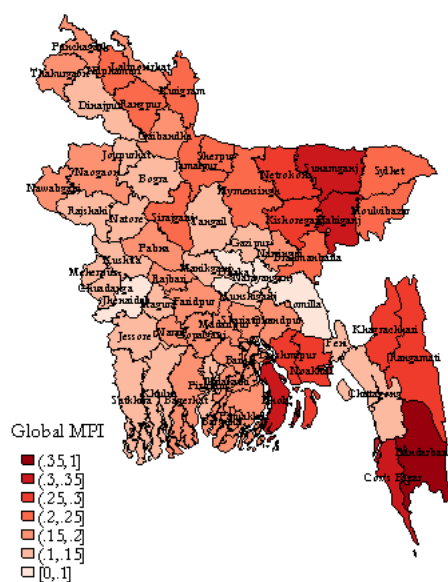# MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY INDEX 2016
2 June 2016
HIGHLIGHTS ~ SOUTH ASIA

In 2016 we have **poverty estimations for seven South Asian** countries, and subnational data for 84 regions, covering 94% of the population in South Asia. We are releasing new MPI estimations using DHS data for Bangladesh (2014) and MICS data for Nepal (2014). Afghanistan is the poorest country in South Asia, with 66% of people being **multidimensionally poor** using 2010/11 data; India (2005/6) was the next poorest with 54%, followed by Bangladesh (2014) with 41%, Pakistan (2012/13) at 44%, Nepal (2014) at 29%, Bhutan (2010) at 27%, and Sri Lanka and the Maldives at 5%. These tend to be higher than the $1.90/day rates, which are 21% for South Asia as a whole.

Global MPI
- (.35,1]
- (.3,.35]
- (.25,.3]
- (.2,.25]
- (.15,.2]
- (.1,.15]
- [0,.1]

In Winter 2015/16 we also estimated and released Bangladesh's Global MPI using the 2012/13 MICS dataset. The distinctive feature of that dataset was that it permitted us to decompose MPI to the district level, rather than division, so subnational data was available for 64 regions, giving an even more fine-grained view of poverty. For example, we can see a great deal of variation within the divisions that was previously not visible.

For the first time we release destitution results all South Asian countries including Bhutan and Maldives. Our **measure of destitution** identifies a subset of poor people as destitute if they experience extreme deprivations like severe malnutrition, losing two children, having all primary-aged school children out of school, and using open defecation. **In Afghanistan 38% of people are destitute**. But interestingly Bangladesh has much lower rate of destitution than Pakistan (12% vs 20% of the populations are destitute), despite having relatively similar headcount ratios, showing that Bangladesh has alleviated the worst forms of deprivations.

Country	Year	MPI	% MPI poor (H)	Intensity of MPI (A)	% Destitute
Maldives	2009	**0.018**	5.2	35.6	**1.5**
Bhutan	2010	**0.119**	27.2	43.9	**8.3**
Nepal	2014	**0.126**	28.6	44.2	**10.8**
Bangladesh	2014	**0.196**	41.3	47.4	**11.6**
Pakistan	2012/13	**0.230**	44.2	52.1	**20.7**
India	2005/06	**0.283**	53.7	52.7	**28.5**
Afghanistan	2010/11	**0.353**	66.2	53.4	**37.7**

Across our 8 South Asian countries we find that poverty remains higher in rural areas. For example, in Nepal, only 7% of urban dwellers are poor but 33% in rural areas. In Afghanistan, 39% of urban dwellers are poor, but 72% of rural inhabitants. Hence rural areas remain the priority for MPI reduction.

Nepal had stellar performance reducing poverty incidence 2006-2011 from 64% to 44%. The MPI estimations using this survey, by MICS, are not comparable to the others and we cannot yet say definitely what the comparable rates would be. However it does seem the Nepal may have halved its MPI in less than 10 years which would be a wonderful accomplishment.

We decompose India, Afghanistan, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Pakistan by subnational regions. **The poorest region in South Asia is Bihar, followed by 'South' Afghanistan.** The poorest 15 subnational regions in South Asia are all in India or Afghanistan, plus one region (Balochistan) of Pakistan.

As a region, South Asia's MPI is dominated by India, whose data are out of date. We are looking to release new estimations using India's NFHS-IV when the data are released, at which time we will further analyse MPI in this region and over time.