Sabina Alkire, director of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at the University of Oxford, has welcomed the UN Secretary General’s call for a Zero Hunger future at the Rio+20 Conference.

“In particular, OPHI and I fully endorse the call, as part of the smallholder productivity and income goal, for ‘developing multidimensional indicators for people’s resilience and wellbeing’,” she said.

“Effective multidimensional measurement tools now exist that provide an overview of complex phenomena and can be broken down to show intuitive component parts. For example, the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) first released by the UNDP Human Development Report in 2010, uses a methodology that has now also been successfully adapted to measure wellbeing.

These multidimensional measures
• Are accurate;
• Have been adopted as official national measures, for example, in Colombia, Mexico and Bhutan;
• Have been used to measure the empowerment, inclusion and agency of women in the agriculture sector, through the Women’s Empowerment in Agriculture Index (WEAI);
• Are simple to use and yet academically robust;
• Are useful for policy guidance;
• Are not expensive.

The measurement of the results of the Zero Hunger initiative is crucial. Developing multidimensional indicators will enable policy makers to keep track of the impact the Challenge has on those whose resilience and wellbeing matter most.

OPHI applauds this Challenge and the inclusion of essential multidimensional measures as a powerful tool alongside other interventions to achieve Zero Hunger.”