A Multidimensional Poverty Index in the Sustainable Development Goals

*Interim Reflections*

Sabina Alkire and John Hammock (OPHI)

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SDGs & POST-2015 AGENDA
Post-2015/SDGs: Two tracks at a glance

1. **UN Secretary-General-led** discussions on what should replace the MDGs, supported by global stakeholder consultations

2. **Member State-led** (UN General Assembly) intergovernmental process to develop **SDGs**.
   - These two tracks *converged* in September 2014 into one intergovernmental process to work towards a single framework and single set of global goals.
   - The 2014 OWG proposal of 17 SDGs and 169 indicators is key.
The 2010 High Level Plenary Meeting of the UNGA to review progress towards the MDGs initiated a discussion on post-2015. (http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/65/1), After this: the UNSG:

• established a **UN System Task Team**
• launched a **High Level Panel** of Eminent Persons (HLP)
• appointed **Amina Mohammed** Special Advisor on Post-2015 Development Planning
• initiated eleven global **thematic** consultations and **national** consultations in 87 countries facilitated by the United Nations Development Group (UNDG).

2010: UNGA Plenary to UNSG

1. We, Heads of State and Government, gathered at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 20 to 22 September 2010, welcome the progress made since we last met here in 2005, while expressing deep concern that it falls far short of what is needed. We reaffirm our resolve to work together for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples, recalling the development goals and commitments emanating from the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

81. We request the Secretary-General to report annually on progress in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals until 2015 and to make recommendations in his annual reports, as appropriate, for further steps to advance the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015.
Regional and Bottom-Up

• **Regional Consultations**
  - Led by the five UN Regional Economic Commissions
  - Regional perspective on the post-2015 UN Development agenda (June 2013)

• **Global, thematic & national consultations**
  - Led by the UN Development Group (UNDG)
  - Online Global Survey - My World
  - 11 thematic and 88 national consultations
  - Synthesis report: A Million Voices: The World We Want (Sep 2013)
2013 UNSG Report

• **A life of dignity for all**: accelerating progress towards the Millennium Development Goals and advancing the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 (Sep 2013).

• Provides the UN SG’s recommendations to the General Assembly for the UN development agenda beyond 2015
High Level Panel

• Comprised of 27 leaders from governments, civil society and the private sector. Co-chaired by Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, President of Indonesia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia, and David Cameron, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom.

• Issued their report: A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies through Sustainable Development (May 2013)

• A key new idea: Data Revolution
President of UNGA - Consultations

- **Water, sanitation and sustainable energy**: 18-19 February 2014 (thematic debate)
- **Contributions of women, the young and civil society**: 6-7 March 2014 (high-level event)
- **Role of partnerships**: 9-10 April 2014 (thematic debate)
- **Ensuring stable and peaceful societies**: 24-25 April 2014 (thematic debate)
- **Contributions of North-South, South-South, triangular cooperation, and ICT for development**: 20-21 May 2014 (high-level event)
- **Human rights and the rule of law**: 17-18 June 2014 (high-level event)
- A high level stocktaking event was held in Sept 2014
Other Actors

• **Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN)**
  – Mobilises scientific and technical expertise from academia, civil society, and the private sector
  – *An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development* & many reports.

• **UN Global Compact (UNGC)**
  – Interfaces with business leaders
  – *Corporate Sustainability and the United Nations post-2015 Development Agenda* (June 2013)

• **UN Non-Governmental Liaison Service (UN-NGLS)**
  – Gathered critical analysis from civil society on post-2015 agenda
  – *Advancing Regional Recommendations on the post-2015 development agenda* (November 2013)
SDGs ~ Surprise from Rio

In June 2012, governments and stakeholders came together in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development – also referred to as Rio+20 or Earth Summit 2012, as a reference to the first conference held in Rio in 1992. Their objectives were:

• To secure renewed political commitment to sustainable development;

• To assess progress towards internationally agreed goals on sustainable development; and

• To address new and emerging challenges.

In fact, at Rio+20 governments agreed to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process to develop a set of SDGs.
Rio+20 Summit 2012
A Future We Want

In Rio, 192 governments agreed to start a process of designing **sustainable development goals**, which are “action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities”.

**OPHI** Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative
Rio+20: The SDGs should:

• Be a useful tool for pursuing focused and coherent action on sustainable development;
• Contribute to the full implementation of the outcomes of all major summits in the economic, social and environmental fields;
• Serve as a driver for implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable development in the United Nations system as a whole;
• Build upon commitments already made;
• Be coherent with and integrated in the United Nations development agenda beyond 2015 (post-MDG track); and
• Not divert focus or effort from the achievement of the MDGs.
THE OWG, DATA, AND DIGNITY
The Open Working Group of UNGA

- Established at Rio+20 to oversee an ‘inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process’ to propose a set of global goals for consideration by the General Assembly by UNGA Sept 2014
- Co-chairs: **Mr. Csaba Kőrösí**, Permanent Representative of Hungary, and **Mr. Macharia Kamau**, Perm Rep of Kenya.
- 30 seats shared by 70 Member States, nominated by Member States from the five United Nations regional groups
- **Input phase:** March 2013 to February 2014. During this phase, the OWG took stock in 19 focus areas, facilitated discussion and gathered inputs on topics in eight sessions. (OPHI: April 2013)
- **Consensus building phase:** March 2014 to September 2014. During this phase, the OWG negotiated and wrote its report, proposing 17 goals and 169 indicators.
The OWG’s SDGs - Goals

Goal: expresses an ambitious, specific and actionable commitment.

• Concise and easy to communicate.
• Aspirational.
• Transformational.
• Limited in number.
• Global in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policies and priorities.
The OWG’s SDGs - Target

Target: specific, measurable objective whose attainment will contribute in a major way to achieving one or more goals.

- Aspirational yet attainable.
- Evident link between target and goal.
- Speak to all relevant stakeholders.
- Nationally relevant, adaptable.
- Time-bound.
- Evidence-, science-based.
- Adjustable:
  - as science advances
  - if countries choose to raise level of ambition.
The OWG’s SDGs - Indicators

The OWG did not identify indicators.

- A metric used to measure progress towards a target; generally based on available or established data.

- The Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) report, “Indicators for Sustainable Development Goals” and its successors outlined a sequence of possible indicator frameworks to accompany the SDGs and their targets. Various drafts were sent for consultation, and revised in parallel with OWG drafts. The latest draft was released in February 2015.
The 17 SDGs

Goal 1  End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Goal 2  End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture
Goal 3  Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Goal 4  Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all
Goal 5  Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Goal 6  Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Goal 7  Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
Goal 8  Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all
Goal 9  Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive & sustainable industrialization and foster innovation
Goal 10 Reduce inequality within and among countries
Goal 11 Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
Goal 12 Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns
Goal 13 Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*
Goal 14 Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development
Goal 15 Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss
Goal 16 Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels
Goal 17 Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development
The 17 SDGs

1. Poverty
2. Hunger & Nutrition
3. Health & Well-being
4. Education & Learning
5. Gender & Empowerment
6. Water & Sanitation
7. Energy
8. Growth & Decent Work
9. Infrastructure & Innovation
10. Inequality
11. Urban areas
12. Sustainable consumption & production
13. Climate Change
14. Oceans & Seas
15. Ecosystems & Biodiversity
16. Peace & Justice
17. Global Partnership
Inter-Agency Expert Working Group on Data Revolution

• The report of this IAEWG, chaired by Enrico Giovannini, and written by Clare Melamed (ODI), was written in an extremely short window, and sought to distill wisdom and experience, especially regarding non-standard data sources like big data, and non-official data, and to address issues of national statistical systems.
The UNSG Synthesis report

The Road to Dignity by 2030: ending poverty, transforming all lives and protecting the planet

This major and much-awaited document did not reduce the number of proposed SDGs. It did propose ‘six essential elements...to help frame and reinforce’ that agenda:

1. **Dignity**: to end poverty and fight inequality
2. **People**: to ensure healthy lives, knowledge and the inclusion of women and children
3. **Prosperity**: to grow a strong inclusive and transformative economy
4. **Planet**: to protect our ecosystems for all societies and our children
5. **Justice**: to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions; and
6. **Partnership**: to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development
MPI IN
SDG DOCUMENTS
Rio+20: poverty remains central

Following on from the MDGs, poverty eradication remains the overarching objective of the international community and is expected to form the core of the SDGs. Poverty is multidimensional and there is now widespread recognition that lasting poverty eradication can only be achieved if the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development are addressed in a holistic and balanced manner, acknowledging and capitalising on their interdependencies and focusing on closing the inequality gap rather than straightforward economic growth.
Also in the UNSG Synthesis report

1. **Dignity**: to end poverty and fight inequality

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3. **Prosperity**: to grow a strong inclusive and transformative economy

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5. **Justice**: to promote safe and peaceful societies and strong institutions; and

6. **Partnership**: to catalyse global solidarity for sustainable development
Poverty Measurement ~ $1.25/day

On 2 April 2013, World Bank President Jim Kim announced the World Bank’s two goals post-2015:
- to end extreme income poverty ($1.25/day), and
- to boost shared prosperity.

He announced the Bank could not achieve these goals alone, but would use these goals:
• to set their own priorities
• to monitor and report on them
• as a focal point for their “convening and advocacy power”
• to share their knowledge on solutions

– Nb: on 18 April 2013, SA presented to OWG on MPI
In 2014, the collaborative OWG reasserted the need to end poverty in all its forms everywhere as the top Sustainable Development Goal. The open working group uses a multidimensional concept of poverty.

**OWG Goal 1. End poverty in all its forms**
1.1 by 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than $1.25 a day.
1.2 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. [link](#)
Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

Issued 4 December 2014, the report discusses multidimensional poverty several times, including in the following sections:

2.1 Shared ambitions for a shared future
50. All contributions emphasized that we should continue the march to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, but they also stressed that Member States will need to fill key sustainable development gaps left by the Goals, such as the multidimensional aspects of poverty, decent work for young people, social protection and labour rights for all. They have asked for inclusive and sustainable cities, infrastructure and industrialization. They have called for strengthening effective, accountable, participatory and inclusive governance; for free expression, information, and association; for fair justice systems; and for peaceful societies and personal security for all.
Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

Issued 4 December 2014, the report discusses multidimensional poverty several times, including in the following sections:

4.1 Financing our future
100. Levels of concessionality should take into account different development stages, circumstances and multiple dimensions of poverty and the particular type of investment made.
Synthesis report of the Secretary-General on the post-2015 sustainable development agenda.

Issued 4 December 2014, the report discusses multidimensional poverty several times, including in the following sections:

5.1 Measuring the new dynamics

135. Member States have recognized the importance of building on existing initiatives to develop measurements of progress on sustainable development that go beyond gross domestic product. Thus, work on developing alternative measures or progress, beyond GDP, must receive the dedicated attention of the United Nations, international financial institutions, the scientific community and public institutions. These metrics must be squarely focused on measuring social progress, human wellbeing, justice, security, equality, and sustainability. Poverty measures should reflect the multi-dimensional nature of poverty. New measures of subjective well-being are potentially important new tools for policymaking.
A resolution of the UNGA (A/RES/69/238) on 19 December 2014 reasserted the need for a global MPI as a necessary conceptual framework for the global community to measure and tackle extreme poverty.

5. [UNGA] Underlines the need to better reflect the multidimensional nature of development and poverty, as well as the importance of developing a common understanding among Member States and other stakeholders of that multidimensionality and reflecting it in the context of the post-2015 development agenda, and in this regard invites Member States, supported by the international community, to consider developing complementary measurements, including methodologies and indicators for measuring human development, that better reflect that multidimensionality.
In a report issued on 18 February 2015, the SDSN presents the MPI as Indicator 3 of Goal 1 (“End poverty in all its forms everywhere”).

Indicator 3: Multidimensional Poverty Index: To ensure our conceptualization of multidimensional poverty is firmly rooted in the Open Working Group Outcome Document and proposed SDGs, we support the creation of a revised MPI. At a minimum this “MPI2015” would track extreme deprivation in nutrition, health, education, water, sanitation, clean cooking fuel and reliable electricity, to show continuity with MDG priorities… We therefore propose using the Alkire and Foster method of calculation, and setting a threshold of multiple deprivations, to determine who is or is not considered poor.
So in the SDGs, Poverty is Multidimensional

UNSG Synthesis Report Dec 2014:
2.1 Shared Ambitions: ... Member States will need to fill key sustainable development gaps left by the Goals, such as the multidimensional aspects of poverty.

5.1 Measuring the new dynamics ... Poverty measures should reflect the multi-dimensional nature of poverty.

Sixty-Ninth Session of the UN General Assembly Dec 2014. (A/RES/69/238)
5. Underlines the need to better reflect the multidimensional nature of development and poverty...

Open Working Group Goal 1 Target 1.2: 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.
Some possible next phases:

Leadership: the UN Statistics Commission with UNDESA, and a new IEAG Group; Indicators are to be technical, not politicised.

• Roadmap on broader measures adopted at UNSC in March 2015 calls for an Inter Agency and Expert Group (IAEG)-SDG to be established and meet in April 2015
• Interim meetings include May 18-24, and July FFD Addis
• September 2015: expected proposal to be presented at UN General Assembly
• March 2016: expected discussion and endorsement by UN Statistics Commission
• The process is in flux
Key questions for MPI

1. Which MPI?
   A. National? *If so, how design/monitor in 200 countries in time?*
   B. Global? *If so:*
      i) is it the *existing* global MPI of acute poverty
      ii) is it a *new* acute global MPI reflecting other SDGs
      iii) is there also an MPI for *moderate* poverty (universal)

2. What are the data source(s)?
   A. Nationally – what survey resources will be provided?
   B. Globally – what data are available for acute & moderate MPIs? Imputation?

3. Which institution(s) design, estimate, and update?
   A. Nationally? *Statistical burden will be v great*
   B. Globally?

4. What is the data source?
   A. Nationally – what survey resources will be provided?
   B. Globally – what data are available for acute & moderate MPIs?

5. Where will it be reported?
Multidimensional Measurement Methods:

Multidimensional Poverty Measurement and Analysis

Sabina Alkire, James Foster, Suman Seth, Maria Emma Santos, Jose Manuel Roche, and Paola Ballon

Comprehensive survey of methods used for measuring multidimensional poverty
Illustrates state-of-the-art of quantitative techniques used in multidimensional poverty studies
A unique guide to viewing poverty through a multidimensional lens

multidimensionalpoverty.org