Acute Multidimensional Poverty: A New Index for Developing Countries
Sabina Alkire & Maria Emma Santos
Who are we?

Calculating MPI – team coordinated by Maria Emma Santos involving Mauricio Apablaza, Yele Batana, Marta Barazzetta, Mauro Caselli, Ivan Gonzalez DeAlba, Enrique Hennings, Salvatore Morelli, Juan Pablo Ocampo Sheen, Uma Pradhan, Jose Manuel Roche, Maria Emma Santos, Suman Seth, Shabana Singh, Babak Somekh, Ana Vaz, Rosa Vidarte, Zheng Zhi, and Shuyang. Uma Pradhan, Sarah Malik, Gisela Robles Aguilar, Ale Ratazzi, and Gaston Yalonetzky have also contributed.

Ground Reality Check: Philomena Wanjiru (Kenya), Karen Daka (Madagascar), Carlos & Jessica (Peru), Indrajit Roy (India), Monica Wihardja (Indonesia), Elise Klein, John Hammock, and James Jewell.

Other contributors include: Karin Eli (Indicators); Paddy Coulter (Communications), Natalie Cresswell (Administration & Finance).
Background: the MPI

– An international measure of acute poverty for 104 developing countries.
– Launched by UNDP’s HDRO and OPHI on 14 July 2010, as an experimental series that supplants HPI-I
– Will be updated annually if new data
– MPI-2 to be developed for middle-high HD countries
– Some analysis is ongoing

– Aims to encourage the development of better national measures of multidimensional poverty
Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)  *acute poverty in developing countries*

1. Data
2. MPI Components
3. Methodology (JEF has done)
4. Results
5. Checks
6. Key Issues
1. **Data: Surveys**

Demographic & Health Surveys (*DHS* - 48)
Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (*MICS* - 35)
World Health Survey (*WHS* – 19)

Additionally we used 2 special surveys covering Mexico and urban Argentina.
2. Dimensions of MPI

- Health
- Education
- Standard of living
2. Missing Dimensions

Data are not available to incorporate any of these into the MPI for 100+ countries:

• Work
• Empowerment / Political Freedom
• Safety from Violence
• Relationships
  (social capital, inclusion, cohesion, dignity)
2. Dimensions and Indicators of MPI

Three Dimensions of Poverty

- Health
- Education
- Living Standard

Ten Indicators
- Nutrition
- Child Mortality
- Years of Schooling
- Children enrolled
- Cooking Fuel
- Sanitation
- Water
- Electricity
- Floor
- Assets
2. Measurement: Indicators & Cutoffs

• **Health**
  
  – **Child Mortality:** If any child has died in the family

  – **Malnutrition:** If any interviewed adult in the family has low Body Mass Index; if any child is more than 2 standard deviations below the reference normal weight for age, WHO standards) [WHS has male & female data but no child data; MICS has child data but no adult data; DHS has women 15-49 & child]

*These are distinctly formulated; mortality is a stock.*
2. Measurement: Indicators & Cutoffs

- **Education**
  - *Years of Schooling*: if no person in the household has completed 5 years of schooling

- **Child Enrolment**: if any school-aged child is out of school, where school-aged is an eight year period from the national starting age.
2. Measurement: Indicators & Cutoffs

- **Standard of Living**
  - *Electricity* (no electricity is deprived)
  - *Drinking water* (MDG definitions)
  - *Sanitation* (MDG definitions + not being shared)
  - *Flooring* (dirt/sand/dung are deprived)
  - *Cooking Fuel* (wood/charcoal/dung are deprived)
  - *Assets* (deprived if do not own a car/truck and do not own *more than one* of these: radio, tv, telephone, bike, motorbike, or refrigerator)
2. Measurement: Indicators reflect MDGs

*MDG omissions: gender, infectious disease, income, maternal mortality, environment, tenure*

– Health
  • Nutrition = MDG 1 (Eradicate Extreme Poverty and Hunger)
  • Mortality = MDG 4 (Reduce Child Mortality)

– Education
  • Enrolment = MDG 2 (Achieve Universal Primary Education)
  • Years Schooling = MDG 2

– Standard of Living
  • Electricity *not MDG*
  • Sanitation MDG 7 (Ensure Environmental Sustainability)
  • Floor *not MDG*
  • Cooking Fuel MDG 7
  • Drinking Water MDG 7
  • Assets MDG 1
  • Assets MDG 1
2. Measurement: data constraints

The MPI is deeply affected by the lack of **comparable** data.
key **indicators** are not collected (stock, quality)
• data for some dimensions are **missing**
• **missing values** lead to sample size reduction/biases
• **respondent(s)** vary; individual level data is sparse
• surveys **updated** every 3-5 years, and in different **years**
• data exclude certain populations (elders, institutionalized)
• **income/consumption** surveys lack MPI health indicators.

*These can be addressed at a national level for national measures.*

“Improving data gathering and its quality in all countries should be a central focus…”

Bourguignon *et al.* 2008 page 6
2. Measurement: data constraints

Examples of the constraints:
62 countries have 10 indicators;
93 have 9 or 10 indicators
101 have 8-10 indicators (8 lack two indicators)
3 countries lack three indicators (Latvia, Myanmar, Surinam)

Biases from sample size reduction:
15 countries are lower or upper bound estimates of poverty.
These include China, S Africa, Pakistan (all lower bound).
2. Measurement Components: Weights

Each dimension is equally weighted:

- Health = 1/3
- Education = 1/3
- Standard of Living = 1/3

“the interpretation of the set of indicators is greatly eased where the individual components have degrees of importance that, while not necessarily exactly equal, are not grossly different.”

2. Measurement Components: Weights

- Each indicator is equally weighted:
  - **Health** (1/3)
    - Nutrition = 1/6;
    - Mortality = 1/6
  - **Education** (1/3)
    - Enrolment = 1/6
    - Years Schooling = 1/6
  - **Standard of Living** (1/3)
    - Electricity 1/18
    - Sanitation 1/18
    - Floor 1/18
    - Cooking Fuel 1/18
    - Drinking Water 1/18
    - Assets 1/18
3. MPI’s Methodology: Identification (dual cutoff)

• MPI’s mathematical structure corresponds to the first measure of the Alkire & Foster (2007) family of multidimensional poverty measures, called $M_0$.

• MPI specifies dimensions, indicators, & weights.

• The deprivation cutoffs ($z_j$) are as detailed above.

• The poverty cutoff ($k$) is set at 3 (out of 10); 30%.
3. Methodology: Identification

Recall the weights on indicators vary

Health and Education: 1.67 each (10/6)
Standard of Living: 0.55 each (10/18)

A person is identified as poor if deprived in:

* any two Health or Education indicators;
* all six Standard of Living indicators;
* 1 Health/Ed plus 3 Standard of Living
3. Methodology: Aggregation

- We construct the MPI using the AF method:

\[
\text{Formula: } MPI = M_0 = H \times A
\]

- \( H \) is the percentage of people who are poor. It shows the *incidence* of multidimensional poverty.

- \( A \) is the average proportion of weighted deprivations people suffer at the same time. It shows the *intensity* of people’s poverty.
3. Methodology: MPI $g_0(k)$ matrix

Adjusted Headcount Ratio = $M_0 = HA = .442$

$k=3$  

(have MPI for all k values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicators</th>
<th>$c(k)$</th>
<th>$c(k)/d$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td>1.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>1.67</td>
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<td>.55</td>
<td>.55</td>
<td>.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$g_0^0(k) = \begin{bmatrix}
0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 \\
1.67 & 1.67 & 1.67 & 1.67 & .55 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0 & 0.55 \\
0 & 1.67 & 0 & 1.67 & .55 & 0 & .55 & .55 & .55 & 0 \\
0 & 0 & 0 & 1.67 & .55 & .55 & .55 & 0 & .55 & .55 \\
4.42 & .442 & & & & & & & & &
\end{bmatrix}$

$H = \text{headcount} = \frac{3}{4} = 75\%$

$A = \text{average deprivation share among poor} = .59 = 59\%$

$HA = .442$
Example: Tabitha

OPHI has done ground reality checks in Kenya, Madagascar, Indonesia, and India.
Washing job: $0.66 per wash
If no washing...

2nd Job: sell recycled cloths
Preparing recycled cloth to sell
Tabitha’s MPI

We know Tabitha is income poor. But what does her life look like?

- One of her children is malnourished-
- She has to buy and carry her water-
- She has to pay to use a group toilet-
- She has no electricity-
- She does not own more than one asset.
Tabitha’s MPI

Tabitha is deprived in nutrition and 4 other indicators.
Others’ Stories
4. Results:

These results are for 104 developing countries, selected because they have DHS, MICS or WHS data since 2000. Special surveys were used for Mexico and urban Argentina.

They cover 78.5% of the world population (2007).
104 Developing Countries:

- ~24 Central and E Europe and CIS, (400M)
- ~11 Arab States, (217.5 M)
- ~18 Latin America and the Caribbean (491M)
- ~5 South Asia (1544M)
- ~9 East Asia and the Pacific (1868M)
- ~37 Sub-Saharan Africa (710.4M)

Total Population: 5.230M people

(population figures from 2007; poverty from 2000-2008).
The MPI headcounts fall between $1.25 and $2.00/day headcounts.

~ of the 5230M people living in the 104 countries, \textbf{1659M} are identified as multidimensionally poor (32\% of people)

~ this is between $1.25 and $2 a day
The MPI headcounts and the $1.25/day data
Most poor people in the world by MPI live in South Asia, followed by Sub-Saharan Africa.
Intensity tends to be highest with high Incidence

\[ MPI = A \times H \]

Poorest Countries, Highest MPI

Niger
Ethiopia

Myanmar, Philippnes
Viet Nam, Pakistan, Indonesia

South Sudan, Bangladesh, India

Nepal, Pakistan, Brazil

China
Sri Lanka

High Income
Upper-Middle Income
Lower-Middle Income
Low Income
The MPI differs from and complements income poverty.

Of the 93 countries for which we have information on income poverty headcounts:

- The MPI headcount of poor persons is higher than $1.25/day headcount in 57 countries.
- The MPI headcount is lower than $1.25 headcounts in 36 countries.
- Higher than $2 headcounts in 24 countries, lower in 69.

The MPI is measuring a related but different underlying phenomenon than income poverty. Further research is required.
Cross-Tabs of MPI with Income Poverty

Do income and MPI identify the same poor?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income</th>
<th>Non-Poor</th>
<th>Poor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Non-Poor</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td></td>
<td>C (Inclusion Error)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capability poverty measured as:</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>---------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children 5-12</td>
<td>Adults (Illiterate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Poor</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Income Poor</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income Poor Not Educ. Poor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ordinary Cross-tabs: India NSS 2004
We were able to do this only with the 19 WHS countries because WHS has a brief consumption module.

43% are income poor; 63% are MPI poor

However, 37% of income poor people are not MPI poor (we might expect 0%)

And 53% of MPI poor people are not income poor (we could expect 31%)

Why?
4. Decompositions uncover large variation in MPI.
4. MPI varies greatly by region & ethnicity

- In Kerala India 16% of the population is MPI poor; in Bihar it is 81%.

- The poorest 8 Indian states are home to more MPI poor people than the 26 poorest African countries: 421M vs. 410 M.
MPI ranges 0 to 0.64
Consider countries where MPI ≥ 0.32
These countries have an MPI $\geq 0.32$.
These countries have an MPI $\geq 0.32$
These countries have an MPI $\geq 0.32$

They include Nepal; Rest are African countries

Here is India
There are 26 African Countries

- Focus: poor people
- India is a very populous country.
- And we know that MPI varies a lot within countries

Where do the people whose MPI $\geq 0.32$ live?

We take India as an example of a large country, and decompose it to see where such people live within India.
Total Population of India compared with pop of 37 African countries (Millions, 2007)
What Indian States’ MPI ≥ 0.32?
Visual comparison: Size = Number of Poor

The chart shows the visual comparison of the average intensity of poverty (A) against the percentage of MPI poor people (H) for various regions. The size of the circles represents the number of poor people, with larger circles indicating higher numbers. Key regions labeled include:

- Cote D'Ivoire
- Nigeria
- Madhya Pradesh
- Bihar
- DRC
- West Bengal
- Zambia
- Uttar Pradesh
- Madagascar
- Ethiopia
- Niger
- India

The graph effectively uses the size of the circles to illustrate the relative number of poor people across different regions, making it easier to compare their poverty levels.
Composition by Indicator

MPIs are similar 0.12-P & 0.13-HP; Composition differs
Composition by Indicator

HP is worse in nutrition & std of living
- Schooling
- Child Enrolment
- Mortality
- Nutrition
- Electricity
- Sanitation
- Water
- Floor
- Cooking Fuel
- Assets

MPIs are similar 0.12-P & 0.13-HP; Composition differs

Punjab is more deprived in education

Punjab: 11.7% (Schooling), 18.2% (Child Enrolment), 12.8% (Mortality), 23.3% (Nutrition), 9.4% (Electricity), 7.4% (Sanitation), 10.4% (Water), 5.2% (Floor), 23.3% (Cooking Fuel), 9.4% (Assets)

Himachal Pradesh: 4.6% (Schooling), 9.0% (Child Enrolment), 11.5% (Mortality), 31.7% (Nutrition), 11.9% (Electricity), 6.5% (Sanitation), 12.4% (Water), 8.5% (Floor), 11.5% (Cooking Fuel), 11.9% (Assets)
The image shows a radar chart comparing various indicators across different countries. The indicators include:

- Schooling
- Child enrolment
- Assets
- Mortality
- Nutrition
- Electricity
- Sanitation
- Cooking Fuel
- Drinking Water
- Floor

The countries compared are Argentina, Mexico, and Colombia. The chart uses different colors to represent each country.
MPI over time…

![Graph showing MPI over time for Bangladesh, Ethiopia, and Ghana]
Ghana and Bangladesh reduced H relatively more than A, Ethiopia the other way round.
Bangladesh improved child enrolment, Ethiopia nutrition and water, Ghana many at the same time.
5. Robustness Checks

• An international measure of multidimensional poverty is quite a crude instrument.

• As this is a new methodology, we tried to scrutinize the measure, and tune it to reflect multidimensional poverty with sufficient accuracy to add value for policy.
Some basic checks:

• **Quality Checks** – triangulating our results with other data sources

• **Robustness** of measure to different \( z \) cutoffs (we implemented a total of 18 measures, having different indicators and cutoffs)

• **Robustness** to changes in the \( k \) cutoff

• **Identification of the poor**: does it identify the same households as poor as a) income poor; and b) bottom quintile by the DHS wealth index?
MPI is robust to changes in key to indicators & cutoffs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MPI 1</th>
<th>MPI 2</th>
<th>MPI 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Excluding</td>
<td>Using</td>
<td>Using</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enrolment</td>
<td>weight-for-age</td>
<td>weight-for-height</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MPI 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using weight-for-age (Selected Measure)</td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>0.989</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spearman</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kendall (Taub)</td>
<td>0.884</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MPI 3</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Using weight-for-height</td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>0.986</td>
<td>0.999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spearman</td>
<td>0.974</td>
<td>0.998</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kendall (Taub)</td>
<td>0.872</td>
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<td><strong>MPI 4</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Using height-for-age</td>
<td>Pearson</td>
<td>0.987</td>
<td>0.998</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Spearman</td>
<td>0.976</td>
<td>0.996</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kendall (Taub)</td>
<td>0.881</td>
<td>0.960</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.946</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Number of countries:** 85 (All DHS and MICS countries)

All MPI 1-4 use the New Reference Population to calculate children’s nutritional indicators

In all cases a cutoff of being deprived in 30% of the weighted indicators was used
MPI is robust to changes in key to indicators & cutoffs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MPI</th>
<th>Using weight-for-age (Selected Measure)</th>
<th>MPI 1</th>
<th>MPI 2</th>
<th>MPI 3</th>
<th>MPI 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Excluding Enrolment</td>
<td>Using weight-for-age</td>
<td>Using weight-for-height</td>
<td>Using height-for-age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPI 2</td>
<td>Using weight-for-age (Selected Measure)</td>
<td>Pearson 0.989</td>
<td>Spearman 0.988</td>
<td>Kendall (Taub) 0.920</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPI 3</td>
<td>Using weight-for-height</td>
<td>Pearson 0.986</td>
<td>Spearman 0.985</td>
<td>Kendall (Taub) 0.908</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>MPI 4</td>
<td>Using height-for-age</td>
<td>Pearson 0.987</td>
<td>Spearman 0.987</td>
<td>Kendall (Taub) 0.917</td>
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<tr>
<td>MPI 5</td>
<td>Using under 5 mortality (rather than age non-specific mortality)</td>
<td>Pearson 0.991</td>
<td>Spearman 0.989</td>
<td>Kendall (Taub) 0.920</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pearson 0.989
Spearman 0.997
Kendall (Taub) 0.966

Number of countries: 51 (All DHS and three MICS countries which have Birth History)

All MPI 1-4 use the New Reference Population to calculate children’s nutritional indicators In all cases a cutoff of being deprived in 30% of the weighted indicators was used
Robustness to poverty cutoff from 20% to 40% - AFR
Robustness of MPI in South Asia

MPI comparisons for some South Asian countries as $k$ is varied

India and Bangladesh are not robust $k=2$ to $k=4$
MPI is robust to varying $k=2$ to 4

Latin American example

- Bolivia
- Dominican Republic
- Haiti
- Peru
- Belize

Cutoff $k$
MPI is robust to varying $k=2$ to $4$

• 95% of the possible pairs of countries have a dominance relation for $k$ 2 to 4. That is, we can say that one country is unambiguously poorer than another regardless of whether we require to be poor in 20, 30 or 40% of the weighted indicators.
Illustrative Example: Weights Robustness

- Recall: Indian states’ MPI varies from .06 to .5 and headcounts vary from 17-81% MPI poor

- Re-weight each dimension:
  - 33% 50% 25% 25%
  - 33% 25% 50% 25%
  - 33% 25% 25% 50%

- How does this affect:
  - MPI, H, A
  - Ranking of Indian states
Illustrative Example: Weights Robustness

- With re-weights, India’s MPI varies:
  - H: 33% 50% 25% 25%
  - E: 33% 25% 50% 25%
  - S: 33% 25% 25% 50%

- Headcount in Kerala varies 16% - 20.5%
- Headcount in Bihar varies 74%-86%
- Rankings robust (next slide).
- Possible conclusion: Set wts and keep stable.
### Illustrative Example: Weights Robustness

Rank correlations across regions for different weighting structures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>H</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>0.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0.99</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>0.96</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>H</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>S</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>1.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Spearman

Kendall
Ongoing analysis

- **Bootstrapping** to estimate confidence intervals
- **Robustness** tests on weights
- **Household Size** effect
6. Some key issues: data

• **Data Constraints**: Most criticisms address these (*why don’t you include _____?*). How to respond well?

  - ‘new’ questionnaires on standard surveys
  - ‘new’ dimensions
  - individual level data, excluded populations
  - combination of surveys, administrative data, mapping
  - combination of data for different reference groups
6. Some key issues: implementation

• **International MPI**
  - Robustness (weights, bootstrapping, hh size, indicators)
  - Updating & Improving existing MPI
  - MPI-2 for an overlapping set of middle-high HD countries

• **National Measures: some questions**
  - What is the purpose of the measure?
    * Targeting the poorest (for services / cash transfers)
    * National Poverty Reporting (akin to Income)
    * Monitoring and Evaluation
  - How choose dimensions/indicators/cutoffs/weights?
  - Should income be included or kept separate?
  - Who decides, implements, designs survey, reports
6. Some key issues: research

• Methodological
  – Time series, Panel data methodologies, Chronic Poverty
  – Robustness tests (weights, cutoffs, indicators)
  – Test statistics, measurement error, uncertainty
  – Appropriate validation ‘tests’ for national measures

• Poverty Analysis
  – Sequence of interventions
  – How decompositions inform allocation/policy design
  – Income poverty & deprivations in other dimensions
  – Analysis methods & endogeneity
Finally

“Achieving the MDGs will require increased attention to those most vulnerable.”

UNDP Millennium Development Goal Report 2010

“Acceleration in one goal often speeds up progress in others;” to meet MDGs strategically we need to see them together.

Roadmap towards the Implementation of the MDGs

www.ophi.org.uk
Policy Applications of MPI

- **Target** groups/regions with the greatest MD poverty.
- **Identify coupled deprivations** – common patterns
- **Show impacts** of policy interventions quickly.
- **Design policy** according to structure of MD poverty

National MPIs could be tailored to the context. OPHI has preliminary enquiries/conversations with countries.