



March 2014 OPHI e-Update

Welcome to the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative's regular email update of announcements, opportunities, new publications and events.

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HIGHLIGHTS

Government of the Philippines adopts multidimensional poverty measure

The Government of the Philippines has adopted an official multidimensional poverty measure in its updated Philippine Development Plan (2011-2016). The measure has been used to set a key poverty reduction target in an effort to secure inclusive growth and improvements in quality of life in the country, which has nearly 97 million inhabitants. The updated plan, which spells out the government's policy actions and investment priorities in 2014-2016, pledges to reduce the incidence of multidimensional poverty to 16-18 percent. The new multidimensional poverty indicator is based on the [Alkire Foster method](#) for multidimensional measurement, which has been adapted to the national context and priorities of the Philippines. [[The Philippines adopts multidimensional poverty measure...](#)] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/government-of-the-philippines-adopts-multidimensional-poverty-measure>

Deadlines approaching for OPHI's Summer School in Oxford, 11-23 August

The deadlines are approaching for OPHI's annual two-week Summer School on Multidimensional Poverty Analysis, which this year will be held at the University of Oxford in the UK from 11-23 August 2014. The purpose of this intensive summer school is to provide a thorough conceptual and technical introduction to some techniques of measuring multidimensional poverty, with a strong emphasis on the Alkire Foster method. Applicants are warmly invited to apply by completing the [online form](#). The deadline for applicants requiring financial assistance is **16 March 2014**, and the closing date for all applications is **23 March 2014**. [[OPHI Summer School 2014...](#)] http://www.ophi.org.uk/ophi_events/ophi-summer-school-on-multidimensional-poverty-analysis-2014-oxford-uk/

New multidimensional measure of extreme poverty proposed in Chile

An Expert Commission convened by the President of Chile, Sebastian Piñera, to review the way poverty is measured, has recommended a new multidimensional measure of vulnerability and extreme poverty to better capture the full reality of poverty in a high-income context. The new measure, which is based on the [Alkire Foster method](#), has five dimensions and divides households into four groups: the extremely poor; the poor; the vulnerable; and those who are neither poor nor vulnerable. [[Multidimensional measure proposed in Chile...](#)] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/new-multidimensional-measure-of-extreme-poverty-and-vulnerability-proposed-in-chile>

Caribbean moves forward with multidimensional poverty measure

Political and technical leaders from the Caribbean met in Barbados in February to move forward with the construction of a new measure of multidimensional poverty for the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) region. The committee is using the [Alkire Foster method](#) to compute a Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), which will be tailored to capture the non-income aspects of poverty in the OECS region, and will be computed annually or every two years. The measure will allow countries to analyse poverty by sub-group and by different dimensions, of which there are four: living standards, labour, education and health. [[Multidimensional poverty measure for the Caribbean...](#)] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/caribbean-moves-forward-with-multidimensional-poverty-measure>

OPHI's China Mills launches her book on global mental health

OPHI Research Officer China Mills gave a seminar on [“Maps that precede the territory”: Simulacra and the global ‘reality’ of mental health](#) at Manchester University in February to launch her book, [‘Decolonizing Global Mental Health’](#), which was published recently by Routledge. The book argues that it is imperative to explore what counts as evidence within Global Mental Health, and seeks to de-familiarize current ‘Western’ conceptions of psychology and psychiatry using postcolonial theory. Mills, whose work with OPHI is focused on Social Isolation, part of the [Missing Dimensions](#) programme, draws on secondary and primary work in the book to question the utility of a psychiatric concept that restricts itself to scientific models of distress without an appreciation of the sociopolitical factors that affect mental health. [[‘Decolonising Global Mental](#)

[Health'...\] http://www.ophi.org.uk/ophi-researcher-publishes-book-on-decolonising-global-mental-health](http://www.ophi.org.uk/ophi-researcher-publishes-book-on-decolonising-global-mental-health)

EVENTS

Lunchtime Seminar Series for Hilary Term - podcasts available online

OPHI's Lunchtime Seminar Series for Hilary Term draws to a close this week, but you can catch up with some of the talks you may have missed by listening to the podcasts and downloading the presentations. The many seminars for which these resources are available include OPHI Director Sabina Alkire's talk on 'The methodologies of computing changes over time in multidimensional poverty', and OPHI Research Officer Ana Vaz's seminar on 'Multidimensional poverty and impact analysis'. You can browse all of this and previous term's seminars on our [Seminar Series page](#). [**Lunchtime Seminar Series...**] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/courses-events/seminars/>

PUBLICATIONS

Alkire and Santos paper on global MPI published online in *World Development*

A paper by OPHI's Director Sabina Alkire and Research Associate Maria Emma Santos on 'Measuring Acute Poverty in the Developing World: Robustness and Scope of the Multidimensional Poverty Index' has been published online in *World Development*. The paper, which was published as [OPHI Working Paper 59](#) and extends [OPHI Working Paper 38](#), presents the [global Multidimensional Poverty Index \(MPI\)](#), and analyses its scope and robustness, with a focus on the data challenges and methodological issues involved in constructing and estimating it. A range of robustness tests indicate that the MPI offers a reliable framework that can complement global income poverty estimates. The paper will appear in volume 59 of *World Development* in July. [**Alkire and Santos paper published in *World Development*...**] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/alkire-and-santos-paper-on-global-mpi-published-online-in-world-development>

Measuring Inequality among the Multidimensionally Poor – new working paper by Seth and Alkire

OPHI's Suman Seth and Sabina Alkire have co-authored a new working paper on 'Measuring and Decomposing Inequality among the Multidimensionally Poor Using Ordinal Data: A Counting Approach'. In *OPHI Working Paper 68*, Seth and Alkire explore the advantages and costs of adjusting poverty measures to be sensitive to inequality among the multidimensionally poor. They go on to propose a separate decomposable inequality measure – a positive multiple of variance – to capture inequality in deprivation counts among the poor and decompose across population subgroups. Two illustrations using Demographic Health Survey data sets are provided to demonstrate how this inequality measure adds important information to the adjusted headcount ratio poverty measure in the Alkire Foster class of measures. [**OPHI Working Paper 68...**] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/measuring-and-decomposing-inequality-among-the-multidimensionally-poor-using-ordinal-data-a-counting-approach/>

Social isolation: A conceptual and measurement proposal – new working paper by Zavaleta, Samuel & Mills

A paper by OPHI researchers Diego Zavaleta, Kim Samuel and China Mills titled '[Social isolation: A conceptual and measurement proposal](http://www.ophi.org.uk/social-isolation-a-conceptual-and-measurement-proposal/)' argues that existing research in several fields provides solid ground for a common concept and indicators that measure specific aspects of social isolation. *OPHI Working Paper 67* argues the importance of understanding the role of social isolation in people's experience of poverty, and of constructing a basic, internationally comparable indicator. The paper adds to the debate in three ways: firstly, by presenting a working definition of social isolation; secondly, by emphasizing the relevance of isolation in poverty analysis; and thirdly, by proposing indicators to measure social connectedness which could be incorporated into a multi-topic household survey. [*[OPHI Working Paper 67...](http://www.ophi.org.uk/social-isolation-a-conceptual-and-measurement-proposal/)*]

Multidimensional Targeting and Evaluation – new working paper by Robano and Smith

[Multidimensional Targeting and Evaluation: A General Framework with an Application to a Poverty Programme in Bangladesh](http://www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-targeting-and-evaluation-a-general-framework-with-an-application-to-a-poverty-program-in-bangladesh/)', by Virginia Robano and Stephen C. Smith, proposes multidimensional indicators to assess the outcomes of poverty programmes. Many poverty, safety net, training, and other social programmes use multiple screening criteria to determine eligibility. *OPHI Working Paper 65* applies recent advances in multidimensional measurement analysis to develop a straightforward method for summarising changes in groups of eligibility (screening) indicators. The authors also examine impacts on other multidimensional poverty measures that address key participant deficits. The methods are applied to an ultra-poverty programme run by the non-governmental organisation BRAC in Bangladesh. [*[OPHI Working Paper 65...](http://www.ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-targeting-and-evaluation-a-general-framework-with-an-application-to-a-poverty-program-in-bangladesh/)*]

Young Lives publishes a working paper on 'Decomposing Multidimensional Poverty Dynamics' by OPHI's Apablaza and Yalonetzky

A paper by OPHI Research Associates Mauricio Apablaza and Gaston Yalonetzky has been published as a working paper by [Young Lives](http://www.ophi.org.uk/young-lives-publishes-a-working-paper-by-ophi-researchers), an international study of childhood poverty led by a team at Oxford University's Department for International Development. '[Decomposing Multidimensional Poverty Dynamics](http://www.ophi.org.uk/young-lives-publishes-a-working-paper-by-ophi-researchers)' proposes a novel decomposition of changes in multidimensional poverty, as measured by the basic members of the Alkire Foster family of measures. The method works for any type of dataset; and, in the case of panel datasets, it is useful for relating changes in these Alkire Foster measures to transitions into and out of multidimensional poverty. Published as *Young Lives Working Paper 101*, the paper is an initial attempt to build a bridge between the literatures of poverty dynamics and multidimensional poverty measures. [*[Young Lives Working Paper 101...](http://www.ophi.org.uk/young-lives-publishes-a-working-paper-by-ophi-researchers)*]

Gender Inequality in Multidimensional Welfare Deprivation in West Africa – new working paper by Agbodji, Batana and Ouedraogo

OPHI Working Paper 64, by Akoété Ega Agbodji, Yélé Maweki Batana and Denis Ouedraogo, explores '[Gender Inequality in Multidimensional Welfare Deprivation in West Africa: The Case of Burkina Faso and Togo](#)'. Unlike other gender poverty studies, which are mostly based on monetary measurement, the study employs a counting approach to examine gender issues in Burkina Faso and Togo using household surveys. Focusing on six dimensions (housing, basic utilities, assets, education, employment and access to credit) largely recognized as MDG targets, the main findings of the study indicate that, overall, individuals are most deprived in education in Burkina Faso, while the reverse situation is true in Togo. Gender inequality is observed in all. [[OPHI Working Paper 64...](#)] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/gender-inequality-in-multidimensional-welfare-deprivation-in-west-africa-the-case-of-burkina-faso-and-togo/>

A Multidimensional Approach to the Bottom Billion – new Research in Progress paper by Alkire, Roche, Seth and Sumner

A paper titled '[Where Do the World's Poorest Live? A Multidimensional Approach](#)' by OPHI Director Sabina Alkire, Research Officer Suman Seth and Research Associates José Manuel Roche and Andy Sumner has been published as *OPHI Research in Progress Paper 39a*. It is now well known that most of the poor do not live in low income nor fragile states, whether one uses income poverty or multidimensional poverty to assess this. However, low income and fragile states typically have higher rates of poverty and poverty severity than stable middle income countries, which raises the question, even if middle income countries are home to the world's poor, where do the world's *poorest* live? This paper takes three approaches to identifying the 'Bottom Billion': by countries, by sub-national regions, and by the poverty profiles of individuals. Although the different approaches produce different findings, there are notable commonalities that are of relevance to discussions on the post-2015 development goals. [[OPHI Research in Progress 39a...](#)] <http://www.ophi.org.uk/ophi-research-in-progress-39a/>

BLOGS & MEDIA

Recent media coverage of OPHI's work includes:

- [Sabina Alkire interviewed on Bhutan's new poverty measure in *Kuensel*](#): OPHI's Director discusses the adoption of the Alkire Foster method to construct Bhutan's national Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).
- [CNN mentions OPHI's work in its round-up of stories of note in 2013](#): In a special news piece over Christmas, CNN reports on four stories of note from last year, including OPHI's analysis of the Global MPI 2013.
- [Sabina Alkire discusses multidimensional poverty on Voice of Russia](#): OPHI's Director is interviewed on Russia's international radio broadcasting service about how the Global MPI is constructed and what it can tell us.

PEOPLE

Research Associates - José Manuel Roche, Paola Ballon and Mauricio Apablaza

OPHI is delighted to announce that former OPHI Research Officers José Manuel Roche, Paola Ballon and Mauricio Apablaza will continue their affiliation with us as Research Associates.

OPHI is pleased to welcome a number of visiting academics during spring 2014:

Thomas Morgan, a Research Fellow at the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), remains with us as a Visiting Fellow. The IEP is responsible for the Global Peace Index, a measure of peace at the nation-state level, and Thom will be analysing the cost of violence to the UK as well as working with OPHI on the nexus of poverty and peace.

We are delighted that our longstanding policy advisor, **Kim Samuel**, remains with us as Scholar in Residence. Kim is working with our Missing Dimensions team to conduct research on social isolation as a critical experiential and measurable component of multidimensional poverty.

March 2014 - OPHI e-Update “Advancing freedoms and overcoming poverty”

OPHI e-Updates aim to highlight key resources and information materials. We welcome your feedback and participation.

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For general information and feedback, please contact us: ophi@qeh.ox.ac.uk.

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Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI)

Oxford Department of International Development

Queen Elizabeth House (QEH), University of Oxford

Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3TB, UK

<http://www.ophi.org.uk/>, tel. +44 1865 271915
