

Global Multidimensional Poverty Index 2017

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The 2017 global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) provides a headline estimation of poverty and its composition for 103 countries across the world. The global MPI measures the nature and intensity of poverty, based on the profile of overlapping deprivations each poor person experiences. It aggregates these into meaningful indexes that can be used to inform targeting and resource allocation and to design policies that tackle the interlinked dimensions of poverty together.

KEY FINDINGS FROM THE GLOBAL MPI 2017

- A total of 1.45 billion people from 103 countries are multidimensionally poor;^[1] 26.5% of the people living in these countries.
- Forty-eight percent of the poor people live in South Asia, and 36% in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- Most MPI poor people – 72% – live in middle income countries.
- Half of the multidimensionally poor (48%) are children aged 0–17.
- Nearly half of all MPI poor people are destitute – 706 million – and so experience extreme deprivations like severe malnutrition in at least one-third of the dimensions.
- In Uganda, 22% of people live in a household where at least one person experiences a severe disability. Poverty in these households is higher: 77% of people are poor vs. 69% in other households.
- The MPI and its indicators are disaggregated by 988 subnational regions in 78 countries. The poorest regions are in Chad, Burkina Faso, Niger, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Nigeria, Uganda and Afghanistan. Inside Afghanistan poverty rates vary from 25% in Kabul to 95% in Urozgan.

THE GLOBAL MPI AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The global MPI is a new generation of multidimensional measures that supports key priorities in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- High-resolution poverty diagnostics are needed to **leave no one behind**. The global MPI is disaggregated by children, disability status, subnational regions and rural/urban areas. Linked indices of destitution and severe poverty highlight the very poorest.
- The SDGs call for analyses of **interlinkages across indicators**. The global MPI is built upon solid household-level multidimensional poverty profiles.
- The SDGs advocated **integrated multisectoral** policies. The global MPI shows the composition of poverty by indicator nationally – and for every disaggregated group – hence providing evidence for policy design.

two new countries: Algeria and El Salvador and have updated MPI statistics for 23 countries using new datasets.

At its essence, the global MPI supports the global recognition that poverty has many forms and dimensions, so measures that complement monetary poverty are needed. The first goal of the SDGs is to **end poverty in all its forms and dimensions**. The second sentence of the pivotal SDG document, *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, reads: **‘We recognise that eradicating poverty in all its**

The 2017 global MPI covers 5.4 billion people, or 76% of the world’s population, living in 103 countries. In 2017, we cover

forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development’ (UN 2015).

Discussions leading up to the SDGs highlighted the need for new poverty measures. In December 2014, the UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon wrote, ‘Poverty measures should reflect the multidimensional nature of poverty’.^[2]

A United Nations General Assembly Resolution on 19 December 2014 also ‘underlines the need to better reflect the multidimensional nature of development and poverty’. It invites member states and others ‘to consider developing complementary measurements – ones that better reflect that multidimensionality’ (A/RES/69/238 Paragraph 5). Relatedly, the Addis Ababa Accord^[3] called on the United Nations and others to ‘recognize the multidimensional nature of poverty’.

Table 1. The global MPI indicators mapped to the SDGs

Dimension	Indicator	Related SDG
Health	Nutrition	SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)
	Child Mortality	SDG 3 (Health and Well-being)
Education	Years of Education	SDG 4 (Quality Education)
	School Attendance	SDG 4 (Quality Education)
Living Standard	Cooking Fuel	SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)
	Sanitation	SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)
	Drinking Water	SDG 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation)
	Electricity	SDG 7 (Affordable and Clean Energy)
	Floor	SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities)
	Assets	SDG 1 (No Poverty)

The global MPI responds to this need for new ways to measure multidimensional poverty. And as Table 1 shows, the present global MPI reflects core SDGs.^[4]

Poverty profile: Pedro, Ecuador

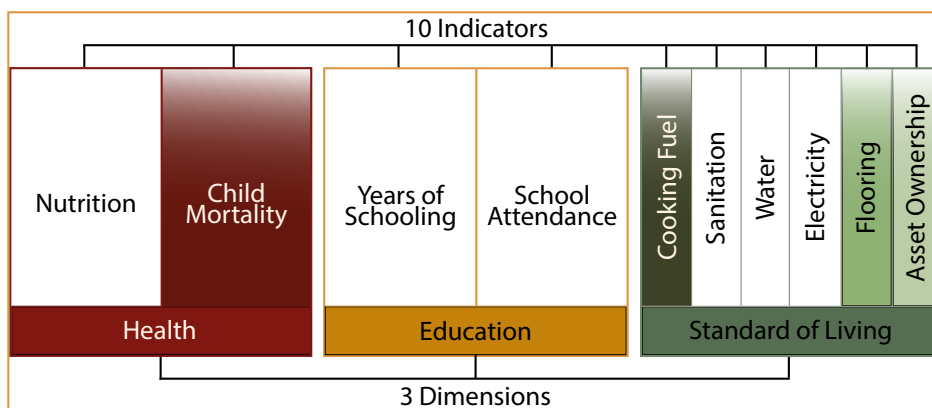
Pedro is a 38-year-old man who lives in a small town about a one-hour drive on a dirt road west of Cañar, Ecuador. He and his wife had five children, four of whom survive, aged 4, 10, 16 and 17. They also take care of Pedro’s stepfather Pelayo, who is 77 years old and unable to work. Pelayo used to receive a pension but that ended due to problems with his identity card.

Pedro and his wife make about US\$10–\$15 a day. But they can find work only one week per month. So the family income is only \$675 a year. They do have electricity and a latrine. Water, from a hose on an outside patio, is a short walk away. But their house is has a dirt floor. They cook outside with wood in a small rudimentary fireplace. They do not own a TV, radio or any electrical appliance, or even a bicycle. They own two head of cattle, two pigs and three chickens.

Pedro is poor according to the global MPI. The coloured boxes in the chart show the deprivations he faces.



John Hammock / OPHI



WHAT IS THE GLOBAL MPI?

The global MPI looks at poverty through a ‘high-resolution’ lens. It directly measures the nature and magnitude of overlapping deprivations in health, education and living standard for each household. The MPI relays vital information on who is poor and how they are poor, enabling policymakers to target resources and design policies more effectively.

As a measure of acute multidimensional poverty, the global MPI offers an essential complement to income poverty indices because it measures and compares deprivations directly. It can be broken down by social groups and geographical areas to reveal poverty patterns within countries – and by indicators to show which deprivations drive poverty in different regions. It can also be used to track changes in poverty over time.

The global MPI was developed in 2010 by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for the UNDP’s flagship Human Development Reports 2010–2015 (Alkire and Santos 2014). The figures and analysis are updated by OPHI using newly released data twice per year. In 2018 we may further align the global MPI with the SDGs. A measure of ‘moderate’ poverty may be developed to reflect challenges in countries that have low levels of acute poverty according to the global MPI.

INSIDE THE MPI: THREE DIMENSIONS, TEN INDICATORS

Who is poor? A person is identified as **multidimensionally poor** (or ‘MPI poor’) if she is deprived in **at least one third** of the weighted MPI indicators set out in Figure 1.

CONSTRUCTING THE GLOBAL MPI

The global MPI was created using a method developed by Alkire and Foster (2011). The **Alkire Foster method** is flexible and can be used with different dimensions, indicators, weights and cutoffs to create measures specific to different societies and situations.

The MPI is the product of incidence and intensity:

$$\text{MPI} = \text{H} \times \text{A}$$

- **Incidence** is the percentage of people who are poor (or the headcount ratio, **H**);
- **Intensity** is the average share of indicators in which poor people are deprived (**A**).

Fig. 1. Dimensions and indicators of global MPI

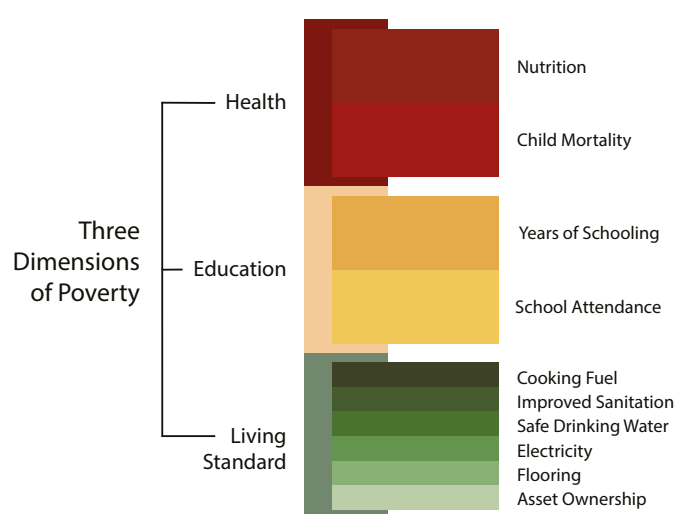


Table 2. The dimensions, indicators, deprivation thresholds and weights of the MPI

Dimension	Indicator	Deprived if...	Relative weight
Health	Nutrition	Any adult or child for whom there is nutritional information is malnourished	1/6
	Child Mortality	Any child has died in the household within the last five years	1/6
Education	Years of Education	No household member has completed five years of schooling	1/6
	School Attendance	Any school-aged child is not attending school up to the age at which they would complete class 8	1/6
Living Standard	Cooking Fuel	The household cooks with dung, wood or charcoal	1/18
	Sanitation	The household’s sanitation facility is not improved (according to SDG guidelines), or it is improved but shared with other households	1/18
	Drinking Water	The household does not have access to safe drinking water (according to SDG guidelines), or safe drinking water is a 30-minute or longer walk from home, roundtrip	1/18
	Electricity	The household has no electricity	1/18
	Floor	The household has a dirt, sand or dung floor	1/18
	Assets	The household does not own more than one radio, TV, telephone, bike, motorbike or refrigerator, and does not own a car or truck	1/18

WHO ARE THE POOR AND WHERE DO THEY LIVE?

Half of MPI poor people are children^[5]

When we disaggregate the MPI by children, we find child poverty to be strikingly high.^[6] Of the 1.45 billion people who are multidimensionally poor, 48% are children. That is a total of 689 million children who live in multidimensional poverty. And, poverty rates are higher among children: 37% of children are poor, whereas 23% of adults aged 18 and above are poor.

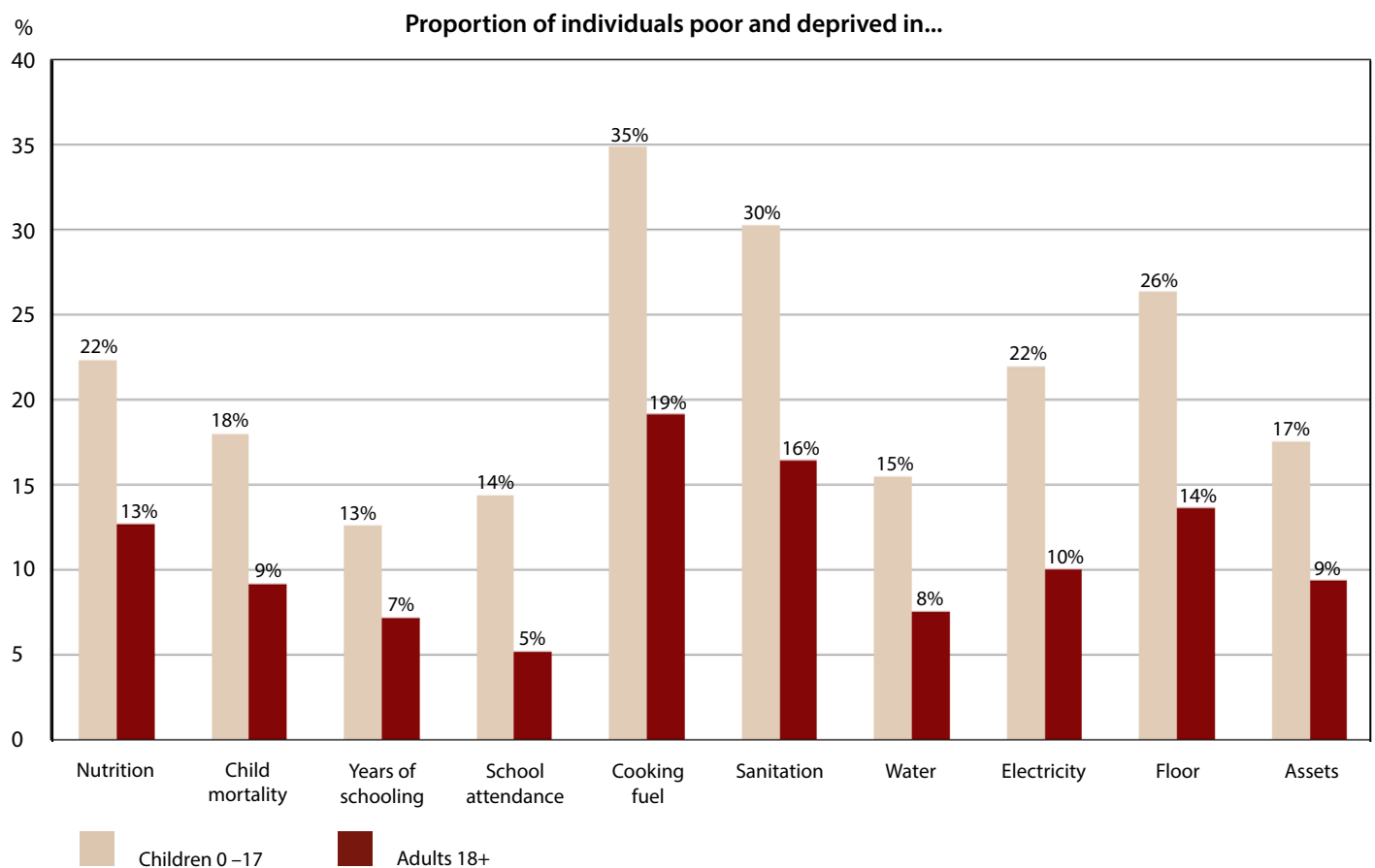
Disaggregating the global MPI by children we find

- Half of all multidimensionally poor people – 48% – are children.
- Nearly two out of every five children – 37% – are multidimensionally poor. This means 689 million children are living in multidimensional poverty.
- Most MPI poor children live in South Asia (44%) and in Sub-Saharan Africa (43%).
- In 36 countries, including India, at least half of all children are MPI poor.

- In Ethiopia, Niger and South Sudan over 90% of children are MPI poor.
- Half of MPI poor children live in ‘alert’ level fragile states, and child poverty levels are the highest in the worst of the fragile states.
- Two-thirds of poor children live in middle income countries.
- Poor children are on average deprived in 52% of weighted indicators.
- As Figure 2 shows, the most common deprivations children face are in cooking fuel, sanitation, flooring, malnutrition and electricity.

Figure 2 shows the proportion of people who are poor and deprived in each indicator. Children’s deprivations are significantly higher in each of the ten indicators.

Fig. 2. Child and adult deprivations in ten MPI indicators



Half of MPI poor people live in South Asia

About half of the MPI poor live in South Asia (48%) and 36% live in Sub-Saharan Africa. This is a different distribution from \$1.90/day income poverty estimations aggregated in the same

Over one billion MPI poor people live in middle income countries^[8]

Over one billion people – almost three quarters of all multidimensionally poor people (72%) – live in middle income

Fig. 3a. Distribution of population by region

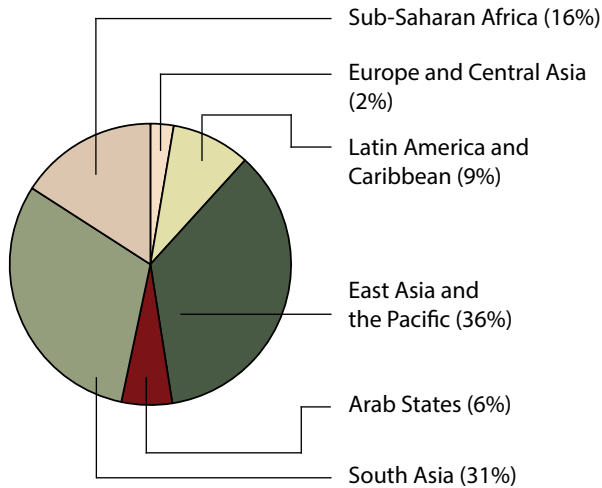


Fig. 3b. Distribution of MPI poor persons by region

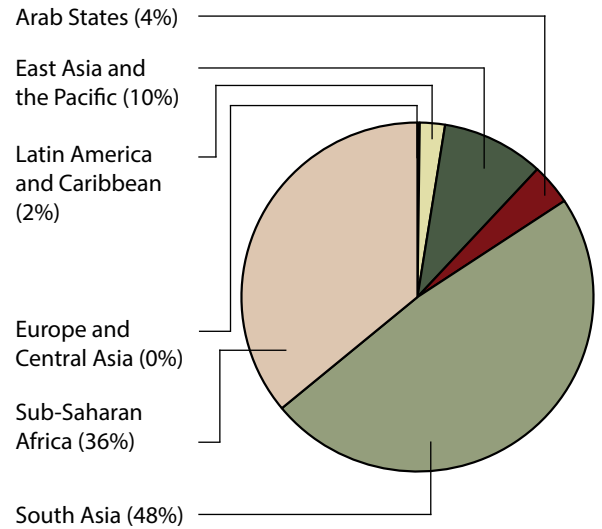


Fig. 4a. Distribution of population by income category

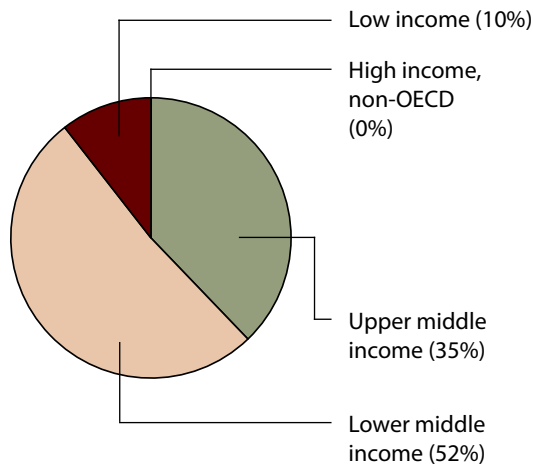
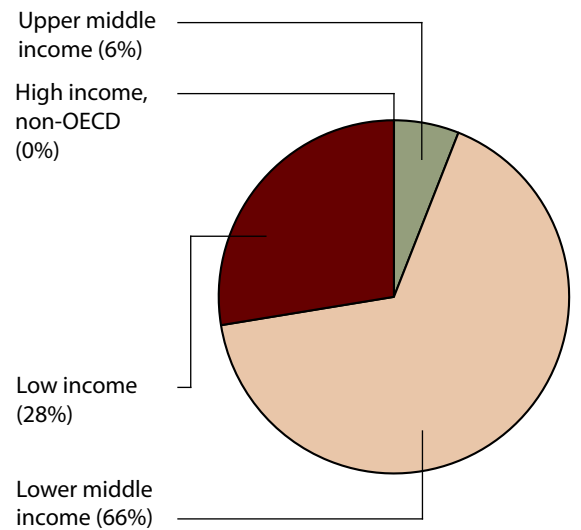


Fig. 4b. Distribution of MPI poor persons by income category



way – because MPI is higher in South Asia. In South Asia, 41.6% of the population are MPI poor and 19.2% are poor by the extreme income poverty measure – so the rate is more than doubled.^[7] In Sub-Saharan Africa multidimensional poverty affects 60.1% of the population; \$1.90/day poverty, 46.4%, so MPI poverty is one-third higher.

countries. Of these, 86 million poor people live in in upper middle income countries and 961 million in lower middle income countries.^[9] What is striking is that the income categories have overlapping levels of multidimensional poverty. In upper middle income countries, the incidence of MPI varies from 0–42%; in lower middle income countries, it's 0–68%; and in low income countries, 29–91% of national

populations live in acute multidimensional poverty. When we focused on subnational regions, the incidence of MPI varies from 0–74% in upper middle income countries, from 0–92% in lower middle income countries and from 4–99% in low income countries.

International aid and multidimensional poverty: Differently distributed

Aid flows are complex and are only part of any poverty reduction strategy. Measured in international currencies, they do not reflect the unit costs of reducing a deprivation. They must be analyzed alongside national public expenditures and other flows they supplement. Yet the MPI portrays acute multidimensional poverty and unmet needs for public health and nutrition inputs, basic education, water, sanitation, housing, electricity and other needs. So a natural question is to what extent is the aid that deliberately targets those priority sectors flowing to the places where people who experience these overlapping deprivations live.

To start such a conversation, we describe aid allocations for 101 of the countries included in the global MPI 2017^[10] using the information in the Creditor Reporting System (CRS) from the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) that contains information from Development Assistance Committee (DAC) countries and International Organizations (IO). We only consider Official Development Assistance (ODA) flows, and we do not yet include Other Official Flows (OOF). We also include only aid commitments to priority sectors that reflect MPI indicators^[11] in a range of three years from the date of the survey used for each country. They add up to \$45 billion in 2015 constant USD.

Table 3 shows that 28% of the MPI poor live in countries classified as low income. Those countries received 42% of the donor flows to priority social sectors. But 66% of MPI poor people live in lower middle income countries, which receive 49% of these aid flows. This is shaped by very low allocations to India, where each poor person is allocated \$1.35 of aid. And 6% of MPI poor people live in upper middle income countries, which receive a generous 9% of aid flows. The flows from IO are more reflective of the distribution of MPI poor than the DAC flows.

Analysis of aid flows to individual countries is also important. If we consider ODA from DAC donors, which is thought to represent the bulk of development aid, the countries that receive very low aid flows in priority social sectors may not be those who need it least. One of the countries with the lowest aid flows is a high income country, Trinidad and Tobago,

Fig. 5a. Priority sector ODA flows from DAC countries

ODA from DAC countries to priority sectors of 101 countries by income category of recipients

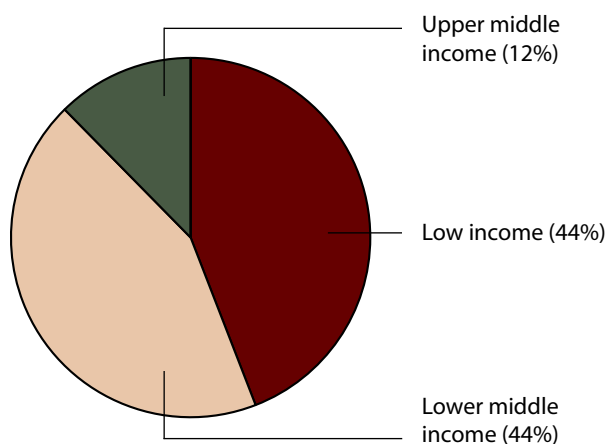
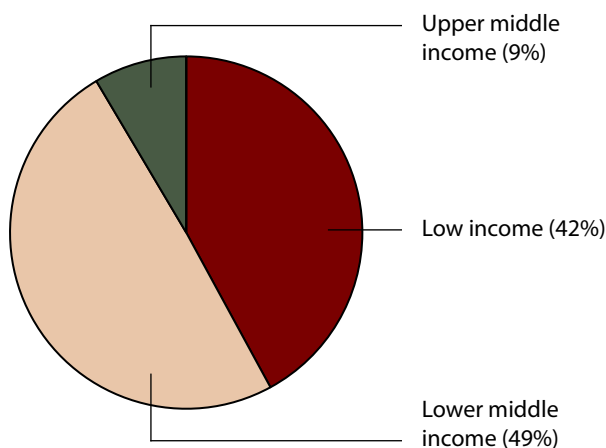


Fig. 5b. Priority Sector ODA flows from DAC countries and IO

ODA from DAC and IO to priority sectors of 101 countries by income category of recipients



and two are upper middle income countries, Algeria and also China – which has mobilized tremendous domestic resources and political will for poverty reduction by 2020. But eight lower middle income countries, including the most populous in terms of MPI poor such as Pakistan (\$2.30), Nigeria (\$1.40) and India (\$0.64), receive very low allocations in priority social sector aid from DAC countries. And nine of the 20 countries, in which aid allocation from DAC donors in priority social sectors totals less than \$5.50 per person, are low income countries. These include Ethiopia (\$5.17),

Niger (\$4.50), Chad (\$2.10) and Somalia (\$2.10). In each of these four countries over 80% of people are MPI poor. The remaining low income countries receive \$6 to \$32 per MPI poor person from DAC countries.

To understand whether and when aid is catalyzing action and further public expenditure to fight poverty in multiple dimensions requires in-depth analysis. What is clear is that the distribution of ODA flows differ significantly from the distribution of multidimensionally poor people.

Table 3. Allocation of ODA from DAC countries and IO for priority sectors and distribution of MPI poor income categories

Total priority sectors	ODA from DAC countries three years previous to country-specific MPI	ODA from IO three years previous to country-specific MPI	ODA from IO and DAC three years previous to country-specific MPI	Share of MPI poor people
Low income	44.1%	40.7%	42.1%	28%
Lower middle income	43.5%	54.5%	49.4%	66%
Upper middle income	12.4%	4.9%	8.5%	6%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note: DAC = Development Assistance Committee (bilateral aid). IO = International Organisations (multilateral aid), including the World Bank, regional development banks, some UN agencies and other multilateral agencies

GOING UP CLOSE: MPI WITHIN MYANMAR, AFGHANISTAN AND CHAD

The MPI and its indicators are disaggregated by 988 subnational regions in 78 countries, revealing an astonishing subnational diversity. The poorest regions are in Chad, Burkina Faso, Niger, Ethiopia, South Sudan, Nigeria, Uganda and Afghanistan.

For example, in 52 subnational regions from 16 countries over 90% of people are poor – 110 million out of the 119 million living in these regions are MPI poor.

These disaggregations show subnational diversity. Inside Afghanistan poverty rates vary from 25% in Kabul to 95% in Urozgan. In Chad it's 53–99%. In Nigeria the range is a massive 8–92%, always with capital cities having the lowest MPI. Of course the range also depends upon the number and size of the subnational regions.

The case studies below profile subnational analyses of Myanmar, Afghanistan and Chad.

The legend used for the maps is the following:

MPI incidence (%)	
■	12.5 – 28.1
■	28.2 – 45.2
■	45.3 – 58.3
■	58.4 – 65.1
■	65.2 – 84.3
■	84.4 – 95.4
■	95.5 – 99.0

USER'S GUIDE TO INTERPRETING THE MPI

Sometimes people presume that the MPI is 'just' an index – one number – showing the level of poverty. But as these case studies show, the MPI is **always** unpacked in different ways to show **who is poor** and **how they are poor**. By design, the MPI can be 'broken down' into interesting, consistent and partial subindices. Here is a user's guide to interpreting the MPI:

Headcount Ratio or Incidence: Let's start with the most familiar number: the percentage of people who are MPI poor. This is called the headcount ratio or incidence of poverty, or the 'poverty rate'. For example, in Myanmar, 30.1% of people are poor because they are deprived in 33.33% or more of the weighted MPI indicators.

Intensity: This is the average deprivation score among the poor. In Myanmar intensity is 44.6%. This means that the poor in Myanmar are on average deprived in 44.6% of the weighted indicators. For example, consider Neheso. She is deprived in both health indicators, as well as in cooking fuel, sanitation, water, flooring and assets. Her deprivations are labelled on the left hand side of the chart on the right. The height of the boxes shows the weight of each indicator. On the right hand side, we stack up her deprivations and find that her deprivation score is 60%. All poor people have deprivation scores between 33.33% and 100%. The average of the deprivation scores of all poor people is intensity.

The MPI: When you multiply 30.1% x 44.6% you obtain 0.134. This is the MPI for Myanmar. It shows that poor people in Myanmar are deprived in 13.4% of the deprivations that would be experienced if every person in Myanmar was poor and was deprived in all indicators. The important thing is that MPI ranges from 0 to 1 and higher levels show higher poverty.

How to Reduce MPI

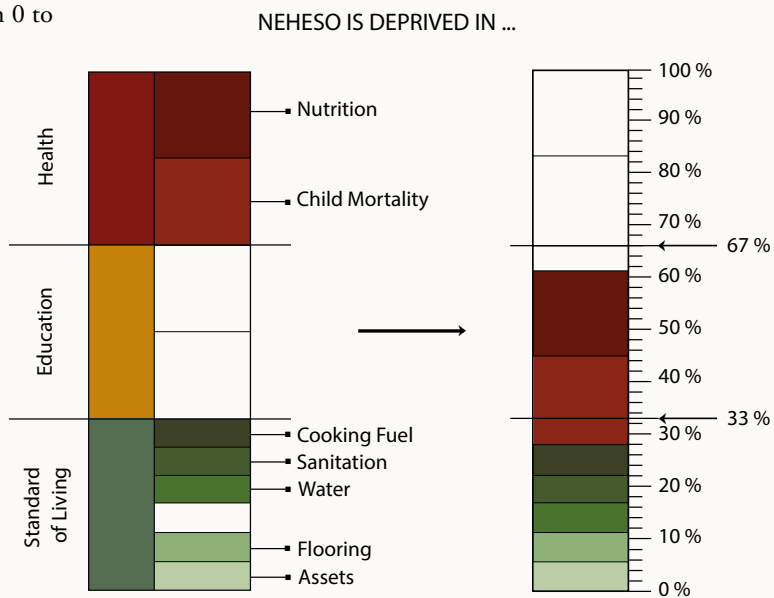
MPI goes down if a) somebody becomes non-poor, so the **incidence** of poverty goes down, or b) the **intensity** goes down, because a poor person gets rid of a deprivation. To accomplish either one, though, what is needed is to reduce deprivations in any one of the MPI's ten **indicators**. So we need to drill down and see how to do that.

The MPI can also be broken down by indicators, which is a useful tool for public policy. The MPI itself is simply the percentage of people who are poor and deprived in each indicator multiplied by the weight on that indicator. You add them up and obtain the value of MPI. Remember that health and education indicators are weighted at 1/6 and living standard at 1/18. So in Myanmar, the MPI

(0.134) is also equal to $(13.7\% + 11.7\% + 12.2\% + 8.5\%)(1/6) + (29\% + 22.2\% + 11.3\% + 21.6\% + 5.1\% + 14\%)(1/18)$. Visually, you can see that the height of the graphic on the bottom left of page 9 is 0.134 and each indicator 'contributes' to it. So if we reduce any deprivation of any poor person in any indicator, what happens? The height of the MPI goes down!

If you prefer, you can simply look at the table at the bottom of the page, which shows the percentage of people in Myanmar who a) are MPI poor (because they have overlapping deprivations that stack up to one-third or more) and b) are deprived in each indicator. For example 12.2% of people are MPI poor and have no one in their household who has completed five years of schooling. We call these the 'censored headcount ratios' of each indicator. If any of these very important deprivations goes down, MPI goes down. The bottom right hand chart on page 9 shows the censored headcount ratios for the Rakhine in Myanmar compared to the national average. Similarly, the chart on page 11 compares censored headcount ratios for two regions in Chad.

These are the fundamental building blocks of the MPI: Incidence, Intensity, Censored Headcount ratios, and (weighted) Indicator contributions to MPI. If you download the online data tables, you will find all of these statistics (and some others) for every single country, rural-urban area, subnational region, and for children. But the goal is not just to understand poverty: it is to use this information to fight poverty and suffering – through better policies and actions.

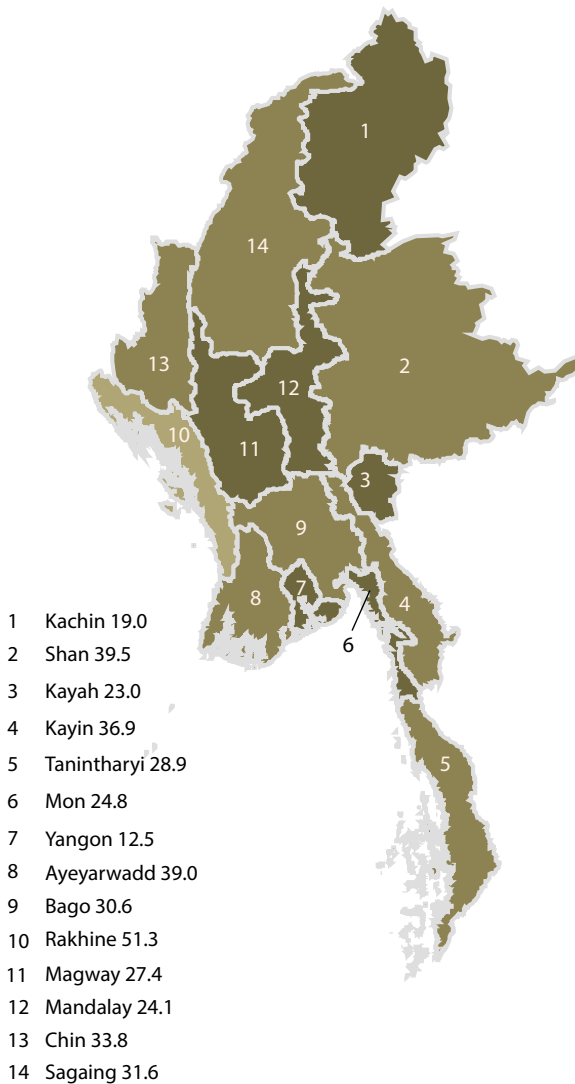


Health		Education		Living Standards					
Nutrition	Child mortality	Years of schooling	School attendance	Cooking fuel	Sanitation	Drinking water	Electricity	Floor	Assets
13.7	11.7	12.2	8.5	29.0	22.2	11.3	21.6	5.1	14.0

MYANMAR

MYANMAR

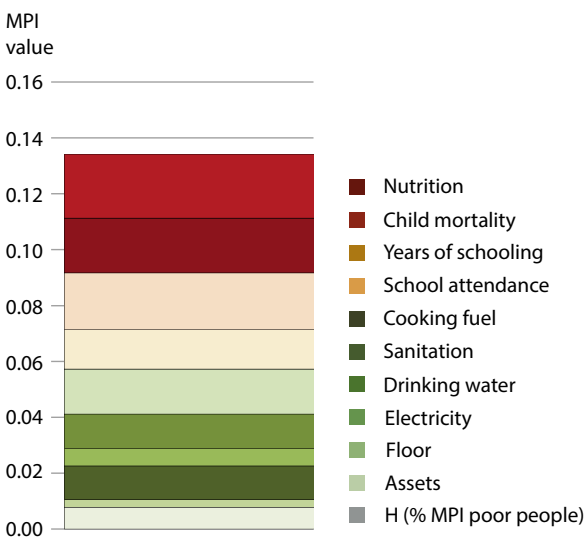
Multidimensional poverty in Myanmar



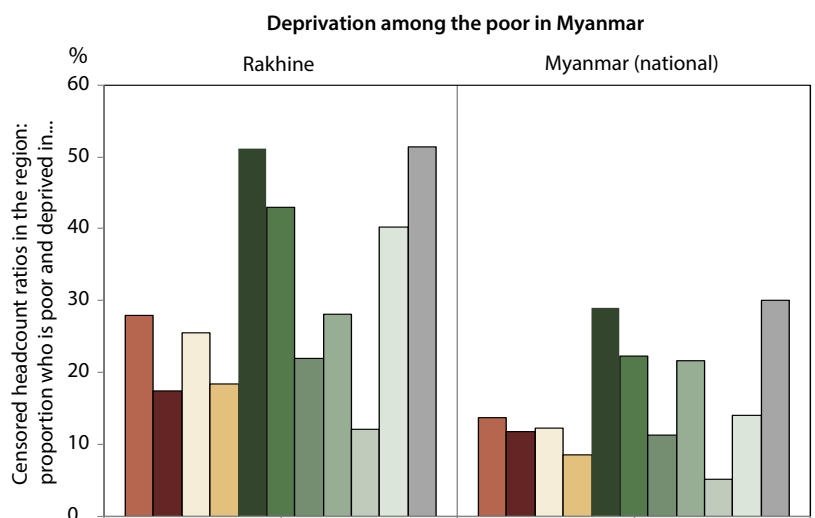
Paul Arps | Flickr CC BY 2.0

Myanmar (DHS 2014–15) is home to 53 million people. Of these, nearly 16 million or 30% are multidimensionally poor. The poorest regions are Rakhine in the southwest and Shan and Kayin in the east, pictured in the lightest green on the map of multidimensional poverty in Myanmar on the left. In Rakhine, just over half of the population (51%) are multidimensionally poor, with particularly high deprivations in nutrition, cooking fuel, sanitation, assets and electricity (see the chart below). Among children aged 0–17, 37% of them are poor whereas 26% of adults in Myanmar are MPI poor. In rural areas, child poverty rises to 44% of children, whereas in urban areas it's 14%.

Composition of Myanmar's MPI

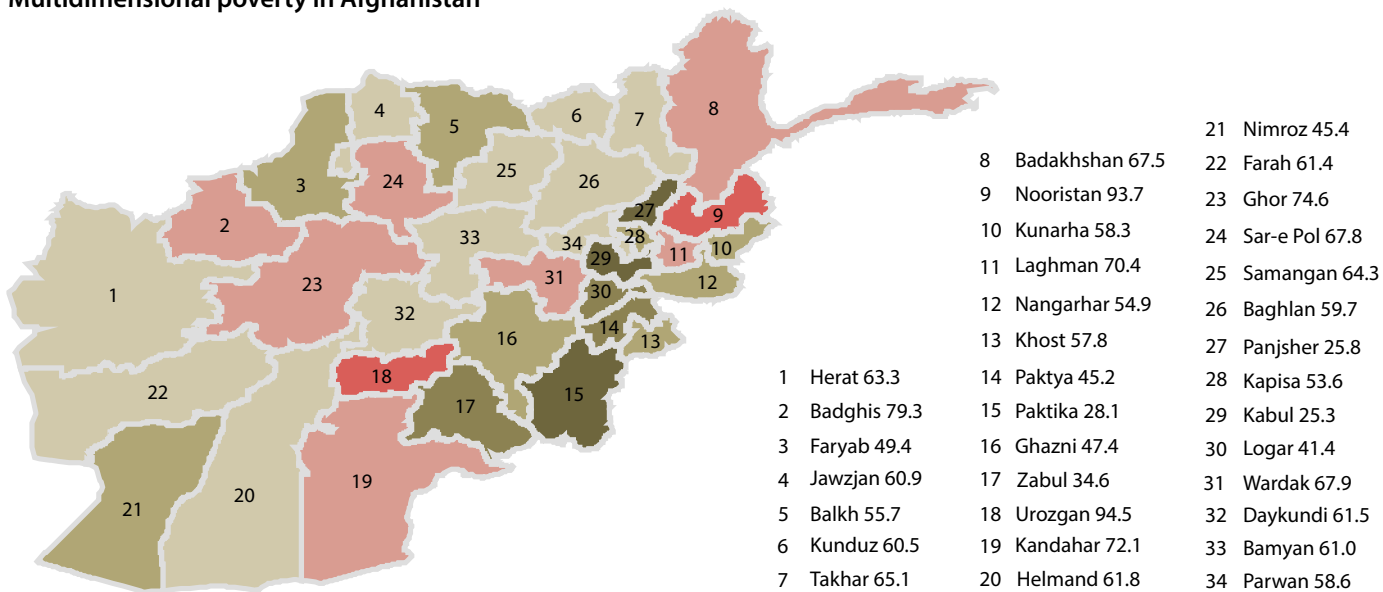


The composition of poverty among Rakhine state and across Myanmar



AFGHANISTAN

Multidimensional poverty in Afghanistan



John Asselín | Flickr CC BY-NC-ND 2.0

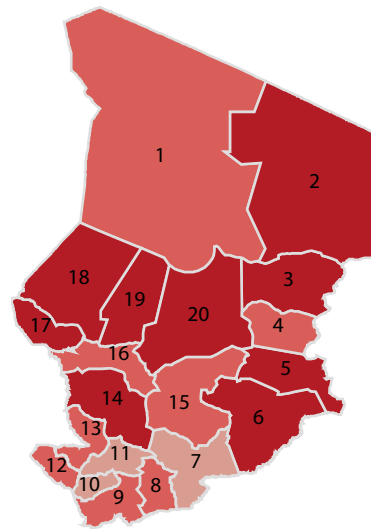
Afghanistan’s national MPI is the highest in South Asia, and 56% of Afghanis are acutely poor by the MPI. Afghanistan’s poorest region, Urozgan, near central Afghanistan, has an MPI of 0.624, which is larger than the national MPI of Niger, and 95% of people are poor. This is followed by Nooristan (94%) in the northeast and Badghis (79%) and Kandahar (72%) in the west and south of the country (see the map above). We do not have nutritional data for Afghanistan, but 28% of people live in a household where a child has died – which is the highest figure for this indicator across every region of the world except Sub-Saharan Africa.

Fully 59% of children are multidimensionally poor in Afghanistan, and 53% of adults. That means Afghanistan has 9.7 million MPI poor children and 7.5 million poor adults. So well over half – in fact 56% of Afghanistan’s poor people are children. Unfortunately, 38% of poor people live in a household where a school-aged child is not attending school, so attention to children’s deprivations is of critical importance. In terms of region, three-quarters of Afghanis live in rural areas, where 65% of people are poor. In the urban areas poverty rates are lower, at 29%.



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Multidimensional poverty in Chad

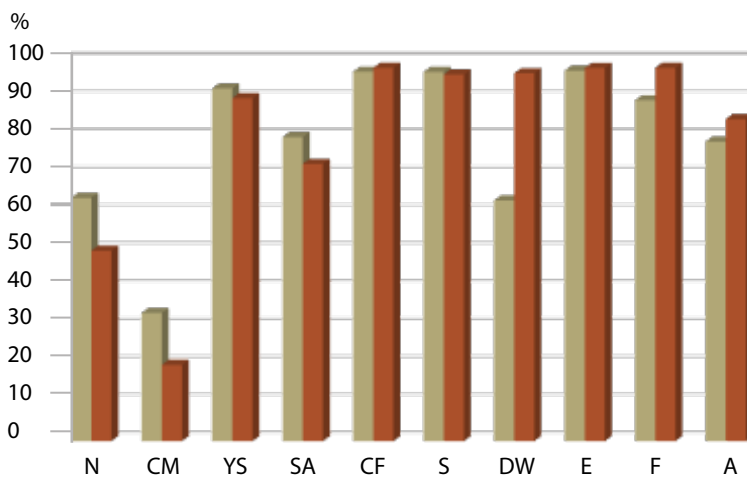


- 1 Borkou Tibesti 89
- 2 Ennedi 96.8
- 3 Wadi Fira 99
- 4 Ouaddai 95.3
- 5 Sila 98.9
- 6 Salamat 97.8
- 7 Moyen Chari 74.1
- 8 Mandoul 88.1
- 9 Logone orientale 88.1
- 10 Logone occidentale 79.1
- 11 Tandjilé 84.3
- 12 Mayo Kebbi Ouest 86.3
- 13 Mayo Kebbi Est 86.1
- 14 Chari Baguirmi 96.9
- 15 Guéra 95.4
- 16 Hadjer Lamis 95.4
- 17 Lac 98.1
- 18 Kanem 98.5
- 19 Barh El Gazal 95.7
- 20 Batha 95.7

Chad (DHS 2014–15) is the fourth poorest among the 103 countries analyzed. Fully 87% of people live in multidimensional poverty. Over 80% of the population are poor and lack electricity, adequate sanitation, flooring and clean cooking fuel, and over half (52%) of the population are multidimensionally poor and have a school-aged child at home who is not attending school. The poorest subnational regions in Chad are the drought-affected regions of Lac, Wadi Fira, Sila and Kanem. In the regions of Lac and Kanem, nearly 65% of the population are poor and have at least one malnourished woman or child (see the map above).

It might seem that in such a poor country (in 12 of Chad’s 20 regions more than 95% of people are poor), the MPI cannot add much analysis. But the indicator details tell a new story. Let’s compare the two poorest regions, Lac and Wadi Fira – in which 98–99% of people are poor. In Lac, 34% of people are poor and have experienced the death of a child, whereas in Wadi Fira it’s much lower at 20%. But in Wadi Fira, 97% of people lack clean drinking water, whereas in Lac it’s 64% (the chart below). So clearly even between two extremely poor regions, policy responses need to differ.

Lac and Wadi Fira: Deprivation levels by indicator

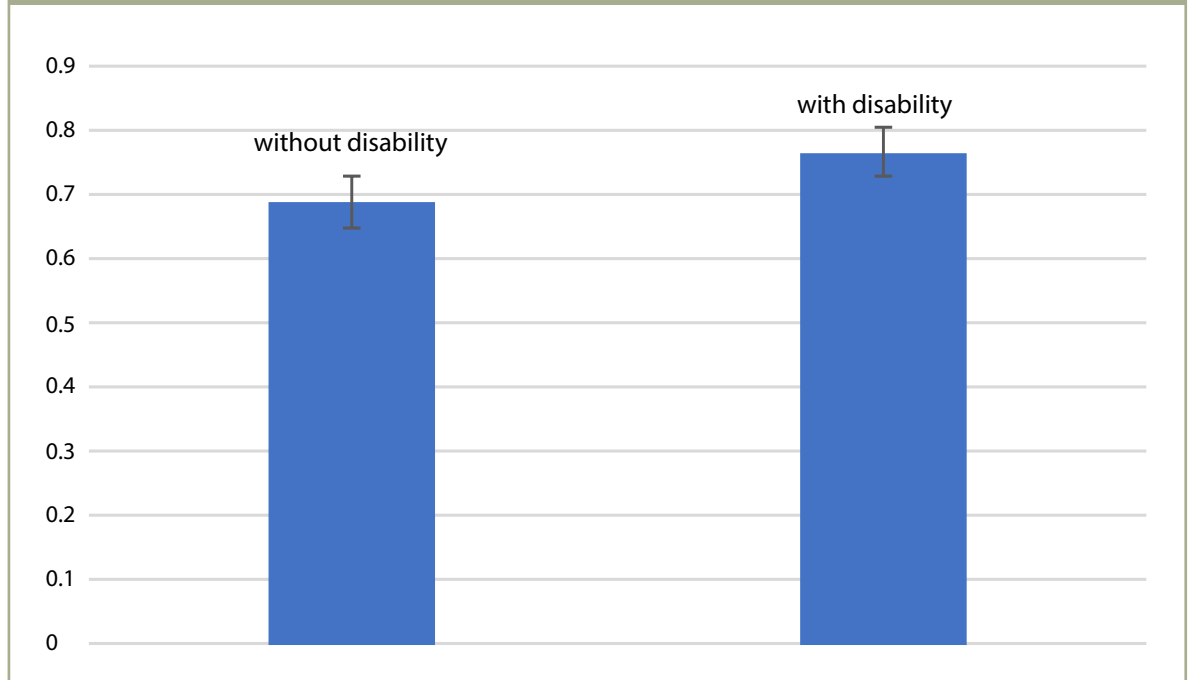


- N Nutrition
- CM Child mortality
- YS Years of schooling
- SA School attendance
- CF Cooking fuel
- S Sanitation
- DW Drinking water
- E Electricity
- F Floor
- A Assets

NEWS FLASH

MPI DISAGGREGATION BY DISABILITY STATUS SOON TO BE STANDARD

Fig. 6. Incidence of multidimensional poverty in Uganda by disability status



In a recent study we disaggregated the global MPI by disability status for the first time.^[12] It was not previously possible to disaggregate the global MPI by disability, but surveys that include standardized questions on disability are set to increase.

77% poverty rate as compared with 69% among households without disability. As comparable data become available, the global MPI will be disaggregated by disability status in order to track – and hopefully to help reduce – the interlinkages among these conditions.

Uganda's 2011 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) pioneered the Washington Group questions on disability, a form of which will be included in DHS and Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) from 2017 onwards. In Uganda, 4% of people aged 5 years and above were living with a disability and 22% of all people live in a household where at least one member lives with a severe disability.

As Figure 6 above shows, households with at least one member with a severe disability faced higher levels of multidimensional poverty – a



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DESTITUTION

The distressing condition of destitution:

- Half of the MPI poor people live in destitution.
- In six countries and 117 subnational regions, 50% or more of people are destitute.
- Most of the highest levels of destitution are found in Sub-Saharan Africa.
- But most of the destitute people – 362 of the 706 million – live in South Asia.
- Pakistan has more destitute people – 37 million – than East Asia and the Pacific (26 million) or the Arab States (26 million).
- India has more destitute people (295 million) than Sub-Saharan Africa (282 million).

The MPI reflects acute multidimensional poverty in developing countries. It measures absolute levels of poverty – which are very low in a number of countries such as China and many areas of Latin America. For many countries, a ‘moderate’ measure of multidimensional poverty is needed.

Even so, since 2014 we have reported a measure of destitution that identifies a subset of the MPI poor who are the poorest of the poor. Unfortunately, nearly half of all MPI poor people are destitute – 706 million men, women and children.

As with the MPI, destitute people are deprived in one-third or more weighted indicators, but the destitution indicators are more extreme. They include severe malnutrition, losing two or more children, having a child out of primary school, having no household member who has completed more than one year of schooling, using open defecation, fetching water that is unsafe or 45 or more minutes away, not owning even a mobile phone or radio, and cooking with wood or dung or straw only.^[13] To leave no one behind we must take urgent action to end the distressing condition of destitution.

Figure 7 on the next page shows the percentage of the population who are MPI poor, which is the height of the beige bar, and the percentage who are living in destitution, which is the height of the red subcomponent. At a glance, we can see that destitution rates range from 0% to 71.4% of the population. What else do we see?

First, there are pockets of destitution even in low MPI countries. In countries like Turkmenistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Barbados, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, 30% or more of MPI poor people are destitute. But in South Africa, less than 9% of the MPI poor are destitute.

Second, there are positive stories: In 57 countries, less than 10% of the population are destitute. Similarly, 506 subnational regions have less than 10% of the population living in destitution.

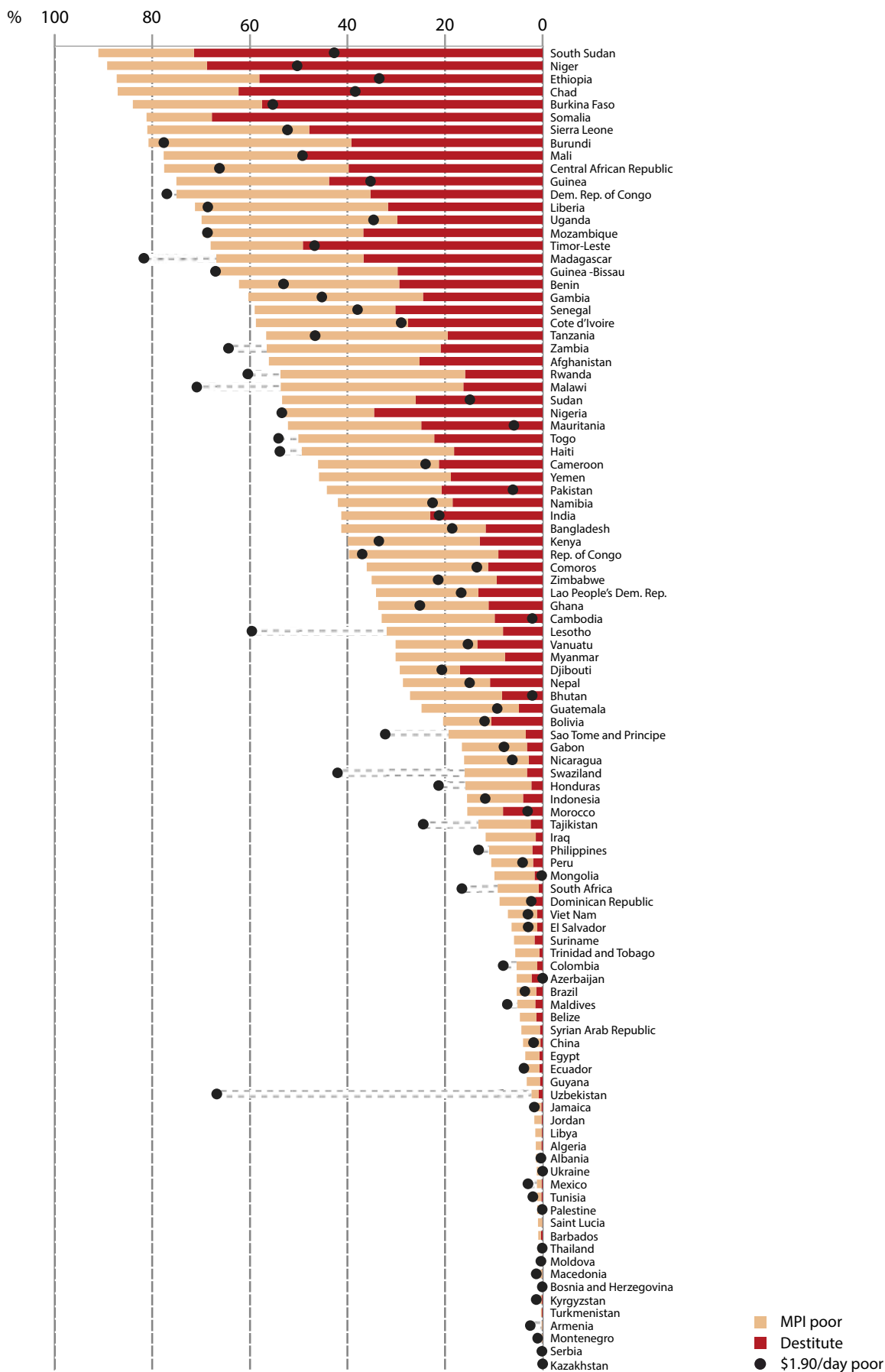
Third, in general, destitution rates tend to be lower than \$1.90/day extreme income poverty rates. But destitution is markedly higher than income poverty in Pakistan, Mauritania, Sudan, Gambia, Chad, Ethiopia, Niger, and South Sudan. This underscores the importance of measuring and fighting poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

In some countries and regions, destitution is still ‘the norm’ because it affects half or more of the population. Six countries have more than 50% of their population living in destitution – and together they are home to 100 million poor people. Drilling down, in 117 subnational regions, 50–92% of the population are destitute (161 million). These high destitution regions are mainly located in Sub-Saharan Africa. Yet there are pockets of destitution in other regions. In **East Asia and the Pacific**, eight regions within Timor L’Este have over 50% of people living in destitution. Within the **Arab States**, 58% of people in Sudan’s Central Darfur, and 50% of people in Yemen’s Hajjah regions are destitute. Within **South Asia**, Afghanistan’s Urozgan, Nooristan, and Kandahar provinces have 50–78% of people living in destitution. In **Latin America**, six regions of Haiti, plus Potosi in Bolivia, have 20–36% of people living in destitution.

Looking at the high rates of destitution we might presume that destitution is largely an African story. But it is not. Of the 706 million people who are destitute, 362 million live in South Asia and 282 million in Sub-Saharan Africa. In addition, 26 million live in the Arab States, another 26 million live in East Asia, and over 8 million live in Latin America, plus nearly 300,000 in Europe and Central Asia. India has over 295 million destitute people, more than the total number of destitute people in all of Sub-Saharan Africa. And Pakistan has 37 million destitute people according to its 2012/13 dataset, more than either the Arab States or East Asia and the Pacific region.

The story of destitution is not over. But it should be. These figures call for vigorous attention to be focused on destitution in South Asia and in Sub-Saharan Africa – and for even low poverty countries to track and empty the pockets of deep poverty in their midst.

Fig. 7. Comparing the headcount ratios of MPI poor, destitute, and \$1.90/day poor



NOTES

- [1] All aggregates use 2013 population data.
- [2] Section 5.1 paragraph 135.
- [3] Addis Ababa Accord 2015, paragraph 119.
- [4] Discussions are underway to consider whether data permit adjustments to further align the global MPI with the SDGs.
- [5] This section draws on 'Children's multidimensional poverty: disaggregating the global MPI' by Alkire et al. (2017).
- [6] As with \$1.90/day poverty, children are identified as poor if they live in an MPI poor household. Alternatively, Child MPIs can be constructed that reflect each individual child's deprivations by gender and age cohort (see Alkire et al. 2016), but data are not available to build a global Child MPI with individual child data.
- [7] \$1.90 is not available for Afghanistan. Omitting Afghanistan, 41.4% of people are MPI poor in South Asia.
- [8] We use income category definitions from July 2016 throughout this document.
- [9] The global MPI covers 92% of all people living in low or middle income countries. It covers 99% of people living in low income countries (29 countries), 99% of the population in lower middle income countries (43) and 82% in upper middle income countries (29).
- [10] There is no information on allocation to Macedonia and Palestine. For those countries with MPI data from 2016, ODA flows allocated between 2011 and 2015 have been considered. For South Sudan, with 2010 MPI data, ODA flows between 2011 and 2015 are used as this is the closest five-year period available.
- [11] The categories included are basic education, basic health, basic drinking water supply and basic sanitation (alone and together), electric power transmission and distribution, low-cost housing, multisector aid for basic social services, developmental food aid and food security assistance.
- [12] Pinilla and Alkire 2017.
- [13] The indicators of electricity and flooring are unchanged.

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ONLINE RESOURCES

OPHI's interactive databank enables you to study over 100 developing countries in terms of multidimensional poverty. Choose interactive data visualizations to explore where and in which indicators people are poor or destitute, and to show how MPI values compare with complementary data, such as \$1.90/day poverty. Or download a country briefing file for any country, which contains explanations of its MPI and is illustrated with graphs, maps and charts. Excel data tables have all the details of MPI plus population, standard errors, sample sizes and much more. Methodological notes provide any particularities of each country's survey data treatment.

See www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index.

MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX ACROSS THE WORLD

