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SPECIAL:
MULTIDIMENSIONAL MEASURES DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

INTERVIEW WITH ELINA SCHEJA

MOST USED DIMENSIONS AND INDICATORS OF POVERTY

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Editorial

'Let's not waste this opportunity' was the appeal made by Sania Nishtar, Pakistan's Minister of Poverty Alleviation, at a high-level event on the side lines of the UN General Assembly, organised by the MPPN and OPHI, and co-hosted by the Governments of Chile and Pakistan and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

At this gripping event, covered in this edition by Bestin Samuel, presidents, prime ministers, ministers, and representatives of international organisations stressed the need to use a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) as a tool to coordinate, target and design public policies which confront the crisis provoked by COVID-19. We highlight insightful quotes from that event and return to one of the participating institutions, the Swedish Cooperation Agency (Sida), in an interview with Sida's Lead Economist, Elina Scheja, by Felipe Roa-Clavijo.

One good example of how to use multidimensional measures to support countries' efforts in responding to the pandemic is Honduras' 'Single Voucher' *(Bono Único)*. Honduras has developed a robust identification and selection process using the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index to measure who is most vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19. Maya Evans and Mónica Pinilla-Roncancio give us more details on this tool.

In this edition we also talk about dimensions and indicators. Jakob Dirksen shares an update of the dimensions and indicators most used by countries in their national multidimensional poverty indices, while Mónica Pinilla-Roncancio tackles the question of whether disability should be included in an MPI. These discussions are very relevant to the challenge of better measuring poverty in order to create informed public policies.

SOPHIA Oxford, a non-profit organisation linked to OPHI and in charge of implementing the business MPI, is working on incorporating a gender dimension. John Hammock and Ana Vaz briefly present this work. Finally, Frank Vollmer and Harriet Smith analyse the relationship between land use and the reduction of multidimensional poverty in Mozambique.

We invite you to read *Dimensions,* a new perspective for understanding poverty.

Carolina Moreno

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'The global pandemic underscores the need for a multidimensional analysis of poverty'

The Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) uses a multidimensional poverty approach for their work. In this interview, Lead Economist at Sida, Elina Scheja talks to Felipe Roa-Clavijo about this framework and the way in which it is operationalised in the field.

Elina Scheja is Lead Economist at the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Swedish government agency in charge of implementing development cooperation policies. On behalf of the parliament and government, Sida's goal seeks to 'enable people living in poverty and under oppression to improve their lives'. They 'facilitate development that prioritises the most impoverished in the world with a vision to safeguard the rights of every individual and their opportunity to live a dignified life'.

Sida currently works bilaterally with 37 countries in areas including gender equality, environment and climate change, agriculture and food security, conflict, peace and security and humanitarian aid. A multidimensional approach to poverty is at the core of Sida's work. In this interview, Elina Scheja explains the background and use of this framework.

What is the background of Sida's approach to multidimensional poverty?

I think it would be fair to say that Sida has been ahead of the game when it comes to working with multidimensional poverty. We have been doing this since the sixties and it has been a part of Sida's mission to have a broad understanding of poverty. But more recently, at the start of the Millennium, Sida formulated a paper on how we view poverty in its different dimensions. It was then called 'Perspectives on Poverty' and outlined a view of poverty that resembles the capability approach. It covered material wellbeing as a core but also included the capabilities and opportunities that shape one's life and power and voice to choose on matters of fundamental importance to oneself. It was also during that time that the government formulated a new policy for global development that doesn't only apply to the Swedish Development Cooperation, but applies to all policy areas in Sweden.

How have the SDGs enriched this multidimensional poverty framework?

Sweden is a strong believer in the Sustainable Development Goals. Our work is framed by them, and we strive to make a significant contribution to their achievement. At the same time, the SDGs together with other political and contextual changes have inspired us to update our own understanding of multidimensional poverty as different agendas came together to reformulate our thinking.

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First, the SDGs came in 2015 from the international agenda. Second, around the same time, the government of Sweden introduced a new policy framework for development cooperation that provided a holistic framework for international cooperation, and third, the development context and the world around us had changed since the previous goals on poverty reduction were set. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of reducing poverty numbers by half had been achieved and surpassed, but what remained was a more complex perspective of people who had been left behind. This was a different kind of world that we needed to understand better, so there was a need for new approaches.

In this spirit, Sida undertook quite a comprehensive exercise in 2016 to redefine a new analytical framework for multidimensional poverty called 'Dimensions of Poverty' that was launched in 2017. It took us almost two years of discussion with our country offices and thematic departments before we landed on this definition. And I think it was needed to have that kind of discussion so that the organisation could own the results. Sida's new multidimensional poverty framework is our domestication of what we mean by the SDG's first goal 'end poverty in all its forms everywhere'.

Which are the dimensions of poverty in Sida's framework?

We recognise four dimensions of poverty. One is resources, which refers to something that is valuable and is invested in you. It has income but also educational achievement, health, and material and immaterial assets.

The second dimension is opportunities of choice, which is about your opportunity to build your resource base and use your resources to lift yourself out of poverty. It includes employment and opportunities to access social services, such as education.

The third dimension is power and voice, which means the ability to influence decisions that are of fundamental importance to your life. It is about anti-discrimination, and decision-making, not just in the political sphere but also in the community and in the household.

> Sida has been restructuring our development financing in light of our understanding of how COVID-19 impacts people living in poverty including the 'new poor' that risk falling into poverty, and allowing our partners to flexibly adjust to the needs on site.

The fourth one is human security which refers to sexual, physical and psychological violence or threats of violence that would limit your opportunities to live a life in dignity. Adding human security to the other dimensions we had been working with was motivated by changes in the landscape of what poverty looks like. There is more poverty concentrated in fragile and conflict contexts, so it was considered that this aspect of poverty was not really well captured in the other dimensions.

The main questions the framework seeks answers to are: who is living in poverty and how poverty looks in these dimensions, but we also ask why this situation came about when we analyse the development context, including political and institutional, economic and social, peace and conflict, and environmental aspects. These elements – beyond the control of the individual – form poverty traps. One can say that the dimensions define our understanding of what multidimensional poverty is, while the different contexts provide an analytical framework for understanding the underlying constraints that keep people in poverty.

Who is considered poor in this framework?

According to Sida, a person living in poverty is resource-poor and poor in one or several other dimensions. So, we take resource poverty as a starting point, but enlarge the definition to the other dimensions. We think that resources are tightly connected to the other dimensions of poverty that together form the situations that keep people in poverty.

I think the previous approach focusing only on the resource dimension is possibly where we got lost in the first place, and why 10% of the world population is still living in income poverty. I think it's because we haven't seen the other interconnected dimensions and binding constraints that people living in poverty are facing.

How is this framework operationalised in the field?

It's important to highlight that this framework serves the purpose of looking at different contexts. Within these contexts we can define who is poorer than the others. As we are working in very different countries, we are aware that the situation in Colombia is nowhere near the situation in Mozambique.

The framework also provides a tool for having a dialogue with partners and other stakeholders at the country level. Different countries have different definitions of poverty; this is our way of analysing and understanding multidimensional poverty, but we do not impose it on others. Instead, we would like to have a discussion on how poverty manifests itself for different groups of people in order to find a common understanding of the current situation, identify priorities, and find pathways out of poverty.

To move from a conceptual framework into applied use in our operations, we launched a toolbox for poverty analysis in 2018 and the toolbox is currently being updated with accumulated experience from the field offices. The methodological guidance has since been updated in light of COVID-19. This toolbox has a banner: make the model work for you. The country teams are allowed to adjust the framework and make their own country variations depending on the country context.

We started with a few pilot countries and asked: how does the dialogue look in your country? What are the main issues? And what issues would you like to highlight? And we asked them to systematically look at all the dimensions, but they were able to prioritise depending on whether it was a conflict country or not, or how the situation looked. We have now gone from a few pilot countries into a mainstream implementation of this type of thinking. Almost all the country teams have done their first multidimensional poverty analysis, and many are updating their analysis given the ongoing changes during the global pandemic. The multidimensional poverty analysis (MDPA) framework has really helped us to keep our eye on the ball and all the time ask how the changes we see impact the different dimensions of poverty.

What are the advantages of working with this framework?

I think the main change and the point of doing this in the first place is that we at Sida have become stronger in responding to development challenges and in understanding why poverty still exists in this day and age of material overload and wellbeing.

The framework allows us to embrace complexity and build theories of change in order to break the silos and poverty traps that still exist. Even now in times of a global pandemic, the framework has been flexible enough to accommodate ongoing changes and help us analyse the different mechanisms through which the people living in poverty are affected.

As I mentioned before, even if you would only narrowly focus on one part of poverty, say monetary poverty, it is important to realise that the main reason why people are still trapped in monetary poverty may not lie in that domain. It could be that it is based on discrimination, it could be that there are limitations to their capabilities and seeing what is actually holding them back. I truly believe in people living in poverty and their agency. If they have the chance and opportunity to lift themselves out of poverty, they will do it.

Talking about COVID-19, many international organisations have estimated that millions of people could fall back into poverty due to the global pandemic. What are Sida's response and plans to address this?

I think the global pandemic and all the changes following it really underscore the need for a multidimensional analysis of poverty. In a short period of time, the number of people living in extreme monetary poverty is expected to increase rapidly as many were previously only barely above the poverty line and experienced several other deprivations making them vulnerable to poverty when a crisis hit. This makes it all the more important to understand the overlapping deprivations and structural constraints that push people into poverty.

We have adjusted our MDPA guidance to analyse changes that are specific to the current situation, but we have also noticed that many of the problems we see now are not really new but were weaknesses we could identify from previous MDPA analyses. It is almost as if COVID-19 is working as a magnifying glass emphasising the structural weaknesses that need to be better understood to sustainably reduce poverty.

In more concrete terms, Sida has been restructuring our development financing in light of our understanding of how COVID-19 impacts people living in poverty including the 'new poor' that risk falling into poverty, and allowing our partners to flexibly adjust to the needs on site. We have contacted all our partners asking what changes they see in the context they work in as the situation varies greatly.

As Sida's preferred modality is to give core support, we have often been able to adjust the activities within our existing programmes and with our partners to better fit the current needs. For instance, a programme working with journalists to promote freedom of speech could quickly mobilise media to spread correct information about hand washing and other preventive measures.

In addition to changes within programmes, Sida has also increased support to humanitarian efforts and responded to urgent calls of support. Even though the Swedish economy has been hit by the economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, the government is committed to its goal to allocate one percent of GNI in development aid and Sida's budget is expected to increase slightly for next year. ■

Elina Scheja, Lead Economist at Sida.

Further information on Sida's framework and toolbox.

World leaders on multidimensional poverty in the UN General Assembly 2020

By Bestin Samuel

When distinguished world leaders came together for a high-level side event at the UN General Assembly, they shared an array of insightful ideas on how poverty is at a crossroad. As the pandemic continues to rage through many parts of the planet, the session evoked powerful messages of reflection, leadership, collaboration and hope.

The leaders spoke broadly about the fresh challenges posed by the pandemic to the lives of people living in multidimensional poverty and the value and use of national Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs) as policy tools during the crisis. Here is a quick glance at some of the most powerful messages from the virtual event, organised on 24 September 2020 by the Governments of Chile and Pakistan, the UNDP, the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) and OPHI from the University of Oxford.

Sebastian Piñera, President of Chile:

In this era of the pandemic and global recession, the MPI is a fundamental tool to improve the efficacy and reach of policies for the poor and the middle class. Yes, it is a measure whose destination lies in shaping powerful, strategic and feasible ways to accompany those whose life projects have been overwhelmed, so they can strive forward again.

Imran Khan, Prime Minister of Pakistan:

(Poverty) is the most pervasive violation of human rights…The COVID virus does not discriminate, but it is the poor and the vulnerable who have suffered the most from it…Apart from the direct attack on poverty, we need to address its systemic causes at the national and international levels, the structures of finance, production and trade must be made fair and equitable.

Ashraf Ghani, President of Afghanistan:

The COVID-19 pandemic is a hyper event, an event so destructive; it marks a rupture…between the past and the future...It forced us to rethink how we lead…to listen better and to act quicker…Poverty is multidimensional…it certainly did not start with COVID…MPI's utility lies in both providing a solid basis for policy formation and monitoring of policy and implementation.

Carlos Alvarado Quesada, President of Costa Rica:

MPI is a change of paradigm, it's a change we see, which can tackle poverty...It is ethically relevant because we are addressing to those who need it the most… With MPI…you are not attacking only what income means in the life of the poor, you are going to the roots of the problem…that shift in paradigm changes not only the vision of how you see poverty, but how you address it.

KP Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal:

We have institutionalized our approach of looking at poverty through the prism of more than absolute income…Investing in people and preventing them from relapsing into poverty remains the key challenge…The COVID pandemic has severely impacted our effort to end absolute poverty and reducing all other forms of poverty as soon as possible…I firmly believe that with sincere national endeavour and larger global development cooperation and dedicated support measures, we can overcome this pandemic.

Sania Nishtar, Minister of Poverty Alleviation, Pakistan:

I genuinely believe COVID-19 has created an inflection point. Today we have the power to make decisions to reverse decades of neglect and sparse progress, and to provide social protection to the four billion people globally who lack it…And it is here that metrics like the MPI will help tremendously, in shaping public policy in the right direction.

Luis Felipe López-Calva, Assistant Administrator and Regional Director for Latin America and the Caribbean, UNDP:

The Multidimensional Poverty Index can be an important instrument to coordinate, target and design policy responses to the crisis…The COVID-19 crisis is fundamentally a systemic crisis that has stressed health, education, social protection, labour market, and fiscal systems simultaneously. It is thus a crisis of governance.

Cecilia Scharp, Assistant Director General, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA):

The pandemic was not part of the plan where the sustainable development goals were agreed. We were prepared for an uphill struggle, but the recent events have made the climb that much steeper and changed the settings in a fundamental way…But what has not changed is our firm commitment to eradicate poverty in all its forms everywhere.

Jackson Mthembu, Minister in the Presidency, South Africa:

… Fresh data on multidimensional poverty in South Africa… (will help) policy makers have a better understanding of the poverty situation, better planning, more accurate targeting and more useful for poverty reduction strategy development…Countries can share experiences and learn from one another… this is important and provide a basis for the use of empirical evidence in our daily efforts to address the poverty challenge.

Rebeca Grynspan, Secretary-General of SEGIB:

The MPI allows us to incorporate dimensions that are a priority, such as health, education – where we know that the inequality gaps are expanding. 32 million children have been excluded from the schooling system in Latin America and we expect school desertion rates to keep going up. If we do not deal with this with urgency, multidimensional poverty will go up greatly in the region in spite of the efforts that countries are making.

Rosemarie G. Edillon, Undersecretary, National Economic and Development Authority, Philippines:

The pandemic has demonstrated the need to include another dimension in the MPI which is resilience…What would be the relevant indicators of resilience? How do we incorporate this? ...Another important research would be to determine how COVID-19 has affected the MPI levels of families.

In no uncertain terms, world leaders touched upon some of the most important ideas framing multidimensional poverty against the backdrop of an unprecedented crisis. However, their statements highlighted how collective action, deliberation and a strategic adoption of multidimensional poverty indices at various levels holds the key to the future. As Sabina Alkire stated when wrapping up the session, the words, insights and steely courage of these top leaders represent an opportunity for us to turn a corner on poverty. ■

www.youtube.com/watch?v=QndK6Ln0bHU&t=6s&t=243s

Photo: www.flickr.com/photos/pixeldrip/51349208

Honduras uses a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for policy targeting

By Maya Evans and Mónica Pinilla-Roncancio

The Government of Honduras has launched a Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI) to provide electronic vouchers for food, medicines and biosafety equipment targeted to independent workers and self-employed persons hit hardest by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The MVI measures who is most vulnerable to the impacts of COVID-19 according to a number of overlapping variables, including the risk the virus poses to their health, and the financial consequences of pandemic measures adopted by the government on their households. It is one of the first tools of its kind in the world to identify individuals eligible for receiving support using a multidimensional approach.

Developed in Honduras, in partnership with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the MVI offers a new and technically robust methodology to increase transparency in social protection programming, providing a robust targeting method ensuring that the vouchers reach the people who need them most.

The MVI works by identifying the most vulnerable individuals in one of the following categories: self-employed, unemployed, employed without social security and employer without social security. Using the Alkire-Foster method, developed in Oxford, the MVI highlights individuals facing multiple vulnerabilities to COVID-19 across 15 indicators categorised under four dimensions. If an individual is vulnerable according to 35% or more of these indicators, they are considered eligible for the voucher.

The first dimension – belonging to a high-risk population – aims to capture households with the highest risk of getting infected by COVID-19. The second dimension – health, food security and household characteristics – aims to capture individuals who are living in precarious conditions or have faced food insecurity. The third dimension – economic resilience – aims to capture households' ability to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 by liquidating their assets or having access to financial services. Finally, the fourth dimension of employment aims to capture individual vulnerability to the financial shock, with indicators relating to the type of employment they have, the

sector they work in, and their access to social security. In most cases, the indicators relating to employment contributed the most to the MVI.

The structure of the measure is the product of multiple consultations with national institutions and international organisations. Nine different structures were analysed and their results compared, before the final structure of the measure was confirmed. The MVI is, therefore, robust to changes in the structure, weights, and vulnerability cut-offs.

The MVI is computed using data from the National Register of Participants (*Registro Único de Participantes*, RUP), which covers 1.5 million households, and represents 40% of the poorest population in Honduras. In addition, a bespoke online questionnaire was created for self-registration and additional registrations were made through a range of unions and different religious institutions and currently individuals can self-register using the web page designed for this purpose.

The first round of identified beneficiaries received the e-voucher in October. Over coming months, 260,000 people will receive a single electronic voucher redeemable in selected establishments around the country for food, medicines and biosafety equipment.

The President of Honduras, Juan-Orlando Hernández, said that the Single Voucher based on the MVI measure 'represents a milestone. It will bring much more social benefit and inclusion to the different population sectors. A rigorous work, with high standards of transparency, is being made throughout the process in collaboration with UNDP. This is the money of the Honduran people directed in favour of those most affected by the pandemic. It represents an opportunity for the Government to fulfill its promise of social justice'. ■

Dimensions and indicators of the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index (MVI)

Dimension	Indicator
High-risk population	60 years old or more people
	People with chronic diseases
	Unemployment because of health problems
Health, food, household and services	Access to food
	Access to water
	Access to sanitation
	Overcrowding
Economic resilience	Housing payments
	Goods and assets
	Financial services
	Comunication
Financial means and work security	Type of employment
	Permanent employment
	Sector
	Social security

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Which are the dimensions and indicators most commonly used to measure multidimensional poverty around the world?

Jakob Dirksen explains how governments are measuring the many dimensions of poverty in their countries*

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) call upon the global community to 'End poverty in all its forms and dimensions everywhere' (Goal 1) and specify the clear target to, 'By 2030, reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions' (Target 1.2). In line with – but even before the formulation of – the SDGs, a growing number of governments around the world have already started to use national Multidimensional Poverty Indices (national MPIs) to measure the overlapping deprivations people in their countries are affected by.

Poor people all over the world have referred to similar deprivations when describing the disadvantages they experience – but the different faces of poverty can also be more pronounced, or less frequently witnessed, from one society to another. For this reason, national MPIs consider key deprivations, measurement purposes, and definitions of poverty *specifically by country*, thus enabling more nuanced pictures of, and powerful tools for, the measurement, analysis, and alleviation of multidimensional poverty.

Each national MPI considers a unique set of indicators, grouped into the different dimensions of poverty that comprise the respective measure. What are the dimensions of poverty governments are using to measure multidimensional poverty – and which are the indicators most commonly used to capture overlapping deprivations around the world? The two tables in this article answer these questions, providing an overview of dimensions and indicators that have been used in some official national MPIs to date. Because dimensions are often similar but only partially overlapping, and because some indicators appear in different dimensions across countries, both tables also provide additional clusters and thematic groupings intended to facilitate at-a-glance overviews.

The following paragraphs summarise information on the most commonly used dimensions and indicators in some official national MPIs.

* This article updates Diego Zavaleta's *What are the dimensions and indicators most commonly used by countries in their national MPIs?* published in *Dimensions* 2, February 2017.

Dimensions

As Table 1 presents, there is clear consensus among all existing national MPIs and the global MPI on the importance of including the dimensions of **health**, **education**, and **living standards**. Indeed, there is no national MPI without dimensions that focus on these three areas, testifying to their importance in evaluations of the lives humans can lead, no matter where.

On top of these three core dimensions, most national MPIs consider at least one dimension related to **employment** & **social protection**, thus capturing important deprivations of (decent) work and public social safety nets. In addition, national MPIs have also considered dimensions such as **quality of the environment**, **livelihood shocks**, or **social cohesion**.

Indicators

Education

To capture educational deprivations, most national MPIs consider both **school attendance** and at least one indicator on **educational attainment** – for example the years of schooling completed by adult household members, or learning outcomes such as literacy. Other frequently used indicators include **school lag** and **early childcare**, an important indicator of cognitive development, which affects children all their lives.

Water & sanitation

All national MPIs include deprivation of an improved source of drinking water and all but three have included deprivation of access to improved sanitation. Since these are key features of adequate housing and basic public services, they are often included in dimensions related to living standards. But because they also offer valuable information about associated health risks, e.g. due to contaminated water or lack of adequate sanitation, in some countries these indicators have been included in health dimensions.

Health

In addition to water and sanitation, two of the most frequently used health indicators are **nutrition** & **food security.** Other common health indicators are **access to healthcare**, e.g. as distance to the next health facility; **health insurance**; and **child mortality**.

Housing, basic public services & infrastructure

Every national MPI considers at least one, and most commonly two or three indicators on **housing materials** – material of floor, material of roof, and material of (exterior) walls. Other housing and infrastructure related indicators that are frequently used include **electricity**; **overcrowding**; **cooking fuel**; **assets**; **land and/or livestock**; and, **garbage disposal**. Cooking fuel is also an important health-related indicator, since indoor use of coal, dung, or leaded fuels is associated with much of the global disease burden.

Employment & social protection

Most national MPIs consider at least one employment-related indicator, such as **unemployment**, **informal work** and/or otherwise precarious work, e.g. **inadequate pay** or **sub-employment** and/or **inadequate employment**. Many national MPIs also capture **child labour**. Together with work-related indicators, a number of national MPIs consider indicators related to social protection, such as **social transfers**, **pensions** or other forms of **social security**.

Environment & personal safety

Furthermore, several national MPIs include indicators on environmental conditions and, closely related thereto, personal safety – ranging from **exposure to hazards** and **proximity to polluted areas** through **physical safety** and **crime** in one's neighbourhood, to **personal security** from different forms of violence, or combinations thereof.

National MPIs – purposes and processes

When considering the dimensions and indicators that have been used in national MPIs, a few procedural and contextual aspects are worth bearing in mind. Perhaps most importantly, that a measure does not include a particular dimension or indicator does not necessarily suggest that it has been considered less important, let alone unimportant, for the measurement of multidimensional poverty per se.

> The structure of any national MPI will also depend on the concept of poverty against which it is being developed and on the process through which the measure is being designed.

In order to be informative and policy-salient, national MPIs have to prioritise and integrate the indicators that capture the most important joint deprivations people in that particular country are affected by. But the definitions of multidimensional poverty, and the choice of the most important indicators will also depend quite strongly indeed both on the *purpose* of a particular measure and on the process by which they are chosen.

Since the specific purposes of measurement differ from country to country, indicators will be more or less attractive for each of them. For example, if a national MPI is – beyond measuring multidimensional poverty – primarily intended to serve as a policy-prescriptive tool, it will prioritise and thus often limit the inclusion of indicators to those that are highly sensitive to policy-interventions.

Likewise, the absence of monetary indicators from most national MPIs should not suggest ignorance about the importance of sufficient purchasing power. But a core purpose of many national MPIs is to complement national monetary poverty measures (income, expenditure, consumption) – and this task can be made unnecessarily complicated by integrating monetary deprivation itself into a national MPI.

The structure of any national MPI will also depend on the concept of poverty against which it is being developed and on the process through which the measure is being designed. A participatory process seeking to legitimise a measure by involving various public stakeholders, representatives, and experts – including the 'voices of the poor' – may take a different form than a measure based on a national development plan or constitutionally enshrined guarantees.

Processes of developing a national MPI may thus start from unique conceptions of poverty that prescribe perhaps similar but nevertheless distinct sets of dimensions and indicators across countries. As the wording of SDG Target 1.2 suggests, multidimensional poverty measurements thus facilitate the agenda to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions, and according to national definitions.

And instead of including indicators focused exclusively on particular population subgroups – e.g. women or differently-abled people – national MPIs are commonly disaggregated and augmented to analyse MPI results by subgroups, thus making visible those who might be particularly disadvantaged within a subnational region or an entire country.

> The importance of new and better household survey data as well as innovative techniques of merging data from external sources – e.g. geospatial data on environmental conditions – cannot be overstressed in this context.

However, perhaps the most frequent reason for the non-inclusion of *prima facie* desirable dimensions and indicators is the lack of quality data. A measure may only be as good as its weakest indicator. Thus, it is often advisable to focus on those quality indicators that are currently available, with the prospect of updating a national MPI later on, when new and better data become available. That dimensions and indicators related to the natural environment, social exclu-

sion, or participation, for example, do not frequently feature in national MPIs is not necessarily a sign of their subordinate importance. It also has to do with the difficulty of finding quality indicators that would justify their inclusion both from a technical and normative standpoint.

National MPIs usually require all their indicators to be available from the same source, i.e. a single household survey. To a large extent, it was the increasing quality, availability and frequency of household surveys that made possible multidimensional poverty measurement in the first place.

Nevertheless, the importance of new and better household survey data as well as innovative techniques of merging data from external sources – e.g. geospatial data on environmental conditions – cannot be overstressed in this context.

National MPIs indicators cloud

Photo: unsplash.com/photos/wtk4VH8EU20

Table 1. Most used dimensions in some official national MPIs

Dimension	Global MPI	National Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs)																											
		Afghanistan	Angola	Armenia	Bhutan	Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica	Dominican Republic	Ecuador	El Salvador	Ghana	Guatemala	Honduras	Malaysia	Maldives	Mexico	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Pakistan	Palestine	Panama	Philippines	Rwanda	Seychelles	Sierra Leone	South Africa	Viet Nam
EDUCATION																													
Education	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Education & Information																●													
Education & Early Child Care																													
HEALTH																													
Health	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			●	●	●	●
Health & Nutrition																								●					
Health, Water & Food										●																			
Health, Food & Nutrition Security													●																
Health, Basic Services & Food Security											●																		
LIVING STANDARDS																													
Basic (Public) Services													●												●				
Living Standards	●	●	●		●							●			●	●			●	●	●					●	●	●	●
Housing											●		●	●															
Housing & Surroundings				●		●	●	●	●	●								●				●			●		●		●
Assets/Durable Goods																		●				●							
Energy																											●		
Housing, Living Standards & Basic Services																	●					●	●	●					
CHILD & YOUTH CONDITIONS																													
Child & Youth Conditions							●																						
ENVIRONMENT																													
Quality of the Environment											●												●						
SHOCKS & BASIC NEEDS																													
Basic Needs				●																									
Income															●		●					●							
Shocks		●																											
EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL PROTECTION																													
Social Services & Economic Activity																									●				
Employment		●	●				●	●					●	●						●		●	●	●		●		●	
Livelihood & Work									●																				
Social Protection								●																					
Employment & Social Protection/Security				●		●				●	●						●												
SOCIAL COHESION, PARTICIPATION & DIGITAL DIVIDE																													
Networks & Social Cohesion						●																							
Digital Divide & Social Cohesion									●																				
Access to Information																													●
BASIC FREEDOMS																													
Personal Freedoms																						●							

*Dimensional specifications frequently overlap. Rather than collapsing the congruent, this overview tries to preserve the genuine nuances that exist in nevertheless similar dimensional specifications. The commonalities shared by dimensions that have been used in National MPIs are instead emphasised through their groupings into dimensional clusters.

Table 2a. Most used indicators in some official national MPIs (Afghanistan - Maldives)

				National Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs)														
Indicator Cluster	Indicators	SDG Targets & Indicators*	Global MPI	Afghanistan	Angola	Armenia	Bhutan	Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica	Dominican Republic	Ecuador	El Salvador	Ghana	Guatemala	Honduras	Malaysia	Maldives
EDUCATION																		
Educational Attainment	School Attendance	4.1.1/4.5.1	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
	Years of Schooling/School Attainment	4.1.1/4.5.1	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●
	Educational Quality/Literacy/Human Capital Formation	4.c/4.6				●			●	●						●		
	School Lag	4.1.1/4.5.1						●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●			
Access to Education	Proximity to Education Services	4				●												
	Affordability of Education	4										●						
Early Childhood Care & Services	Early Childhood Care and/or Services	4.2.1/4.2.2/4.5.1							●	●	●		●		●			
HEALTH																		
Nutrition, Food Security & Anthropometrics	Nutrition	2.1.1/2.2.1	○		●			●						●				●
	Food Security	2.1.2		●		●	●				●		●					
Health Outcomes	Child Mortality	3.2.1/3.2.2	○		●		●				●							
	Assisted Delivery	3.8.1/3.1.2		●	■													
	Ante-Natal Care	3.8.1																
	Ill Health					●												
	Immunisation	3.b.1																
	Satisfaction with Health Services	3.8				●												
	Substance Abuse	3.5																
Access to Healthcare	Health Insurance	3.8.1						●	●	●	●			●				
	Access to Health Services	3.8.1				●		■	●		●		●				●	●
	Affordability of Health Services	3.8				●												
	Disability																	
LIVING STANDARDS																		
Basic Services	Quality of Public Services	11.7/16.6				●												
	Garbage Disposal	11.6				●				●		●			●		●	
	Electricity	7.1.1/1.4.1	○	●	●		●				●			●	●	●		
	Water	6.1.1/1.4.1	○	●	●	●	●	■	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Sanitation	6.2/1.4.1	○	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Cooking, Lighting & Heating Fuel	7.1.2	○	●	●		●				●			●	●	●		
	Ventilation	7.1.2																
Housing	Adequate Heating	7.1				●												
	Housing Materials (Floors, Walls, Roofs)	11.1.1	○	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
	Overcrowding	11.1.1				●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	House Ownership/Safety of Tenure	1.4.2/11.1.1											●					
	Satisfaction with Housing					●												
Mobility & Inclusion	Access to Transportation/Roads	11.2.1/9.1				●	●										●	
	Access to Market																	
	Travel Restrictions or Barriers	11.2.1																

Table 2b. Most used indicators in some official national MPIs (Afghanistan - Maldives)

Indicator Cluster	Indicators	SDG Targets & Indicators*	Global MPI	National Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs)														
				Afghanistan	Angola	Armenia	Bhutan	Chile	Colombia	Costa Rica	Dominican Republic	Ecuador	El Salvador	Ghana	Guatemala	Honduras	Malaysia	Maldives
EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL PROTECTION																		
Employment, Decent Work & Exploitation	Sub-Employment and/or Inadequate Employment	8.3								●			●			●		
	Informal Work	8.3/8.8 (8.3.1)				●			●	●	●				●			
	Minimum Wage/Adequate Pay	8.3/8.5/8.8								●								
	(Un-)Employment	8.5.2		●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●					
	Underemployment	8.5		●		●												
	Child Labour	8.7.1			●				●		●	●	●		●	●		
	Youth Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET)	8.6.1/4.3.1/4.5		●	●													
Social Security	Social Security	1.3.1/8.8 (8.5)						●					●			●		
	Pensions	1.3.1						●		●		●						
	Disability & No Social Transfers	1.3.1								●								
	Birth Registration	16.9.1			●						●							
Dependency	(Intrahousehold) Dependency			●	●													
	Aid/Remittance dependence	17.3.2				●												
ENVIRONMENT & SAFETY																		
Personal Safety	Physical Safety & Crime	16.1						●			●		●					
	Security	11.1		●									●					
Environment	Access to Public / Leisure Spaces	11.7											●					
	Exposure to Environmental Hazards	11.5.1/13.1.1/1.5									●		●					
	Proximity to Polluted Areas							●			●							
SOCIAL EQUALITY & PARTICIPATION																		
Women's Empowerment	Early Pregnancy or Marriage/Female Genital Mutilation	5.3.1 / 5.3.2																
	Birth Control	3.7.1																
	Women's Financial and Economic powerment																	
Discrimination	Discrimination/Equal Treatment	10.3/16.b.1						●			●							
Connectedness & Participation	Social Networks/Participation							●										
	Access to and/or use of Internet/Telecommunication Services	17.8.1/9.c								●	●							●
	Decision-Making (Direct Participation)										●							
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS & FINANCIAL INCLUSION																		
Assets, Land & Livestock	Asset Ownership	1.4.2	●	●	●		●							●		●	●	
	Land and Livestock	1.4.2					●											
	Subsistence Farming	2.3																
Shocks	Production/Water/Crop/Livestock/Grazeland Shock	1.5		●														
	Income/Price Shock			●														
Financial Security & Inclusion	Income	1.2.1/10.1.1/10.2.1				●						●					●	
	Bank Account	8.10.2																

■ Indicate sub-indicators combined into an overall indicator in that particular national MPI. Since it was logistially impossible to differentiate indicators and sub-indicators for all national MPIs in this way, some sub-indicators are listed as separate indicators for some countries.
*If SDG Targets, rather than Indicators are cited, national MPI Indicators, do not specifically – or partially – match one of the 231 SDG Indicators, but do match one of the 169 SDG Targets.

The tables show the results from 28 countries, illustrating the composition of national MPIs by dimension and indicator. Links to further information on each national MPI, including reports with results and disaggregated details, can be found on each MPPN website country's page. Results from additional MPIs are reported in the global SDG database against SDG Indicator 1.2.2. At present, the global SDG database does not provide information on the structure of national multidimensional poverty measures.

Table 3a. Most used indicators in some official national MPIs (Mexico - Viet Nam)

Indicator Cluster	Indicators	SDG Targets & Indicators*	Global MPI	National Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs)												
				Mexico	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Pakistan	Palestine	Panama	Philippines	Rwanda	Seychelles	Sierra Leone	South Africa	Viet Nam
EDUCATION																
Educational Attainment	School Attendance	4.1.1/4.5.1	●	■	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	
	Years of Schooling/School Attainment	4.1.1/4.5.1	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Educational Quality/Literacy/Human Capital Formation	4.c/4.6						●								
	School Lag	4.1.1/4.5.1							●	●						
Access to Education	Proximity to Education Services	4			●											
	Affordability of Education	4														
Early Childhood Care & Services	Early Childhood Care and/or Services	4.2.1/4.2.2/4.5.1														
HEALTH																
Nutrition, Food Security & Anthropometrics	Nutrition	2.1.1/2.2.1	●		●	●	●				●		●	●		●
	Food Security	2.1.2		●							●					
Health Outcomes	Child Mortality	3.2.1/3.2.2	●			●	●							●	●	●
	Assisted Delivery	3.8.1/3.1.2						●								
	Ante-Natal Care	3.8.1						●								
	Ill Health								●							
	Immunisation	3.b.1						●						●		
	Satisfaction with Health Services	3.8														
	Substance Abuse	3.5											●			
Access to Healthcare	Health Insurance	3.8.1							●		●	●				
	Access to Health Services	3.8.1		●	●			●	●	●		●				
	Affordability of Health Services	3.8														
	Disability								●							
LIVING STANDARDS																
Basic Services	Quality of Public Services	11.7/16.6														
	Garbage Disposal	11.6								●		●				
	Electricity	7.1.1/1.4.1	●	■	●	●	●	●	■	●	●	●	●	●		
	Water	6.1.1/1.4.1	●		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Sanitation	6.2/1.4.1	●		●	●	●	●			●	●		●	●	●
	Cooking, Lighting & Heating Fuel	7.1.2	●			●	●	●	■			●		●	●	
	Ventilation	7.1.2														
Housing	Adequate Heating	7.1														
	Housing Materials (Floors, Walls, Roofs)	11.1.1	●	■	●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●	●	●
	Overcrowding	11.1.1			●			●	●	●		●	●	●		●
	House Ownership/Safety of Tenure	1.4.2/11.1.1									●					
	Satisfaction with Housing															
Mobility & Inclusion	Access to Transportation/Roads	11.2.1/9.1			●											
	Access to Market				●											
	Travel Restrictions or Barriers	11.2.1							●							

Table 3b. Most used indicators in some official national MPIs (Mexico - Viet Nam)

Indicator Cluster	Indicators	SDG Targets & Indicators*	Global MPI	National Multidimensional Poverty Indices (MPIs)												
				Mexico	Mozambique	Nepal	Nigeria	Pakistan	Palestine	Panama	Philippines	Rwanda	Seychelles	Sierra Leone	South Africa	Viet Nam
EMPLOYMENT & SOCIAL PROTECTION																
Employment, Decent Work & Exploitation	Sub-Employment and/or Inadequate Employment	8.3								■						
	Informal Work	8.3/8.8 (8.3.1)						●					●			
	Minimum Wage/Adequate Pay	8.3/8.5/8.8							●	●						
	(Un-)Employment	8.5.2					●	●	●	●			●		●	
	Underemployment	8.5							●		●					
	Child Labour	8.7.1									●					
	Youth Not in Education, Employment, or Training (NEET)	8.6.1/4.3.1/4.5							●				●			
Social Security	Social Security	1.3.1/8.8 (8.5)		●					●							
	Pensions	1.3.1														
	Disability & No Social Transfers	1.3.1														
	Birth Registration	16.9.1														
Dependency	(Intrahousehold) Dependency															
	Aid/Remittance dependence	17.3.2														
ENVIRONMENT & SAFETY																
Personal Safety	Physical Safety & Crime	16.1							●				●			
	Security	11.1			●				●							
Environment	Access to Public/Leisure Spaces	11.7														
	Exposure to Environmental Hazards	11.5.1/13.1.1/1.5								●						
	Proximity to Polluted Areas															
SOCIAL EQUALITY & PARTICIPATION																
Women's Empowerment	Early Pregnancy or Marriage/Female Genital Mutilation	5.3.1/5.3.2											●			
	Birth Control	3.7.1								●						
	Women's Financial and Economic powerment								●							
Discrimination	Discrimination/Equal Treatment	10.3/16.b.1														
Connectedness & Participation	Social Networks/Participation															
	Access to and/or use of Internet/Telecommunication Services	17.8.1/9.c								●				●		●
	Decision-Making (Direct Participation)															
SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS & FINANCIAL INCLUSION																
Assets, Land & Livestock	Asset Ownership	1.4.2	●		●	●	●	●	■		●	●		●	●	●
	Land and Livestock	1.4.2						●		●						
	Subsistence Farming	2.3										●				
Shocks	Production/Water/Crop/Livestock/Grazeland Shock	1.5														
	Income/Price Shock															
Financial Security & Inclusion	Income	1.2.1/10.1.1/10.2.1		●					●							
	Bank Account	8.10.2										●		●		

■ Indicate sub-indicators combined into an overall indicator in that particular national MPI. Since it was logistially impossible to differentiate indicators and sub-indicators for all national MPIs in this way, some sub-indicators are listed as separate indicators for some countries.
*If SDG Targets, rather than Indicators are cited, national MPI Indicators, do not specifically – or partially – match one of the 231 SDG Indicators, but do match one of the 169 SDG Targets.

The tables show the results from 28 countries, illustrating the composition of national MPIs by dimension and indicator. Links to further information on each national MPI, including reports with results and disaggregated details, can be found on each MPPN website country's page. Results from additional MPIs are reported in the global SDG database against SDG Indicator 1.2.2. At present, the global SDG database does not provide information on the structure of national multidimensional poverty measures.

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Should disability be included in a multidimensional poverty measure?

The answer is no. In this article, Mónica Pinilla-Roncancio explains why.

Disability is a complex concept, which is usually misunderstood. In fact, different models to define disability exist, and in the last few decades the concept has evolved from understanding disability as a medical or individual perspective to a human rights one, where disability is the result of the interaction between a health condition and different social and attitudinal barriers.

In the last few decades, the recognition of people with disabilities as a vulnerable group that needs to be included in development strategies has increased. The Sustainable Development Goals for the first time explicitly mentioned people with disabilities as a vulnerable population and made a call for Member States to disaggregate data by disability status. Disability was explicitly mentioned in several of the 17 goals.

> It is important to disaggregate multidimensional measures by disability status and to identify which are the most important deprivations this group faces.

However, although people with disabilities constitute one of the most vulnerable populations in the world, and their individual characteristics are associated with poverty (e.g. low levels of education, low access to healthcare services, low rates of labour force participation, etc.), disability should not be understood as a cause or a consequence of poverty. Indeed, from a capability approach perspective, disability is the lack of practical opportunities available to a person with health limitations. In this context, people living with functional limitations become disabled only as a consequence of the lack of access to basic opportunities, which is the consequence of discrimination and social exclusion based on their health condition.

Measuring multidimensional poverty

In the process of designing a multidimensional poverty measure the selection of indicators is critical and one important and difficult stage. This stage identifies a list of aspects that define poverty and, in some cases, indicators are confused with aspects or characteristics usually related to poverty.

Health indicators are usually limited and, depending on the survey, these indicators can be restricted to a few questions, in most cases related to children's health. There is not a clear definition of which indicators are associated with poor health for adults and how existent indicators can be included in a multidimensional poverty index. In this context, when questions related to health limitations or difficulties are included in the

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survey, having disability as an indicator is considered an option. However, are indicators related to health difficulties good indicators to include in a multidimensional poverty measure? And the answer is no.

There are several reasons why it is not a good indicator. First, people living with a disability face a higher risk of living in poverty, not because of their health conditions, but because of social and attitudinal barriers to participating equally in a society. Second, although the levels of poverty of this group are higher, this does not mean disability should be negatively associated with poverty. In fact, the social movement on disability has worked to reduce the negative stereotype associated with disability and to increase awareness that disability is a situation that we all can face over the course of our lives and so society should be inclusive to people with different capabilities. Third, to increase the recognition of disability and the visibility of this group in the public agenda, it is important to disaggregate multidimensional measures by disability status and to identify which are the most important deprivations this group faces. In this context, policy makers will have the information needed to define policies to reduce poverty and deprivation and to improve the lives of people with disabilities who are living in poverty or face different deprivations.

In addition to the normative reasons why disability should not be included as an indicator of multidimensional poverty, there are technical reasons to consider. For example, when thinking about the characteristics of disability as an indicator, it is important to recognise that disability behaves as a stock indicator. When changes in multidimensional poverty over time are analysed, and disability has been included as an indicator, it is expected that no changes will be observed in this indicator as a result of public policy. In fact, it is expected that the prevalence of disability will increase over time, given increasing life expectancies and the increasing prevalence of chronic diseases. Therefore, this will be an indicator that cannot be affected by policies, which will increase for demographic reasons and that, even though it can be associated with 'poor health', this indicator does not reflect a health deprivation.

> People living with a disability face a higher risk of living in poverty, not because of their health conditions, but because of social and attitudinal barriers to participating equally in a society.

In conclusion, people with disabilities are a vulnerable group, who should be at the centre of the policy agenda. In this context, disability should not be an indicator of multidimensional poverty, instead, multidimensional poverty indices should be disaggregated by disability status, and attention should focus on the levels of poverty and deprivation of people with disabilities and their families in a society. ■

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Incorporating gender into the Business Multidimensional Poverty Index: The Wise Responder initiative

By Ana Vaz and John Hammock

SOPHIA Oxford has developed a technological tool for businesses to collect and analyse data on the deprivations faced by employees and their families. This tool allows a company to conduct an online census of its employees, and analyse the data collected. The tool implements the Wise Responder questionnaire, which collects information on all deprivation indicators included in the national measure of multidimensional poverty, on income, on debt and a few additional questions to assess the effect of the COVID-19 crisis on the household. The Wise Responder questionnaire also includes questions aimed at capturing gender gaps.

Once the data is collected, the tool provides businesses with standard diagnostic reports. The reporting of the Wise Responder census results also includes a dashboard focused specifically on gender gaps. By taking into account gender inequalities, the tools of the business MPI (bMPI) better track barriers that are related to gender and support businesses in implementing more inclusive action plans to reduce poverty.[1]

A workshop in Guatemala in February of this year helped shape our thinking about which additional questions to include in our questionnaire in order to capture gender issues relevant in Guatemala.[2] Following that workshop, we added a few questions to capture gender differences in the use of technology, home ownership, hours of work, and the use of credit.

The digital gap is very important because, if not addressed, it will most likely lead to a gap in employability in the near future. For that reason, the questionnaire includes questions about the frequency and type of use of the internet (e.g. communication by email, posting on social media, attending school, shopping, banking operations), as well as questions about computer skills (e.g. ability to use a word processor like Word, ability to use a spreadsheet, and the ability to download and install software programmes).[3]

In terms of home ownership, in the cases where the house is owned by the household, we ask the employee to identify the owner or owners of the household. This way we will be able to identify not only the potential gender gap in home ownership, but also assess the specific position of the employee (e.g. home owner vs. child of home owner).

Regarding hours of work, the questionnaire asks employees how many hours they spend on average working on paid work and doing domestic chores per week. Although we understand such data will have some degree of measurement error, we hope it will provide some insight into the overall work burden of

[1] The effort to incorporate a gender focus into the bMPI methodology was funded by the International Development Research Center. As part of Canada's foreign affairs and development efforts, IDRC invests in knowledge, innovation, and solutions to improve the lives of people in the developing world.

[2] The workshop was co-hosted with UNDP, a long-term OPHI partner. Participants ranged from Guatemalan academics and NGO leaders to consultants and international donors.

[3] In the questionnaire, which is already being implemented in Guatemala, we measured the digital gap by comparing the percentage of women and men who used a mobile phone, a computer and accessed the internet during the two weeks preceding the census.

men and women employees. In addition, it might also be useful to design interventions taking into account the general time commitments of employees.

In order to try to shed some light on the hypothesis that men and women use credit for different purposes, we added a question about the purpose of each loan and credit. However, we believe that this data will have to be interpreted very carefully for many reasons, as, for instance, individual loans might actually result from joint decisions.

SOPHIA Oxford's technological platform will include a gender dashboard aimed at raising awareness among company managers about gender gaps. This dashboard will have three sections, one focused on the company's employees, one focused on the adults covered by the survey (employees and their household members who are 18 or older), and a final section focused on children. As we rely on the employee as the source of information on the situation of all household members, the information regarding other household members will have to be interpreted carefully.

The dashboard section on the employees will compare, among other things:

- the average tenure of men and women in the company;
- the distribution of men and women across the company's departments;
- the average years of schooling of men and women, by age and by ethnicity;
- the salary per hour of men and women, by years of schooling and ethnicity;
- the average hours spent on paid work and domestic chores by men and women;
- the average debt income ratio of men and women;
- the percentage of men and women who live in an owned house; and,
- the percentage of employees who live in a house at least jointly owned by a woman.

The section focused on the adult population covered by the survey will compare, among other things:

- the percentage of men and women using a mobile phone, a computer and internet, by ethnicity;
- the percentage of men and women employed, unemployed and out of the labour force;
- the percentage of men and women employed who work in the informal sector;
- the unemployment rate among men and women by years of schooling and ethnicity;
- the reasons why men and women are out of the labour force; and,
- the number of men and women who lost their job and whose income fell due to the COVID-19 crisis.

The section focused on children will compare, for example, girls and boys' school attendance, child work and use of technology.

The SOPHIA platform will generate these reports automatically for each company.

SOPHIA Oxford has now expanded to Guatemala and Central America. It partnered with OPHI in the publication of a Latin American Briefing paper on the global MPI and COVID, with the support of IDRC. IDRC also supported the process of expansion to Chile and Colombia, which will be operational in early 2021. In each of these projects, gender will be of particular interest. By incorporating local, national academics and researchers in the process, we help to foment ongoing local capacity and innovative research.

For further information, go to sophiaoxford.org.

Photo: unsplash.com/photos/aodAT7xySVE

Land use intensification and multidimensional destitution

Harriet Elizabeth Smith and Frank Vollmer's research on Mozambique shows how to reach the 'poorest of the poor'.

What is the relationship between land use and the alleviation of multidimensional destitution in Mozambique? What lessons can be drawn for a broader context, beyond that of Mozambique, of regional trends towards land scarcity in Sub-Saharan Africa and beyond? What do these relationships mean for policy makers?*

Development economists emphasise the value of access to productive assets, such as land and forest resources, through which people can create routes out of poverty. When households have access to such resources, land use intensification (LUI) – enhancing the productivity, or profitability of a given area of land – has the potential to improve rural livelihoods.

Land use is set to intensify in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) alongside increasing rural population pressures and competition from national and global investors; much of the remaining available land is concentrated within a few countries. It is widely held that reducing poverty in SSA will rely largely on stimulating agricultural growth; cropland expansion is expected to be necessary for smallholder-led development across the region. Simultaneously, biomass energy (particularly of charcoal and firewood) is the most important fuel source for SSA and it plays a critical role in economic growth across the region.

But what are the environmental and social trade-offs of LUI? Many rural households are inextricably dependant on woodland and forest-derived ecosystem services, such as productive soils, food and timber. The conversion of land for agriculture is the leading cause of deforestation in SSA. In parallel, biomass energy is a major contributor to forest and woodland degradation. Whilst improvements in rural livelihoods are often an implicit assumption with LUI, and despite some evidence for beneficial wellbeing outcomes, there are concerns that associated negative environmental impacts may undermine rural livelihoods.

Many rural areas in SSA have high levels of multidimensional poverty, as identified in the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) for 2018 and 2019. Understanding how human wellbeing changes with LUI is therefore key in the pursuit of global development, especially as ecosystem services underpin many of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Furthermore, with the imperative of the SDGs to 'leave no one behind' and to end poverty in all its forms and dimensions, a disaggregated analysis of LUI and multidimensional poverty is critical to identify the most vulnerable and destitute groups, to recognise how they use, access and depend upon resources.

* This is a short version of the paper published in Global Environmental Change.

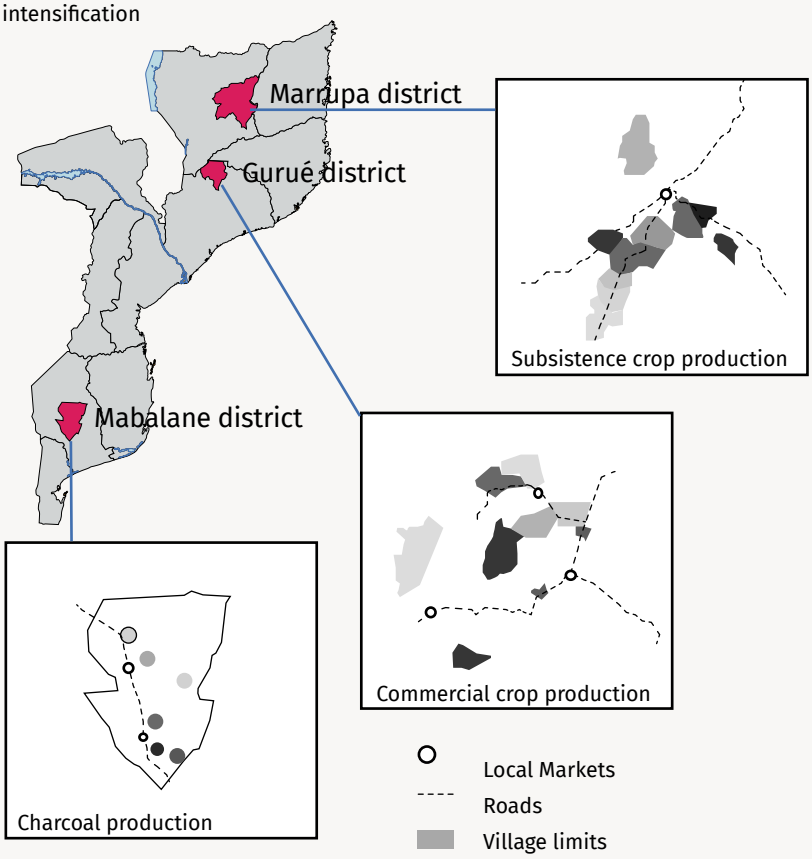
Mozambique: A good case selection

Mozambique retains surplus land available for intensification. This provided a novel opportunity to examine how the wellbeing of the poorest of the poor, the 'destitute', changed with intensification of three prevalent LUI pathways occurring in SSA, under conditions of relative land abundance:

- charcoal production,
- transitions from smallholder subsistence to commercial crop production,
- smallholder subsistence expansion.

Between 2014 and 2015, quantitative and qualitative social and geospatial data were collected from 27 villages: seven in Mabalane, and ten each in Gurué and Marrupa Districts (Fig. 1).

Fig. 1. Village locations in each case study site and spatial patterns of land use intensification



Note: Darker shades of grey indicate villages with higher levels of land use intensification, lighter shades of grey indicate villages with lower levels of land use intensification.

Source: Impacts of land use intensification on human wellbeing: Evidence from rural Mozambique.

Tracing land use intensification (LUI)

The impacts of LUI on rural livelihoods and multidimensional poverty are not well understood. Research tends to focus on environmental impacts of agricultural intensification and expansion. The few existing examinations of livelihood impacts mostly assess the extent of a particular land cover (e.g. swidden agriculture), or of unidimensional intensification indicators such as agricultural yields or fertiliser application rates.

Yet, LUI is a complex process that integrates multiple dimensions embedded within complex socio-ecological systems. Furthermore, land use impacts have scarcely been traced through to livelihood and wellbeing outcomes, or to an examination of the net multidimensional and social-ecological outcomes.

To fill this research gap, we applied two distinct and multidimensional measures. First, an integrative LUI conceptual framework was adopted, where LUI is a combined process of inputs to a production system (e.g. of land, labour or technology), outputs from the production system (e.g. products and services) and modifications to system properties and functions (e.g. to soil quality, biodiversity and carbon stocks and flows).

Secondly, multidimensional destitution needed to be measured, and the destitute (the poorest of the poor) identified.

> Reaching the poorest of the poor thus requires economic benefits to be retained locally and productive investment opportunities to be made available.

Who are the 'destitute'?

The destitute are the poorest of the poor; a subset of the multidimensional poor so deprived that they fall below the most extreme deprivation cut-offs. For example, not owning any assets characterises a household in destitution, whereas owning one small item such as radio constitutes a household as deprived in assets. This technique to identify the poorest of the poor is called the depth approach. In Mozambique, given the high severity of multidimensional poverty in Gaza, Zambézia and Niassa provinces, the focus on destitution was chosen for these three study districts.

The indicators and dimensions (see Table 1) were selected by triangulating participatory wealth rankings results, focus group discussions and a structured secondary literature review (for the full methodology of the identification process see here). The index is comprised of 15 indicators, grouped across three dimensions. A household is classified as multidimensionally destitute if they are considered destitute in at least four indicators, across at least two dimensions.

Table 1: Multidimensional wellbeing components and destitution cut-offs in Mozambique.

Dimension	Wellbeing indicator	A household is considered destitute if ...
Human capital	Water source	All household members do not have year-round access to improved water sources, in accordance with SDG guidelines
	Distance to water source	The time to collect water exceeds a 60-minute round trip
	Sanitation	All household members do not have access to a lavatory (e.g. defecate outside)
	Infant mortality	A child under five has died within the household
	Medical diagnosis	No diagnosis (traditional or modern) was acquired for household members
	Medical treatment	No treatment (traditional or modern) was received for household members
	Medical affordability	No household member can afford treatment, or at least one affords treatment but with a lot of difficulty
	Child education	No school-aged child has received compulsory education
	Household education	No household member has achieved post-compulsory education
Social capital	Access to services	No household member received farmer services, credit or advice
	Food security	Any household member has experienced food insecurity
Economic capital	Housing material: roof	The roof is built using unimproved materials (e.g. grass roof)
	Housing material: wall	The walls are built using unimproved materials (e.g. no bricks used)
	Housing material: floor	The floor is made from unimproved materials (e.g. bare floor)
	Asset ownership	No household member owns any asset (e.g. mobile phone)

Destitution headcounts reduce under favourable circumstances

We analysed how LUI had differential impacts on livelihoods, multidimensional wellbeing and destitution, and showed that market access had a role to play. Results found increases in multidimensional wellbeing with expansion of commercial and subsistence agriculture. However, reductions in the percentage of people considered destitute were only observed with transition and expansion of commercial crop production into forested land (in Gurué District, see Fig. 2).

> The empirical evidence supports claims that access to sustainable and inclusive markets is essential for pro-poor growth strategies.

In this case, people had higher market access through better-developed market infrastructure and low-cost barriers (e.g. nearby markets and internal market access within villages). Results from this site also showed reductions in the proportion of households considered destitute in the following five indicators: household education, child education, roof material, water source and access to farming services.

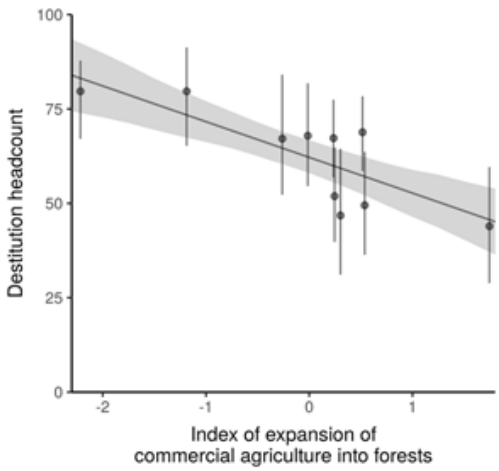


Fig. 2. Trends, with increasing intensity of expanding commercial smallholder crop production in Gurué District in the proportion of villages that are destitute.
Source: Impacts of land use intensification on human wellbeing: Evidence from rural Mozambique.

Photo: www.flickr.com/photos/ifrc/28923469683

In contrast, destitution did not change in sites with lower market access, neither with the intensification of charcoal production (in Mabalane), nor with the expansion of subsistence cultivation (in Marrupa). This suggests that under these circumstances, benefits from LUI struggled to reach the poorest of the poor.

The empirical evidence supports claims that access to sustainable and inclusive markets is essential for pro-poor growth strategies. Charcoal markets in Mozambique and across SSA are ill-defined, poorly supported and rarely functioning. Without a functioning market for charcoal, resources are harvested unsustainably, resource degradation ensues and rural production markets shift to increasing distances from urban demand centres leaving a trail of forest degradation in their wake.

In contrast, commercial agricultural markets across SSA are better supported, as their development is considered critical for economic growth across the region. Unlike commercial agriculture however, by definition, subsistence agricultural production has limited market dependence, as per-capita production (and consumption) remains constant, irrespective of functioning markets.

Reaching the poorest of the poor thus requires economic benefits to be retained locally and productive investment opportunities to be made available. Sustainable and inclusive markets are therefore essential developments alongside LUI to improve wellbeing, particularly for the poorest households, to ensure that no one is left behind. ■

COVID-19 impact on multidimensional poverty in Dominican Republic

The government of the Dominican Republic released a document analysing the possible effects associated with the COVID-19 pandemic on multidimensional poverty.

Six possible scenarios were defined: 1) access to health services in the event of illness, 2) health insurance, 3) access to food, 4) school attendance or dropout, 5) family support and 6) informality. For each scenario, the analysis considers three possible magnitudes of the effect: mild (25%), moderate (50%) and severe (75%).

In all scenarios and magnitudes, an increase in the incidence of multidimensional poverty is observed, as in the MPI-DR, and the estimated effect is statistically significant.

The three largest effects on multidimensional poverty are related to the increase in deprivation of access to medical services due to illness, followed by family support and school attendance. ■

Simulation on health dimension

Indicator: Access to health services			
Simulated magnitude	Expected value of the impact	Confidence interval	
% deprived people			
Base line	7.8	6.5	9.2
25	28.0	26.8	29.2
50	43.9	42.6	45.3
75	56.0	55.2	56.9
Incidence (H)			
Base line	18.5	16.2	20.7
25	21.5	21.1	21.9
50	23.8	23.3	24.2
75	25.5	25.1	25.8
Intensity (A)			
Base line	39.4	38.5	40.2
25	39.6	39.4	39.7
50	39.7	39.5	39.8
75	39.7	39.6	39.8
MPI-DR			
Base line	0.073	0.063	0.082
25	0.085	0.084	0.087
50	0.094	0.093	0.096
75	0.101	0.100	0.102

Source: COVID-19 y la Pobreza Multidimensional en República Dominicana. Simulación del Efecto de la Pandemia en la Pobreza Multidimensional en República Dominicana.

Photo: www.flickr.com/photos/figure8designs/6562459055

MPPN High-Level Side Event during the United Nations General Assembly 2020

On September 24th, OPHI and the MPPN held an online Side Event at the 75th UN General Assembly yesterday for 21 world leaders and policy makers to discuss how to reduce poverty in the context of the COVID-19 crisis. The discussion entitled 'Poverty at a Crossroad: Using Leadership and the Multidimensional Poverty Index to Build Back Better' created a space to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on poverty around the world, and to share experiences of using multidimensional poverty indices (MPIs) to illuminate the way through the current crisis.
More info: mppn.org/mppn-unga2020

New Angola MPI

54% of Angolans live in multidimensional poverty and experience multiple deprivations, according to the new Angola Multidimensional Poverty Index (A-MPI) launched by the National Institute of Statistics (INE), in collaboration with the UNDP and OPHI.
More info: mppn.org/multidimensional-poverty-angola

New MPPN Participants: Argentina and India are new members of the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network.

Business MPI in Costa Rica

Last 30 October, Horizonte Positivo (H+), a non-profit association of the private sector in Costa Rica, celebrated the third anniversary of the Business Multidimensional Poverty Index (bMPI). This association implemented the bMPI for the first time worldwide in two companies in the Costa Rica in 2017. This year, H+ recognized the pioneering work of 8 companies which have implemented the bMPI and have made significant changes in the well-being of their collaborators. The recognized companies will be highlighted in the next edition of *Dimensions*.

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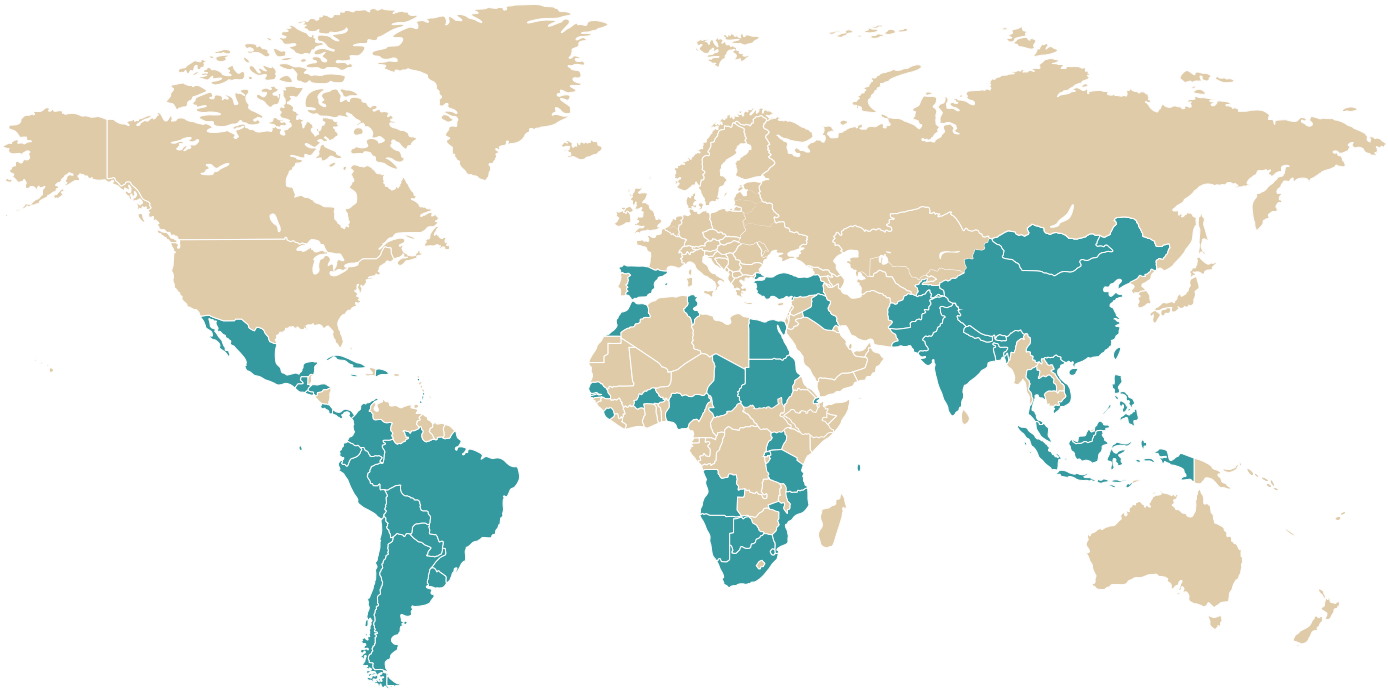
MPPN

The Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) is a South-South initiative that supports policymakers in developing multidimensional poverty measures.

It promotes the use of such measures for more effective poverty eradication efforts at the global, national, and local levels.



Participants in the network are Ministers and senior officials from:

- Afghanistan
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- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Bangladesh
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Botswana
- Brazil
- Burkina Faso
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Colombia
- Costa Rica
- Cuba
- Djibouti
- Dominican Republic
- Ecuador
- Egypt
- El Salvador
- eSwatini
- Gambia
- Grenada
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Indonesia
- India
- Iraq
- Jamaica
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mexico
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Namibia
- Nepal
- Nigeria
- Pakistan
- Panama
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Rwanda
- Saint Lucia
- Saint Vincent and the Grenadines
- Senegal
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- South Africa
- Spain
- Sudan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Uganda
- Uruguay
- Viet Nam

www.mppn.org

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