Multidimensional poverty dynamics: Methodology and results for 34 countries

Sabina Alkire¹, Jose Manuel Roche², and Ana Vaz³

June 2014

Abstract

This paper analyses changes in multidimensional poverty over time for over thirty countries and 338 sub-national regions, for which we have comparable data across at least two periods of time. The paper first describes the absolute and relative changes in the multidimensional poverty index (MPI) and their significance, as well as changes in the composition of multidimensional poverty. In so doing demonstrates the core statistics of dynamic multidimensional poverty analyses. Second, the paper examines changes in the MPI and its consistent partial indices over time across over 338 sub-national regions, plus a diversity of ethnic groups. In each case it identifies regions or ethnic groups where national poverty reduction is at risk of leaving the poorest subgroups behind. This extensive body of empirical evidence points to some fundamental research questions on the study of multidimensional poverty reduction.

¹ Oxford Poverty & Human Development Initiative (OPHI), Queen Elizabeth House (QEH), Oxford Department of International Development, 3 Mansfield Road, Oxford OX41SD, UK +44-1865-271915, sabina.alkire@qeh.ox.ac.uk. Corresponding author.
² Save the Children Fund UK, j.roche@savethechildren.org.uk.
³ Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), Oxford Department of International Development, University of Oxford, 3 Mansfield Road, Oxford OX1 3TB, UK ana.vaz@qeh.ox.ac.uk.

OPHI gratefully acknowledges support from the UK Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)/(DFID) Joint Scheme, Robertson Foundation, Praus, UNICEF N’Djamena Chad Country Office, German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ), Georg-August-Universität Göttingen, International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI), John Fell Oxford University Press (OUP) Research Fund, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report Office, national UNDP and UNICEF offices, and private benefactors. International Development Research Council (IDRC) of Canada, Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), UK Department of International Development (DFID), and AusAID are also recognised for their past support.
Keywords: Multidimensional poverty, Poverty measurement, FGT measures, Economic Growth, Poverty reduction

JEL classification: I3, I32, D63, O1

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Mihika Chatterjee, Maria Mancilla-Garcia and Christian Oldiges for splendid research assistance, our colleagues at OPHI and particularly Suman Seth and Adriana Conconi for perceptive comments and substantive as well as presentational inputs, and Maarit Kivilo for support in editing the paper. All errors remain our own.

Citation: Alkire, S., Roche, J. M., and Vaz, A. (2014). ‘Multidimensional poverty dynamics: Methodology and results for 34 countries’. OPHI Research in Progress 41a.

This paper is part of the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative’s Research in Progress (RP) series. These are preliminary documents posted online to stimulate discussion and critical comment. The series number and letter identify each version (i.e. paper RP1a after revision will be posted as RP1b) for citation.

For more information, see www.ophi.org.uk.