



**Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
Department of International Development
Queen Elizabeth House
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MISSING DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY DATA

CALL FOR PROPOSALS FOR ANALYSIS OF NEW DATASET ON CHILE

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OPHI, the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), is a research institute within the University of Oxford's Department of International Development, Queen Elizabeth House. Our overall aim is to build and advance a more systematic methodological and economic framework for reducing poverty that is grounded in Nobel Laureate Amartya Sen's capability approach and related ideas. Advancing this approach requires data on people's freedoms to guide and evaluate development actions. A critical bottleneck, however, is a dearth of high-quality internationally comparable data. Since its May 2007 launch, OPHI has identified and developed short modules to measure five 'Missing Dimensions' of poverty – aspects that seem to matter to poor people but are often missing from large-scale surveys collected at the individual and household levels:

- Employment quality, including both formal and informal employment, with particular attention to the quality of employment ([Lugo 2007](#));
- Empowerment, or agency, the ability to advance goals one values and has reason to value ([Ibrahim and Alkire 2007](#));
- Physical safety, focusing on security from violence to property and person, as well as perceived violence ([Diprose 2007](#));
- The ability to go about without shame, to emphasize the importance of dignity, respect and freedom from humiliation ([Zavaleta 2007](#)).

We have also developed one module for an area we do not necessarily consider to be a dimension of poverty, but for which more internationally comparable data are required:

- Psychological and subjective wellbeing, to emphasize meaning, satisfaction and their determinants ([Samman 2007](#)).

[Alkire \(2007\)](#) provides a detailed overview of the motivation for the Missing Dimensions and further details of our activities to date under this theme are available on our website: www.ophi.org.uk.

OPHI is pleased to announce a call for proposals for researchers interested in analyzing a brand new dataset on ‘Missing Dimensions of Poverty’ in Chile, the first nationally representative dataset of its kind. Using the five modules devised by OPHI, the data contains indicators of employment quality, empowerment, physical safety, dignity and subjective/psychological wellbeing – in addition to standard poverty data already collected on income, health, education, housing quality, standard employment conditions, etc.

The new survey was administered in 2008/09 to a subsample of 2,000 households from the 2006 CASEN (Encuesta de Caracterización Socioeconómica Nacional), so in addition to the new data, all the CASEN 2006 data are available for the surveyed households. Numerous questions from the 2006 CASEN were repeated – the entire income module, most of the employment module, and several questions on health, education and housing. In addition, the 2008/9 survey contains data on each of the dimensions OPHI has identified as potentially ‘missing’. Therefore, the dataset has interesting panel as well as cross-sectional elements. The full questionnaire that was administered is available at: www.ophi.org.uk, as is a five percent sample of the dataset.

OPHI is inviting innovative proposals from researchers based in Chile and elsewhere to analyse this data and to prepare papers (8,000-10,000 words) based on their findings. The papers should be of a level appropriate for publication in peer-reviewed academic journals. We would like to know whether and how including the Missing Dimensions data adds value to an income-based definition of poverty, whether it changes who we might consider poor and how, and how it might contribute to a broader understanding of poverty and poverty-reduction policy in the Chilean context.

We list below areas in which we are already working, followed by some possible themes others may wish to take up. In addition, applicants are very welcome to propose new topics. Researchers will be granted access to this dataset and will work closely with OPHI researchers, receiving guidance as needed. For some research themes, co-authorship with an OPHI researcher may be suggested. Successful applicants may be invited to present their research at relevant international conferences – including a conference OPHI will organize next March or April in Santiago – and can be assisted with journal publication (either as part of a special issue or independently). All final papers must be submitted to OPHI for publication as Working Papers or research in progress. There is no direct remuneration for the papers.

OPHI researchers are currently working on the following themes:

1. ***Income and traditional multidimensional poverty levels and transitions: Links to the Missing Dimensions:*** The respondents in the 2006 and 2008/9 datasets can be identified as income poor in each of these years, given that the full CASEN income module is available at both points in time. They can also be identified as multidimensionally poor in a number of other traditional dimensions such as education, health and housing. Therefore, it becomes interesting to develop a picture of how income poverty and/or multidimensional poverty status and their corresponding transitions are

associated with the Missing Dimensions. The paper will address the following dimensions: How do the income poor and income non-poor differ along the Missing Dimensions? How do the multidimensionally (MD) poor and the MD non-poor using traditional dimensions differ along the Missing Dimensions? What picture do we get of the Missing Dimensions for those who stayed poor in the two periods? For those who left poverty? For those who entered into poverty?

2. ***Subjective vs. objective indicators within the Missing Dimensions:*** What relationship emerges between subjective and objective indicators for each domain? How does this relationship vary between groups? Is there evidence of adaptive preference or other systematic distortions between groups? How might this perceptual data influence our view of poverty?
3. An exploration of gender differences in the Missing Dimensions using existing and new indices of inequality/discrimination.
4. Links between income mobility, empowerment and subjective wellbeing.

We put forth the following additional topics as potential topics of new papers which other authors may wish to explore:

1. ***Dimension by dimension analysis: Validity and links to other dimensions:*** Papers that rigorously analyze each dimension – assessing the validity of the new indicators, providing a full descriptive analysis and assessing the inter-relationships with the other dimensions and with standard poverty indicators.
2. ***Transitions in traditional variables and the Missing Dimensions:*** Papers could be proposed relating transitions (and/or or continuity) on some specific dimension captured in both periods such as standard employment conditions, health status, housing or education and one or more Missing Dimensions.
3. ***Social benefit receipt and the Missing Dimensions:*** To what extent is receipt of social benefits in 2006 and 2009 reflected in the Missing Dimensions?
4. ***Group differences in the Missing Dimensions:*** To what extent are the Missing Dimensions indicators correlated or clustered amongst groups defined by space or other attributes (gender, ethnicity, poverty status, educational attainment etc.)? How does the existence of data on the Missing Dimensions inform an analysis of group differences – e.g., gender, ethnicity, urban/rural zone etc.? When considered along multiple dimensions, how does the wellbeing of groups defined by these (or other group-based) characteristics change?
5. ***Autonomy and capabilities:*** Exercises exploring how domain specific autonomy measures could be used alongside the functionings for each domain to partially reflect people's capabilities.

6. ***Inequality and/or polarization within and across the Missing Dimensions:***

Papers that look at inequality and polarization measures using the Missing Dimensions, and possibly comparing them with inequality and polarization measures using traditional dimensions. Analysis might also consider between and within group decompositions. Please note that most of the missing dimensions variables are of a categorical or ordinal nature, so the proposals need to address how they will handle such a challenge.

7. ***Comparing unidimensional and multidimensional poverty indices, and their correlates:***

How do the MD poverty figures including the missing dimensions compare with unidimensional income-based measures and with MD poverty measures using only traditional dimensions? What are the correlates of income poverty, of the Missing Dimensions and/or of a multidimensional poverty measure that incorporates the Missing Dimensions?

8. ***Causal links of the Missing Dimensions with standard indicators:*** Innovative and technically sound efforts to look at causal relationships involving the Missing Dimensions data and standard poverty indicators using instrumental variable estimation or other techniques.

9. ***The Missing Dimensions and Policy Implications:*** Analysis of how the new data could inform the Chilean policy context and specific policy questions relating to poverty reduction.

Please note that this list is meant as a point of departure only. Variations on these themes and new themes are very welcome.

How do I apply?

Interested researchers should consult the supplementary material (questionnaires and sample of data) online and prepare a proposal that includes the following:

- Proposal (~ 1,000 – 2,000 words) setting out the research questions to be addressed, the previous work upon which it builds, the methodology to be followed, and a discussion of how the proposed research will deepen current understanding of the issue. Proposals that relate the Missing Dimensions to current policy debates over poverty reduction in Chile are especially welcome.
- List of the interested researchers & their CVs
- Timeline and proposed outputs of the research

Please send this proposal to the attention of ophi@geh.ox.ac.uk by 15 September. Applicants will be informed of our decision by 30 September and will generally have up to six months in which to prepare the paper.

Please feel free to contact us with any further questions.