Seminar on Multidimensional Poverty Index Techniques

Background

There is an increasing consciousness about the limitations of income (and GDP) as a measure of quality of life, development, social progress and poverty. There is a growing demand to complement traditional indicators through the inclusion of more variables to: [1] extend poverty analysis to non-monetary areas (especially for those dimensions not affected by income); [2] consider imperfect markets in developing countries where purchasing power does not imply the ability to satisfy a need; and, [3] help the decision making of policy makers, especially in the short term.

The international Multidimensional Poverty Index developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative and released by United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in the Human Development Report 2010 and 2011 has shown not only for its technical benefits, but also based on its straightforward interpretation and analysis for public policies. The governments of Colombia and Mexico have implemented e included multidimensional measures of poverty in their long term social development strategies.

The MPI can be used as an analytical tool to identify the most vulnerable people, show aspects in which they are deprived and, consequently, to target resources and design policies more effectively. Because the MPI measures outcomes directly, it will immediately reflect changes such as school enrolment, whereas it can take time for this to affect income, thus results in effective policy interventions quickly. Finally, in the understanding that each country is different, the MPI can be tailored to local context using country-specific data and indicators to provide a better understanding of country-level poverty.

In summary, poverty is often defined by one-dimensional measures, such as income, but no one indicator alone can capture the multiple aspects that constitute poverty. A rapidly increasing number of policy makers around the world are working to establish multidimensional poverty measures, using the Alkire Foster (AF) methodology developed by OPHI. These measures enable them to:

- Allocate resources more effectively;
- Improve policy design;
- Identify interconnections among deprivations;
- Monitor the effectiveness of policies over time;
- Target poor people as beneficiaries of services or conditional cash transfers.

Aim

The main aim of this seminar is to provide a conceptual and technical introduction to the implementation of the Alkire and Foster multidimensional poverty measure. Additionally, the experience of other countries in this process will be shared. We will also be able to provide feedback and input into southern African efforts to measure poverty.
Target: Practitioners, policymakers from Government line ministries, and Heads of Statistical Departments.

Objectives:
1. At the end of this three day course, students will understand the framework in which the multidimensional poverty measurement emerges and its relevance on the definition of public policies.
2. Likewise, participants will be able to understand the adaptation of the multidimensional poverty method according to their own requirements and contexts.
3. The course will provide a summary of the Mexican, Colombian and Brazilian experiences (among others) in the adaptation, implementation and outcomes of the methodology.
4. The course will introduce the Multidimensional Poverty Policy Network of Governments and agencies adopting the MPI.

Facilitators:
Dr. Sabina Alkire (Online)
Director, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

Dr. John Hammock
Co-founder, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

Dr. Mauricio Apablaza
Researcher, Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

First Day
Welcome & OPHI presentation
Why multidimensional poverty?
The International Global MPI
Q&A: Multidimensional Poverty and Public Policies
Dr. Sabina Alkire
Dr. John Hammock
Dr. Mauricio Apablaza
Dr. Sabina Alkire

Second Day
Alkire Foster Methodology
Paper-based Exercises on AF Methodology
Normative Issues in MD Poverty Measurement
Group Exercise: Normative issues: southern Africa
Presentation of Dimensions and Indicators
Dr. Sabina Alkire
Dr. Mauricio Apablaza
Dr. Sabina Alkire
Dr. John Hammock
Dr. Mauricio Apablaza

Third Day
MD Poverty Measurement: and southern African values
Missing Dimensions of Poverty Data
The cases of Mexico, Colombia and Brazil and growing demand
Politics of the MPI
The Multidimensional Poverty Network
Dr. John Hammock
Dr. Sabina Alkire
Dr. Mauricio Apablaza
Dr. Sabina Alkire
John Hammock