Concept Note

High Level Side Event during the United Nations General Assembly

POVERTY AT A CROSSROAD: USING LEADERSHIP AND THE
MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX TO BUILD BACK BETTER

Thursday 24th September 2020, 9:00 (New York time)

Background

Poverty reductionis at a crossroad. Today, it is globally acknowledged that people experience poverty in a multidimensional way. A decade after launching the Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (Global MPI), and the first National Multidimensional Poverty Indices (National MPIs) their relevance has been proven. However, the negative effects derived from the COVID-19 crisis threatens to reverse part of the progress made and will demand greater efforts by all.

While emergency responses worldwide have been focused on cash transfers and food security, a post emergency response also demands investments in education, health, infrastructure, employment, among others. In a time of scarce resources, with an economic recession around the corner, efficiency, accountability, and transparency in ending povertyare more critical than ever.

To navigate this new reality, governments and non-state actors need powerful and efficient tools. While vaccines are expected to be ready by the end of this year, we need tools to stop poverty in its tracks. Global and national multidimensional poverty indexes (MPIs) are important to measure and forecast the effects of COVID-19, illustrate group risks anddesign high-impact strategies. The MPI represents a powerful tool to orient recovery policies through rigorous targeting, budgeting and coordination within governments and other sectors. There are multiple examples. Colombiacombined their census-level MPI with health records data to identify high risk spots and prevent infections; Viet Nam is about to update their national MPI quarterly in order to closely monitor poverty trends. Afghanistan's statisticians used microsimulations to predict where poverty would rise, so as to offer new support.

Leaders of today will be remembered for having faced the worst global crisis after the World War II. Some will leave behind a legacy. A vision and determination to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals and end with long-standing situations that have costed countless lives.

It is imperative to engage in a High-Level discussion on what that transformation looks like.Grateful forthe leadership of the Government of Chile, the Government of Pakistan and

UNDP in this UNGA 2020 event, the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Networkaims to invite Leaders to plan the use of national and global multidimensional poverty indexes (MPI) for this purpose: To seize this unparalleled moment and to act in fundamental solidarity with those teetering towards or already living in multidimensional poverty around the world.

Objectives

- Convene global leaders with a demonstrated commitment to address the multidimensional effects of Covid19 on people living in poverty.
- Introduce innovative uses of the MPI as a relevant policy toolto drive efficiency, targeting, and coordination for a response agenda.
- Make a collective call for collaboration to tackle povertyduring the pandemic and recession, by creativelyredefining the policies that are being put in place to reduce poverty in all of its dimensions.

Format

This high-level virtual event, hosted by the Government of Chile, the Government of Pakistan and UNDP, and organized by OPHI at the University of Oxford and the 60-country, 20-agency South-South Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network, will be a two hour-long dynamic discussion. The participants are expected to be High Level representatives of governments and international organizations. Prior to the event, OPHI will coordinate the logistical details with participants' teams, to ensure the integrity of the event.