.2. All documents to be distributed among field staff were organized and printed by KCG.

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Due to the complexity involved with the questionnaire, its contextual appropriation, sensitivity involved with collected information and the complications associated with the areas in which data were to be collected, the PMP local team in close collaboration with Kandy Consultancy organized a comprehensive training prior to the enumerators beginning work in the field. Best practices learnt from the pilot survey that took place in 2015 and the pilot run of the island wide questionnaire which took place just a week ago needed to be shared with the entire field team. Due to the fact that the training included 22 field staff out of which 11 were entirely new participants for the project, and also because the whole process was to be conducted among both Sinhala speaking as well as Tamil speaking field staff, a comprehensive training program was organized. This training occurred on the 29th and 30th of May 2017. The logistical arrangements for this training were borne by KCG and was conducted at a separate premises close to KCG called The Women's Development Centre in Kandy. Participants for the training included administrative staff from KCG handling responsibilities pertaining to the PMP's longitudinal survey, PMP local team members (the project coordinator and the quantitative doctoral researcher) and enumerators and supervisors hired by KCG for the island wide survey. The training was conducted in both Sinhalese and Tamil. The PMP quantitative doctoral researcher assumed the lead role explaining the questionnaire in Sinhalese. The translator responsible for translating the questionnaire into Tamil and being present as the translator at the pre-fieldwork pilot study training was again present during this main fieldwork-training program. As before, KCG had made a great effort in hiring bilingual native Tamil speakers as supervisors and enumerators to work in sampled areas, which were predominated by Tamil speaking respondents. Each item and instruction was read out in Sinhala followed by the same being read in Tamil. Adequate time was allocated to each section where both Sinhalese and Tamil enumerators and supervisors would acknowledge their understanding or otherwise provide feedback in terms of their interpretation or any other complication that might arise when asking such items / giving out such instructions to respondents within the field.

Following the two day training session fieldwork began immediately on the 3rd of June 2017. A total number of 22 field staff participated in the fieldwork. The Sinhalese team comprised of 11 (10 male, 1 female) out of which 3 were supervisors and 8 were enumerators. The Tamil team contained 7 (2 male, 5 female) members out of which 2 were supervisors and 5 were enumerators. The Muslim team included 4 (2 male, 2 female) out of which 1 was a supervisor and 3 were enumerators. Apart from the questionnaire material, enumerators were provided with a sampling list to locate respondents, a photo identity card along with a letter of introduction issued by KCG stating their temporary enrolment status within the PMP Sri Lankan survey project, an information sheet with signatures from both the co-investigator and the director of the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) introducing the project on behalf of ICES, and a consent form which explained the nature of responses collected and obtained consent from the respondents prior to participation.

The enumerators were instructed to locate respondents, introduce the PMP project briefly, introduce the survey comprehensively, double check if age of respondent is over 18, obtain consent and administer the questionnaire. In case respondents couldn't be located, enumerators were instructed to make a minimum of

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three attempts prior to replacing them through the reserve list. All successful and unsuccessful attempts made in locating respondents were recorded on the contact sheet.

Even though data collection was predicted to be completed within 6 weeks, it eventually took 20 weeks due to complications that arose within the field. An immediate problem that arose after the training was incessant rains for 48 hours that affected over half a million people in 7 districts in Sri Lanka (Sri Lanka Red Cross Society, 26 May 2017). Amidst loss of human life and mass destruction amounting due to flash floods and landslides, survey work in the affected districts of Gampaha, Galle, Hambantota, Kalutara, Kegalle, Matara and Ratnapura were temporarily suspended until August 2017.

Fieldwork in the rest of the country, especially the war affected North and East were carried out. By the end of June 2017, 815 out of 1200 questionnaires had been completed. Another hurdle that prolonged fieldwork was the month of Ramadan falling between end of May and end of June 2017. As a result many of the questionnaires pertaining to Muslim respondents got delayed until end of July. By the end of July another 222 questionnaires were completed making the total 1037 out of 1200.

While data collection is in progress, KCG carries out an evaluation procedure, which involves a field visit. The main purpose of this visit is to evaluate the performance of field staff. The correct execution of field instructions and the correct administering of the survey instrument are observed, evaluated and feedback is provided. The procedure is notified to field staff well in advance, however the exact dates of the visit is unveiled at the last possible moment. The work of enumerators who fail to turn up for evaluation are temporarily suspended. A field visit performed in June 2017 saw the temporary suspension of one enumerator. A second field visit performed in August 2017 revealed a serious case of systematic cheating by an enumerator who had wrongfully completed 96 questionnaires. The services of the enumerator was terminated and the questionnaires were redone using respondents from reserve lists.

One enumerator's traveling bag was stolen at his place of lodging in the field. This bag had contained 14 questionnaires, which had to be redone by going to the same respondents once again. The same enumerator was assaulted at a different location, which prevented further data collection in that particular GN division from taking place. Another enumerator who had claimed to have completed 27 questionnaires suddenly went off the radar failing to answer calls. Even though contact was established with him through great effort, he refused to continue fieldwork and to handover the completed questionnaires. This posed a serious threat for KCG and the local PMP team as confidential respondent details were at risk.

Sample lists contained names that were taken from voters' lists. During the preparation of these sample lists, the names were scanned by KCG staff prior to being included in sample lists and handed over to enumerators to be taken to the field. Usually the ethnicity of the enumerators were matched with the ethnicity of the respondents as a huge effort was made by KCG to match different ethnic communities (GN divisions) with the ethnicity of the enumerator. However there were rare

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instances where certain names could not be distinguished whether they were Sinhalese or Tamil. For example the name Sarojini is a name that is frequently being used by both Sinhalese and Tamil woman. As a result there were instances where a Tamil enumerator would go to a GN in the North, complete 11 out of 12 survey interviews and find the last respondent to be a Sinhalese. In such cases, KCG would have to separately deploy another Sinhalese enumerator all the way from the South to complete this single survey interview.

All of the above-unforeseen complications in the field contributed to an unnecessary delay in completing fieldwork.

3.4 Additional training and fieldwork

Due to the massive delay in completing fieldwork, the termination of services of two enumerators and the substantial workloads placed on current enumerators, KCG was unable to optimally utilize the services of the existing field team to complete fieldwork. As a result 3 Sinhalese enumerators were recruited by KCG and trained by the local quantitative PMP researcher on the 14th of October 2017. These 3 enumerators were responsible in finishing off 96 survey interviews.

Following a long history of events, the fieldwork of the island wide PMP survey that began on the 3rd of June 2017 was completed on the 30th of October 2017.

3.5. Field staff evaluation

Field Visits

The earliest screening of enumerators takes place through a field visit that is conducted by KCG staff during the early stages of data collection. KCG staff comprising of the senior project manager, one or two research assistants and the quantitative doctoral researcher from the local PMP comprised the team that embarked on field visits. The main purpose of this visit is to evaluate staff performance in the field. The precise execution of instructions and the correct administering of the survey instrument are carefully observed by the field visit team. This observation is carried out by prior consent of the respondent and once completed, feedback is provided to enumerators.

The second important reason behind the establishment of such a field visit was because of the sensitive nature of the areas in which data collection was taking place. This was the first time KCG had engaged in a data collection exercise in the former war zone and the presence of a team responsible for the initiation of the data collection exercise was thought to have boosted the moral confidence of the field team. The presence of KCG in the field at an early stage of data collection was also thought to increase the credibility of the overall survey project in the face of unexpected obstacles preventing data collection in the field.

The field staff are informed of visits well in advance, however the dates of the actual visit is revealed only at the last possible moment. The GNs in which

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enumerators operate are recorded on a daily basis and as a result KCG has information on where each enumerator is operating on a given day. Based on this information a route is charted to cover many enumerators as possible through a single visit. It is compulsory for enumerators turn up, with whom evaluations have been scheduled. Failure to do so results in a temporary suspension of fieldwork until an evaluation is completed or satisfactory explanations made for no show.

Hash weather conditions in Sri Lanka at the time of data collection separated fieldwork in the Southern part of the country to take place at a later time period. As a result 2 field visits were carried out. The initial visit was carried out during the days of 13th, 14th, and 15th of June 2017. The visit covered districts of Puttalam, Kilinochchi, Jaffna, Mannar and Batticaloa. A total number of 8 enumerators were evaluated during this field visit. The local PMP quantitative doctoral researcher was out of the country at that time hence did not participate for the field visit. The second visit was carried out on the 11th of August 2017. This visit covered districts of Colombo, Galle and Matara. A total number of 3 enumerators were evaluated. The full field visit team including the local PMP quantitative doctoral researcher participated in the field visit.

These field visits proved extremely productive as instances of serious enumerator misconduct were revealed. Several instances where enumerators inaccurately executed procedures were discovered and rectified.

Enumerator supervision

A huge effort is made by KCG to evaluate both enumerators and supervisors. Zero tolerance is shown over fabrication of data or any other misconduct in the field. In order to ensure that the enumerator is physically present in the field and conducting interviews with a stated respondent, rigorous checks are being implemented. Enumerators and supervisors often lodge together in the field, or meet regularly. During these initial stages, supervisors accompany enumerators and are fully involved in the process of locating respondents. The supervisors are often physically present during the first few interviews that are conducted by each enumerator. By maintaining such close proximity, the supervisors are able to better oversee enumerators, ensure their security and gain valuable insights to various issues that arise within the field.

Once a questionnaire is complete, it is 100% checked by the supervisor (each and every item, each and every response looked at) and then sent to KCG's project office. In the case of an error such as a missed response, the enumerator is instructed to get in touch with respondents by either revisiting or through telephone. After the questionnaires are being submitted to KCG they are directly sent for data entry. At the point of entering responses to the system, the questionnaire gets re-scrutinized for potential errors. If errors are revealed, both supervisors and enumerators are scrutinized and the process of enumerators contacting respondents will be initiated. During the island wide survey KCG states that they hadn't come across any incident where enumerators had been sent back to the field to make amendments. However, there had been many instances where incomplete questionnaires had been completed by enumerators, by contacting respondent over the phone. Enumerators had to make

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several visits to KCG's project office in order to complete and clean their questionnaires during office scrutinizing and data entry phases.

Supervisor supervision

KCG maintains constant communication links with supervisors. Daily logs maintained by supervisors are often checked. These logs are frequently crosschecked with enumerators to verify whether supervisors' have spent adequate time in the field supporting enumerators in building their confidence to start working independently. KCG had also compared daily logs between enumerators and supervisors to check whether these entries match.

Random checks over the phone (Back-checks)

At least 10% of randomly selected respondents for each enumerator were given a phone call by KCG from its project office in order to ensure whether the interview genuinely took place. Some of the items that were checked included "date of birth", "name of the GN division" and the "most frequently followed media source for local information". Furthermore, respondents were asked about any difficulties they experienced while responding to the questionnaire, whether they had received the token of appreciation and whether there was any inconvenience caused due to the survey interview in general. Since the supervisor in the field did a 100% check of the questionnaire including validating the implementation of the sampling procedure, no requirement was seen to redo it over the phone.

The process utilized by KCG for the random checks was as follows. Respondent ID's (rid's) of questionnaires completed by each enumerator were listed. A random number was generated for each rid and the rid's were subsequently sorted according to ascending order (smallest to largest). Then the number of rid's corresponding to the 10% of the total completed by the relevant enumerator were chosen from the top of the list (the rid's with the lowest random numbers at the top of the list). If they weren't contactable i.e. not having a telephone or not answering the phone even after three attempts, the next respondent with the lowest random value assigned would be selected. This process was repeated until 10% of respondents per enumerator were contacted.

STATA checking

Once data is entered and rechecked 100% by the data entry operators, the data sets are passed on for STATA cleaning. The research assistant responsible for STATA cleaning merges all the data sets that are received from different data entry operators and makes a single data set. This involves the merging of different PSPP data sets. Once a complete data set had been generated, they are imported to STATA and the following procedures are carried out.

- A stepwise inspection of all variables within the dataset (for missing values and erroneous entries).

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- Ensuring the sequence of responded IDs, and other numberings throughout the dataset.
- Checking for consistencies in rid's across different survey documents within the data set.
- Provide a single cleaned data set in the form of PSPP as requested.

4. Interviewer Debriefings

Two interviewer debriefings were performed during different stages of data collection by the quantitative doctoral researcher with the main objective of investigating problematic issues that arose with regards to the content of the questionnaire as well as the process of data collection. Debriefing sessions were also used as a platform for sharing best practices among enumerators. The initial debriefing occurred on the 24th of May 2017 at KCG following the pre-fieldwork pilot study. All enumerators and supervisors who engaged in fieldwork were present at this debriefing session. Important feedback was received regarding questionnaire amendments and best practices.

The second debriefing occurred following the completion of all fieldwork on the 16th of November 2017 at KCG office premises in Kandy. Data collection had taken almost 20 weeks and as a result enumerators who had finished off data collection quite early in the process found it difficult to recall their field experiences. The meeting was also organized as a final get together for the field staff with a lunch reception at the end. Some of the feedback received during the debriefing meeting are summarized below.

- According to most enumerators, finding all 12 respondents mentioned within the initial sampling list rarely happened. Obtaining a total of 290 contact sheets from the field relating to unsuccessful contact attempts confirms their claims.
- They were also concerned about the total number of documents they needed to carry in the field. According to one enumerator, this questionnaire would have been ideal to conduct in a closed setting with proper seating. However survey interviews rarely happen in such ideal settings. They are often conducted at the roadside, under trees in extreme heat. Sometimes pieces of the questionnaire had blown away in the wind. Respondents become discouraged when enumerators start to ramble through all documents, especially when they pullout life calendars. A suggestion was made to use tabs in future.
- In the Northeast, some people had been reluctant to provide information about their social networks. They would barely introduce networks beyond their husband or son. One possible reason was speculated to be suspicion, the other being lack of social contact. Neighboring houses are often spaced apart in these regions.

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- Almost all enumerators state that section C on identity characteristics was the most difficult and time consuming section of the questionnaire to administer. They suggested it to be further improved or simplified in future if effective and efficient data collection was to occur.
- One enumerator had received feedback from a respondent in the North stating that the questionnaire wasn't focusing much on gender issues. It was stated to be a surprise to the respondent provided the large amount of female headed households present in the North.
- Many LTTE carders as well as members of the armed forces had taken part in the survey. Some military personnel had been very critical about the questionnaire and had been hesitant when answering questions relating to the F section. With regards to former carders, a great effort had been taken by the Tamil speaking field team to locate such respondents. Some had even fled with their families when news had spread that the enumerators were searching them for. They had shared valuable life experiences. However requests had been made to the enumerators to refrain from taking notes or stating responses in the questionnaire. Tamil field staff made a special request from KCG at the debriefing to be extra cautious when contacting respondents from former war zones, as many of them are still extremely nervous when answering calls. This was confirmed by KCG research assistants. Respondents living in former conflict zones were very difficult to get hold of on the phone for random checks. They would often hang up saying it's a wrong number.
- The field staff were grateful for the PMP project for providing them with a great field experience. Some Tamil enumerators stated that even though they were Tamils who originated from the south, they had learnt so much first hand, regarding the destruction that had happened to their own people during the war.

5. Scanning

All survey documents, which included consent forms, life calendars, network matrices, community para-data, questionnaires and contact sheets were all scanned and digital copies made. A high-speed Epson colour document scanner was utilized in scanning, which scanned documents ranging from A4 to legal size. The life calendar, which was A3 sized, had to be scanned separately using a regular copier. As a result the life calendars were scanned as black and white images.

The file size of the digital copies of the PMP island wide survey was close to 10GB. As a result, its transfer to Switzerland was done using an encrypted USB stick which was hand delivered by the local quantitative doctoral researcher in 2018. Once its safe storage was confirmed by the central PMP team, all physical copies of the survey documents stored at KCG were destroyed in 2018.

6. Difficulties and unexpected events

Pre-fieldwork

Sampling Lists

In Sri Lanka, there exists no convenient means of obtaining a list of registered voters that can be utilized for random sampling. Even the department of census and statistics in Sri Lanka is very protective of its data and tends to be extremely cautious when providing it for private use. The election commission maintains a voters' list, however its provision for private use wasn't previously heard of. To avoid unnecessary exposure of the PMP, a separate fieldwork was organized to obtain voters' list from different divisional secretary administrative offices in areas in which the survey was to be administered.

The divisional secretariats have great administrative authority over their DS divisions. As a result they have the power in turning down requests for using voters' list. Even though precautions were taken by KCG and the local PMP team to request for permission beforehand, it also required skilled enumerators to confidently present the research purpose (which didn't frequently happen) in gaining access to voter information. Some divisional secretariats were extremely helpful, some required greater persuasion and a single divisional secretariat refused access to the voters' list stating it to be extremely confidential. In the North, some divisional secretariats required us to inform the district secretariat prior to the release of the voters' lists. Hence the volatile nature of the context and the lack of a straightforward mechanism in obtaining sampling list for research in Sri Lanka, causes a great amount stress and extra effort even prior to actual field work.

Questionnaire Translation and Training

The 2018 PMP island wide survey questionnaire like its predecessor, the 2015 PMP pilot questionnaire was long and complex. It required great effort in translating, contextualizing and familiarizing with enumerators, to be subsequently administered in two languages. Despite the great efforts taken, the questionnaire was differently interpreted and administered in the field.

Fieldwork

Despite the great effort taken in careful translation and training of the questionnaire, the Tamil enumerators and supervisors administered the questionnaire differently in two instances. The initial instance was with regards to A12. This question asks respondents which national media (radio, television or newspaper) they frequently follow to get news regarding Sri Lanka. However the Tamil team had administered the question simply asking the national media they frequently follow. The purpose for following the media, which is for news had been omitted. However during the final debriefing session it was clarified by the Tamil field staff that most Tamils would switch to Indian satellite television channels for entertainment and use all other national media sources (including the examples provided within the questionnaire) to obtain information regarding local matters.

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The second instance was regarding the instructions for questions D21 to D25. The instructions required the respondent to think about the GN division within which he/she lived during the period of the armed conflict. If they had moved places, they were to think of the GN in which they lived the longest relating to the time period of the war. There were cases where respondents had migrated to India to escape the conflict quite early. However these respondents had answered D21 to D25 imagining as if they had continuously lived in their previous village throughout the entire war. Ideally the answer for respondents who had migrated out of the country should have been not applicable (N/A). The instructions for these questions had not been clearly explained to respondents by the Tamil enumerators causing this complication. Later, questionnaire responses were amended to reflect N/A for all respondents who had moved to India quite early during the period of the conflict.

The entire data collection exercise was greatly delayed due some unexpected events occurring in the field. Firstly the extreme weather related disasters that occurred during the month of May 2017, greatly affected the southern part of the country. This stalled fieldwork from taking place in the South for almost two months.

A field evaluation visit carried out by KCG revealed that a greatly experienced enumerator who had been working with KCG for the past five years to have committed systematic fraud. Two field evaluation visits were carried out by KCG and during the initial visit, this enumerator failed to turn up for evaluations. Provided his previous track record, the enumerator's work was not temporarily suspended. However a check performed by the field evaluation team during a second visit revealed certain signs of systematic cheating. The enumerator was purposefully uncalled for evaluation, and the field visit team visited some of his respondents and inquired details of survey administration. It was revealed that certain parts of the questionnaire had been deliberately omitted. Essential information with regards to demographic and the life calendar had been collected and the rest had mostly been fictional data. Some questionnaire interviews had only taken 15 minutes, given the average questionnaire administering time of 1 hour, 17 minutes throughout the entire survey. Most of the contact details (phone numbers) provided by the enumerator within the contact sheet were fictional. However investigative work performed by KCG revealed genuine phone numbers written elsewhere (in the questionnaire) and later erased. Contact numbers that could be salvaged from engraved markings on erased paper were phoned. Shocking discoveries were made while calling respondents. Interviews had being carried out with a terminal patient who had passed at the time the calls was being made. Another call revealed a questionnaire pertaining to an ex military officer who had refused consent to record his responses. A hearing was conducted at KCG where the enumerator admitted to have committed systematic fraud. All survey material administered by this enumerator were reclaimed and the enumerator was dismissed. At this point of time 96 questionnaires had been completed by this enumerator, which required to be redone. Since this enumerator had failed to adhere to strict sampling guidelines, he had not utilized reserve lists. Substitute enumerators were sent to the same areas to redo these 96 surveys using reserve lists.

Another enumerator maintaining a good track record with KCG was at the receiving end of a few unfortunate incidents while collecting data. In a GN division in

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the Colombo district called Obesekarapura, which is notorious for high crime and the presence of narcotics, this particular enumerator had got attacked by an alleged drug addict. The attacker had misrecognized the enumerator for a microfinance officer. Microfinance companies often operate in poverty stricken neighbourhoods and offer microcredit. When customers fail to pay, reclaiming officers are sent to their homes to collect payments due. Our enumerator who was well dressed with an identity card lanyard around his neck perfectly matched the profile of a typical microfinance officer. Without any explanations being asked for, the enumerator had been assaulted. Once KCG had received information regarding this incident, immediate measures were taken to remove the enumerator from the respective GN division and to provide him with medical care. The termination of fieldwork resulted in a loss of three questionnaires from the Obesekarapura GN.

The same enumerator operating at a similarly notorious location, the Kuda Buthgamuwa GN, had his bag stolen one night. He had been lodging at a temple within Kuda Buthgamuwa and the next day, had noticed that his overnight bag had been stolen. Valuables including his wallet, identity documentation, mobile phone and 14 completed questionnaires were lost in the process. Upon receiving information on the incident, KCG in consultation with the local PMP team instructed the enumerator to redo the survey interviews with the 14 respondents. Police complaints were lodged for both incidents by the enumerator.

This enumerator for the third time was involved in a more serious incident while collecting data at the Kudaheella North GN. This GN is situated in the deep south of Sri Lanka and is the electorate of the former president Mahinda Rajapaksa. This area and the southern region in general is known to hail Sinhala Buddhist nationalism. A government official working for the GN had walked in unannounced into a survey interview that was being conducted by the enumerator. Upon hearing the questions presented on minority rights, the official had become extremely agitated and had disrupted the interview. He had immediately called the divisional secretariat and had informed of the situation. The enumerator had been instructed to stop work and to meet the divisional secretariat the following morning. Upon meeting the divisional secretariat, she had reprimanded the enumerator stating that he could not conduct such research in her administrative area. Upon receiving information regarding this incident the senior project manager of KCG got in contact with the relevant divisional secretariat. Upon stating that the survey had been introduced and permission sought after before and voters list collected, the only answer given by the divisional secretariat was, “this is a sensitive area, it is the former president's electorate, and we can't do whatever we want”. Furthermore she had stated that she had informed the criminal investigations division (CID) and that once they cleared KCG and the survey project, she would let us resume data collection. However, such a call is yet to be received by KCG. The enumerator was questioned by the CID division in Tangalle. All documents pertaining to survey introduction and the survey ID card had been produced by the enumerator. Subsequently the enumerator had been released without further hassle. Upon PMP local team and KCG instructions, data collection was terminated immediately and the enumerator was called back to KCG with the questionnaires completed so far in the particular GN. This premature termination of data collection resulted in the loss of 9 more questionnaires. This along with the 3 questionnaires lost in Obesekarapura, resulted in the final sample figure of 1188.

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This is a classic example of the volatile political context in Sri Lanka. A government official at the lowest administrative level can hamper data collection based on nationalist sentiments. The divisional secretariat present during the time when KCG sent permission letters and collected voter lists had gone on transfer and another divisional secretariat was present during the time of data collection. Perhaps the time gap between permission seeking and data collection needs be narrowed down especially within areas that are sensitive in nature in future studies.

The final problematic issue took place in the field when an enumerator who claimed to have completed 27 questionnaires suddenly went off the radar failing to answer calls made by KCG. Even though contact was established through great effort, the enumerator refused to resume fieldwork and submit the already completed survey instruments. This posed a serious issue to KCG and the PMP local team as confidential respondent information was being compromised. While KCG was contemplating legal action against the relevant enumerator, it was revealed that this enumerator hadn't completed a single questionnaire. A substitute enumerator sent to repeat data collection revealed that the original sampling list had not been exhausted.

Due to the afore mentioned complications taking place in the field, data collection was significantly delayed by 14 weeks. Apart from contracts being terminated on disciplinary grounds, a greater number of enumerators were lost to the project due to the delay caused in data collection. Most of the enumerators tend to be part time employers selected from a pool for short-term assignments. Most of them have permanent employment that they attend to and as a result 3 new enumerators had to be recruited, trained and sent to the field to collect data.

Post-fieldwork

The CID investigation that originated in Hambantota had triggered a general investigation with regards to KCGs research portfolio. A CID officer from the Kandy police station visited the office premises of KCG on the 28th of September 2017. According to this officer, an organization profile had been created for KCG and the officer had visited KCG to perform a preliminary investigation regarding KCGs research activities.

According to the senior project manager of KCG who was in direct contact throughout the investigation with the CID official, this information gathering visit seemed to be a routine procedure carried out by the official. The official seem to have not been specifically interested in the PMP island wide survey, even though it was the main reason that triggered the investigation. The official had also requested information on the number of staff employed by KCG, their residential addresses, ID numbers, properties and also information about the vehicles used by KCG. A second visit was made by the official a week later to collect the requested information.

This incident was followed by another investigation involving the ministry of defence. Organizations that undertake sensitive research projects such as the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES) tends to be constantly monitored by the military intelligence, under the purview of the ministry of defence in Sri Lanka.

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Just after the conclusion of fieldwork of the PMP and the CID investigation at KCG, a military intelligence official had got in contact with the co-investigator of the PMP project in Sri Lanka. He had stated that he is in charge of monitoring ICES and its various research projects. He had requested documents relating to the survey including the survey instrument from the co-investigator. Upon close consultation with the local PMP team, KCG and ICES, the co-investigator had informed the alleged intelligence official that all proceeding regarding the PMP survey is transparent and to make an official request for information through official communication lines. No subsequent attempts by the ministry of defence and the CID to contact any one from the PMP, ICES or KCG regarding the PMP project had been made ever since.

The investigations mentioned above all occurred during the post-fieldwork stages of the PMP island wide survey. Most of the questionnaires had reached KCG and were being entered by data entry operators. Upon notifying the central PMP regarding the investigative attempts made on the survey project and its current stage of data entry, one of the main concerns raised by the central PMP team was regarding the risk to confidentiality of the respondents interviewed. Even though questionnaires themselves contained only a unique number to identify respondents, there were other documents that linked this unique number to the actual personal details of a respondent. Hence it was agreed that the questionnaires and the other survey documents containing actual contact details of respondents should be kept separate in order to mitigate any risk to the confidentiality of the respondents. Hence until all documents were entered into the system (data entry completed), scanned, digital copies made and physical copies destroyed, the documents containing personal information were entered into the dataset first, and transferred to ICES for secure storage. The documents transferred to ICES included respondent's contact sheets (both successful and unsuccessful attempts), consent forms, life calendars, network matrixes and community para-data sheets. Majority of these documents that were received from the field were transferred on the 26th of October 2017. The rest of the documents received at the conclusion of fieldwork and data entry were transferred to ICES on the 10th of January 2018.

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7. Fieldwork timeline

Time Period	Milestones
2017	
February	Handing over of the survey instrument and related documents (English version)
March	Training for sample selection and fieldwork relating to sampling
	Translation of the questionnaire (to Sinhalese & Tamil)
May	Pre-fieldwork pilot questionnaire training and pilot study
	Debriefing after pilot fieldwork
	Amendments to questionnaire based on feedback & reprinting
	Main training
June	Commencement of island wide fieldwork (except the Sabaragamuwa & Southern provinces)
	Field visit 1
August	Commencement of fieldwork in the Sabaragamuwa & Southern provinces
	Field visit 2
September	Data entry training and data entry
	STATA checking
	Scanning survey documents
October	Extra training
	Continuation of island wide fieldwork
	Completion of island wide fieldwork
December	Handing over of completed (cleaned) data set