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EXPLORING MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY ACROSS IsDB MEMBER COUNTRIES IN MENA AND EUROPE USING THE GLOBAL MPI



Islamic Development Bank Institute

Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

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Islamic Development Bank Institute



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These poverty briefs were jointly prepared by the Islamic Development Bank Institute (IsDBI) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) under the strategic guidance and direction of the Sami Al-Suwailem (Acting Director General, IsDBI/Chief Economist) and Sabina Alkire (Director, OPHI).

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FOREWORD

The COVID-19 pandemic has reversed the gains made in the fight against poverty, battering both lives and livelihoods, and leading to millions of people across the world falling back into poverty. Lockdowns and other interventions have brought about a global economic standstill, resulting in job and income losses, particularly among people living in poverty, many of whom are informally employed in vulnerable sectors. As economic activities recover, we face a widening inequality gap in a post-COVID-19 world.

Given that one in three people in Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Member Countries tend to live in multidimensional poverty, fighting poverty has been and will always be at the core of the strategies and policies of IsDB.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further compelled us as a development institution to strengthen our efforts to ensure a more inclusive recovery in our Member Countries. At IsDB, we believe it is imperative that nobody is left behind. Our emphasis on inclusive growth is embedded in our response to COVID-19, the IsDB Group Strategic Preparedness and Response Programme (SPRP), which focuses on '3 Rs' – Respond, Restore, and Restart. The SPRP has been developed in line with the IsDB's President's Five-year Program (P5P), which aims to make us more proactively engage with Member Countries through 'better understanding their unique development challenges, stimulating the private sector, and making markets work for development' to provide the much-needed impetus to foster sustainable and inclusive growth.

The path towards post-pandemic inclusive recovery must start with an understanding of the lived experiences of poor people. Together with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), we are publishing a series of briefs that go beyond assessing poverty through a monetary lens to offer a more comprehensive story of the different deprivations of people living in poverty in our Member Countries. By providing data-driven evidence, these briefs can contribute towards the formulation of well-targeted interventions and efficient mobilization of resources to have a larger impact on the lives of poor people.



We have less than a decade to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but economic recovery remains mired with uncertainties. At this crossroads, we have an opportunity to make a difference in the trajectory of poverty reduction and help end poverty in all its forms and dimensions. Further reversals in the global fight against poverty can be prevented through evidence-based, innovative solutions centred on creating an equal society for all. We can forge a new path and create a better world.

Let us act collectively and be relentless in our pursuit of uplifting the everyday lives of poor people.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to be 'بندر' (Bandar) followed by a flourish.

Dr Bandar M.H. Hajjar

Chairman, Islamic Development Bank Group

PREFACE

Poverty is conventionally measured in terms of income, with people often considered poor if their incomes fall below a certain monetary threshold. However, poverty comes in many forms. People living in poverty are often deprived in various non-monetary dimensions, from health, education, access to basic utilities, ownership of assets, to housing.

Therefore, uplifting the lives of poor people in our Member Countries while protecting them from current and future crises requires a more holistic perspective of poverty – one that addresses the different deprivations that people can face. Such an undertaking will enhance poverty-related interventions by multilateral institutions, including the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) Group.

It is with this in mind that the IsDB Institute rekindled its partnership with the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). IsDB and OPHI have collaborated since 2013 in a number of areas, most recently in 2016 on the Multidimensional Poverty Assessment in IsDB Sub-Saharan African Member Countries. We are building on the success of our previous collaborations to help strengthen IsDB Group's evidence-based policies and interventions in our Member Countries.

As part of this collaboration, the IsDB Institute and OPHI are publishing a series of briefs exploring different dimensions related to multidimensional poverty in IsDB

Member Countries. This brief, focusing on the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Europe regions, moves away from standard income poverty assessments and explores multidimensional poverty of 15 IsDB Member Countries for which data are available. It brings to light multidimensional poverty as experienced at the national and subnational levels, providing a basis by which IsDB country programmes and government policies can be crafted. The brief highlights the nuances of countries' multidimensional poverty situations through a systematic analytical framework, bringing out, for example, variations across sub-regions, between urban and rural populations, and across age groups.

This brief also tracks and highlights success stories, such as in Mauritania, which made exemplary progress in reducing multidimensional poverty. Doing so serves as a motivation for policymakers and development institutions that reducing poverty remains possible, despite high initial levels of poverty and other challenges.

We hope that this brief provides insights into how and where we, in the development community, should focus our efforts towards achieving a more inclusive and balanced post-COVID-19 world.

Together, we can build a better future.

Dr Sami Al-Suwailem

Acting Director General, IsDB Institute
and Chief Economist, IsDB Group

Dr Sabina Alkire

Director, Oxford Poverty and Human Development
Initiative (OPHI)

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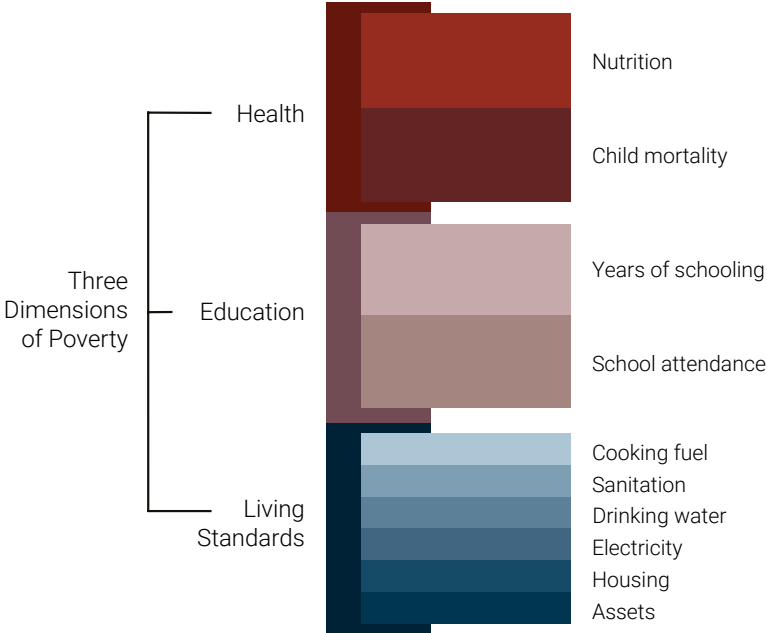
INTRODUCTION

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has changed people's lives in diverse and unexpected ways. The global progress in poverty reduction in the last two decades must be reassessed now that the COVID-19 crisis has put many of these gains at stake. To salvage these gains, policymakers must invest in targeted, evidence-driven interventions to build back better. This brief analyses the most recent trends in multidimensional poverty among the Member Countries of the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Europe prior to the pandemic, which is essential for both understanding the progress made in the past and for use as a benchmark for the future.

The global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) is a measure co-designed by OPHI and UNDP that reflects the multiple deprivations of those unable to reach minimum standards in the dimensions of health, education, and living standards. It measures acute poverty (Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa, 2020) using 10 indicators grouped into the three equally weighted dimensions (Figure 1).

The global MPI has been estimated annually for over 100 countries in developing regions since its launch in 2010. For 2020, the global MPI covers 107 countries worldwide (Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa, 2020), including 15 IsDB Member Countries in MENA and Europe. The data come from international surveys such as the Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS) and the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS). In 2020, trends in the global MPI over time were launched for 80 countries with a combined population of five billion people, using two rounds of recent, comparable cross-sectional data (Alkire, Kovesdi, et al., 2020). Trends are available for 10 of the 15 MENA and Europe IsDB Member Countries in the global MPI. For the intertemporal trends, the first year of analysis ranges between 2006 to 2012/2013, while the second year ranges from 2013 to 2018, with an average difference between periods of around 6 years.

Figure 1. The global MPI structure



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Source: OPHI 2018.

A BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO THE ALKIRE-FOSTER METHOD

The MPI conveys information regarding both the incidence and the intensity of poverty. The incidence of poverty is the proportion of people who are identified as poor. This is the proportion of the population experiencing multiple and simultaneous deprivations and is denoted by H, which stands for headcount ratio. The intensity of poverty is the average proportion of (weighted) deprivations poor people experience and is denoted by A. The MPI is the product of both and can be simply obtained by the interaction of the incidence of poverty and the intensity of poverty: $MPI = H \times A$.

Source: Alkire and Foster (2011).

1. KEY FINDINGS ON MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

The analysis in this section is based on the global MPI 2020 data (Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa, 2020).¹ It provides multidimensional poverty data for 15 countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) and Europe,² using household surveys between 2009 and 2018. These countries, when using 2018 population data (UNDESA, 2019), are home to almost 600 million people.

Analysis across these Member Countries shows the following key findings:

- In total, 157 million people (one in every four) are living in multidimensional poverty.
- The majority of people living in Afghanistan, Sudan and Mauritania are multidimensionally poor.
- Pakistan has the largest number of poor people (81 million).
- The majority of the population are multidimensionally poor in 60 of the 224 subnational regions.
- Eighty-four per cent of people who are poor live in rural areas.
- Children under the age of 18 make up 43% of the population, but 54% of those who are poor.
- Eight of the ten countries for which we have trend analyses in MENA and Europe reduced their global MPI significantly in absolute terms.
- All of the eight countries that reduced their MPI_T significantly also observed overall population growth between the two time periods, and even with population growth considered, all except Sudan reduced the number of poor people across the periods.
- Multidimensional poverty trends do not match monetary poverty trends in US\$1.90 a day headcount trends and GNI per capita growth, suggesting different drivers.

1.1 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: KEY NATIONAL STATISTICS

Three key statistics are used in analysing multidimensional poverty. The first is the incidence or headcount ratio of poverty (known as H), which is the percentage of people who are multidimensionally poor. The second is the intensity of poverty (known as A), which reflects the average share of weighted deprivations that poor people experience. Lastly, the MPI or adjusted headcount ratio (calculated as a product of H and A), reflects the deprivations experienced by poor people as a percentage of the total deprivations that would be experienced if all people were deprived in all indicators. Table 1 presents these statistics for the 15 IsDB Member Countries.

The experience of poverty varies markedly across MENA and Europe. Sudan has the highest MPI at 0.279, followed by Afghanistan (0.272), Mauritania (0.261) and Yemen (0.241). While Afghanistan has the highest headcount ratio at 55.9%, the majority of people living in Sudan (52.3%) and Mauritania (50.6%) are also multidimensionally poor, and in Yemen the headcount ratio was 47.7%. The intensity of poverty among poor people is highest in Sudan (53.4%), with Pakistan having the second-highest intensity (51.7%). Six of the fifteen countries have an MPI of less than 0.010, with Albania (0.003), Tunisia (0.003) and Jordan (0.002) recording the lowest MPI.

Across the 15 countries, 157 million people are living in multidimensional poverty. This means that, on average, one out of every four people (26.6%) are multidimensionally poor. Pakistan has the largest number of people who are living in poverty with 81 million, more than half of the total. Significant numbers of multidimensionally poor people also live in Sudan (22 million) and Afghanistan (21 million).

Table 1. Multidimensional poverty in IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries

Country	MPI data source		Multidimensional poverty					Population 2018	
	Survey	Year	MPI (MPI = H*A)		H		A	Total population ^a	Number of MPI-poor people ^b
			Range 0 to 1	Standard error	% Population	Standard error	Average % of weighted deprivations	Thousands	Thousands
Afghanistan	DHS	2015/16	0.272	0.009	55.9	1.3	48.6	37,172	20,783
Albania	DHS	2017/18	0.003	0.001	0.7	0.1	39.1	2,883	20
Algeria	MICS	2012/13	0.008	0.001	2.1	0.2	38.8	42,228	887
Egypt	DHS	2014	0.019	0.001	5.2	0.3	37.6	98,424	5,083
Iraq	MICS	2018	0.033	0.002	8.6	0.5	37.9	38,434	3,319
Jordan	DHS	2017/18	0.002	0	0.4	0.1	35.4	9,965	43
Libya	PAPFAM	2014	0.007	0.001	2	0.3	37.1	6,679	133
Mauritania	MICS	2015	0.261	0.007	50.6	1.2	51.5	4,403	2,227
Morocco	PAPFAM	2011	0.085	0.008	18.6	1.4	45.7	36,029	6,702
Pakistan	DHS	2017/18	0.198	0.011	38.3	1.8	51.7	212,228	81,352
State of Palestine	MICS	2014	0.004	0.001	1	0.1	37.5	4,863	46
Sudan	MICS	2014	0.279	0.008	52.3	1.4	53.4	41,802	21,874
Syria	PAPFAM	2009	0.029	0.001	7.4	0.3	38.9	16,945	1,253
Tunisia	MICS	2018	0.003	0	0.8	0.1	36.5	11,565	92
Yemen	DHS	2013	0.241	0.007	47.7	1.1	50.5	28,499	13,593

Notes:

MPI Multidimensional Poverty Index.

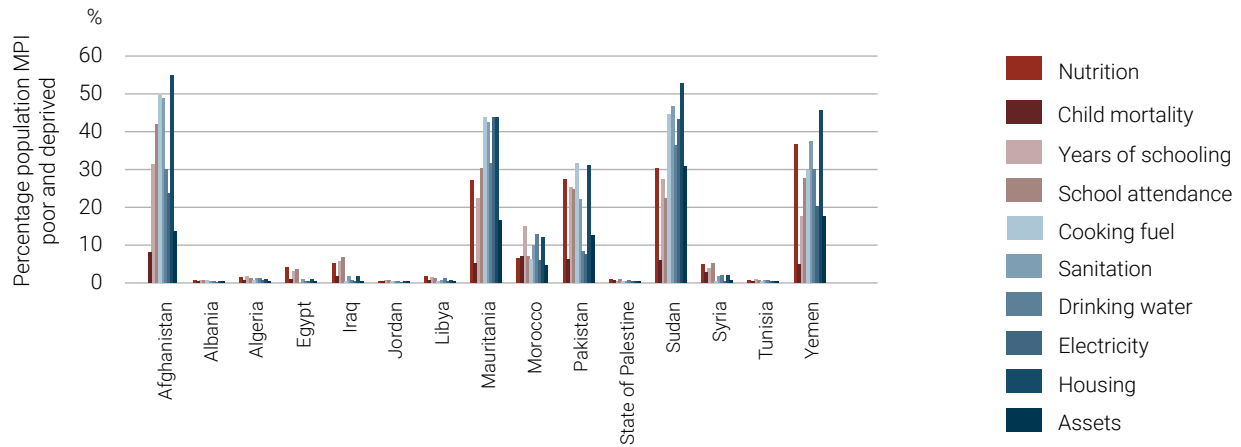
H Headcount ratio: population in multidimensional poverty.

A Intensity of deprivation among poor people.

a UNDESA (2019). Data accessed 28 April 2020.

b Own calculations based on the MPI results and population projection from the year of 2018. This was computed by multiplying the headcount by the population of 2018, and rounding to the nearest thousand.

Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa (2020).

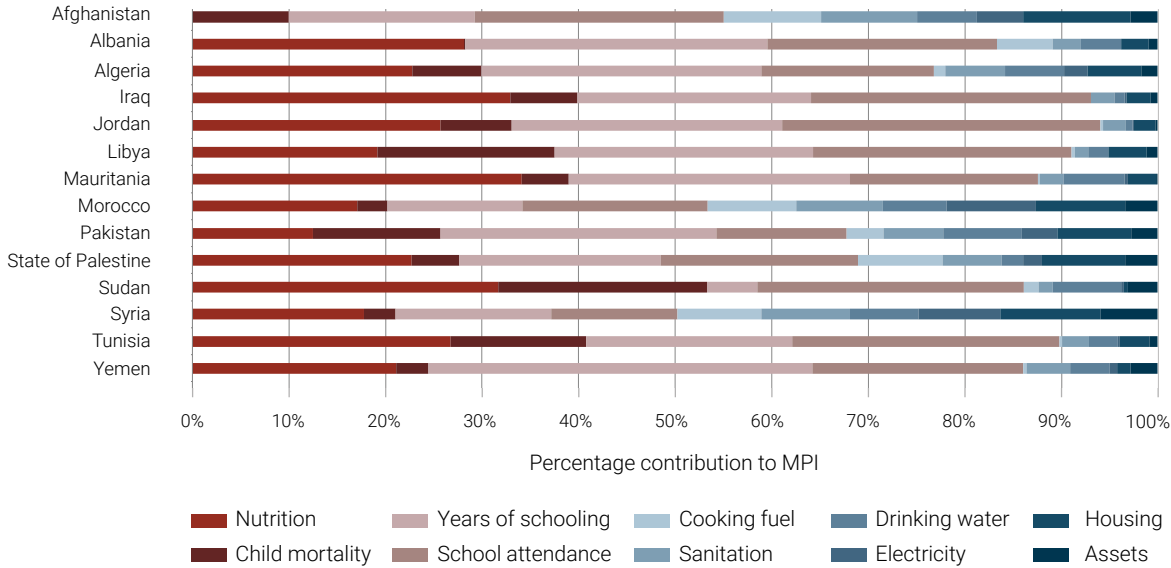
Figure 2. Censored headcount ratios of MPI indicators for ISDB MENA and Europe Member Countries

Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Looking at censored headcount ratios, which measure the percentage of people who are MPI poor and deprived in each of the given indicators of the global MPI, Figure 2 shows that the higher censored headcount ratios are in Afghanistan, Mauritania, Pakistan, Sudan and Yemen.³ This is unsurprising, given the experience of poverty outlined above. The largest censored headcount ratio in Afghanistan is for housing (54.5%), with cooking fuel (49.3%) and sanitation (48.7%) not far behind. The housing headcount ratio is also the largest in Sudan (51.9%) and Yemen (45.1%), while in Mauritania the proportion of the population that is poor and deprived is similar across the four indicators of housing (43.3%), electricity (43.3%), cooking fuel (43.2%) and sanitation (41.9%). By contrast, in Morocco, where overall levels of deprivation are far lower, the two indicators with the highest headcount ratios are years of schooling (14.5%) and drinking water (12.5%).

The relative contributions of each of the indicators differ depending on the country. Figure 3 presents the percentage contributions of each indicator to the MPI for all 15 countries. The different mix across countries is very evident. For example, in both Libya (34.1%) and the State of Palestine (31.7%), the nutrition indicator contributes most to the MPI. However, in Libya, the second-largest contributing indicator is years of schooling (29.1%) and then school attendance (19.5%). In the State of Palestine, the second-largest contributing indicator is school attendance (27.5%), followed by child mortality (21.6%).

Figure 3. Percentage contributions by indicator for IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries



Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

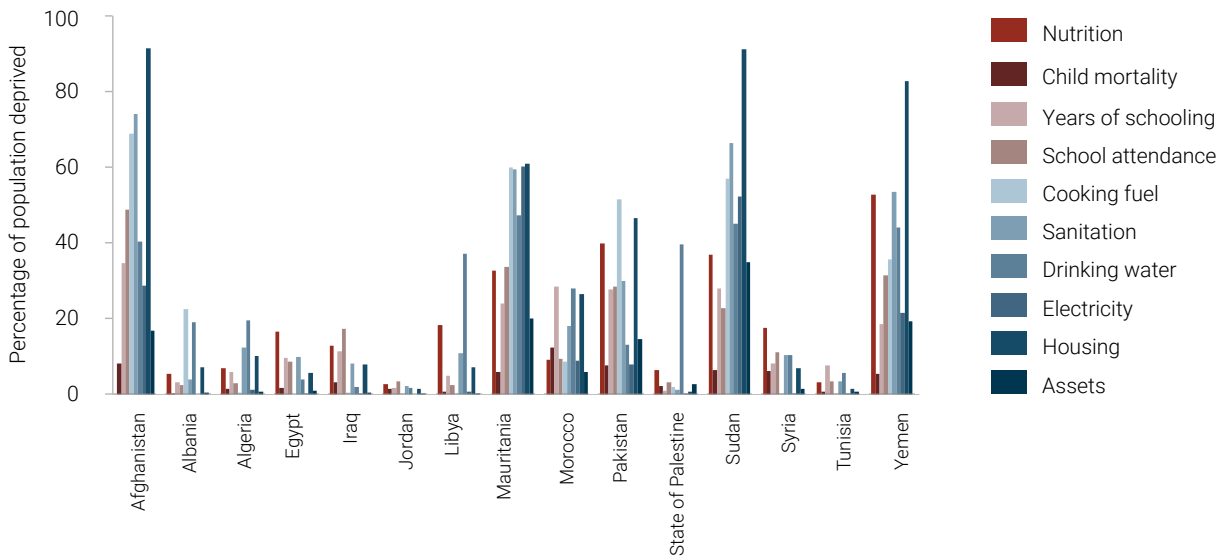
Figure 3 also highlights that those countries with larger MPIs see greater contributions to their MPI from the living standards indicators. When combined, the indicators of cooking fuel, sanitation and housing are large contributors to the MPI in Mauritania (27.4%), Sudan (28.2%) and Afghanistan (31.2%). These indicators are less pertinent in countries such as Morocco (17.7%) and Tunisia (14.0%) and even less so in Iraq (4.9%) and the State of Palestine (3.4%). The implication of this analysis is seemingly simple but profound. To address the poverty situation in one country requires a very different set of policy instruments to those required in another country.

The similarities and differences across Member Countries can also be seen when looking at the uncensored headcount ratios. In contrast to the censored headcounts that focus only on multidimensionally poor people, uncensored headcounts reflect the percentage of the total population of a country who are deprived in each of the 10 indicators of the global MPI. Figure 4 illustrates two main points. First, it is clear from the high uncensored headcount ratios that deprivation in housing

is a common problem in Afghanistan (91.4%), Sudan (91.2%) and Yemen (82.6%) irrespective of whether one is poor or not.

Second, uncensored headcount ratios are an important reminder of levels of deprivation on the various indicators even where countries may have a low MPI. In Albania, for example, approximately one in four people (22.6%) are deprived in cooking fuel. Similarly, one in five people in Algeria (19.5%) and more than one in three people in both the State of Palestine (39.6%) and Libya (37.0%) are deprived in drinking water.

Figure 4. Uncensored headcount ratios of MPI indicators in IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries



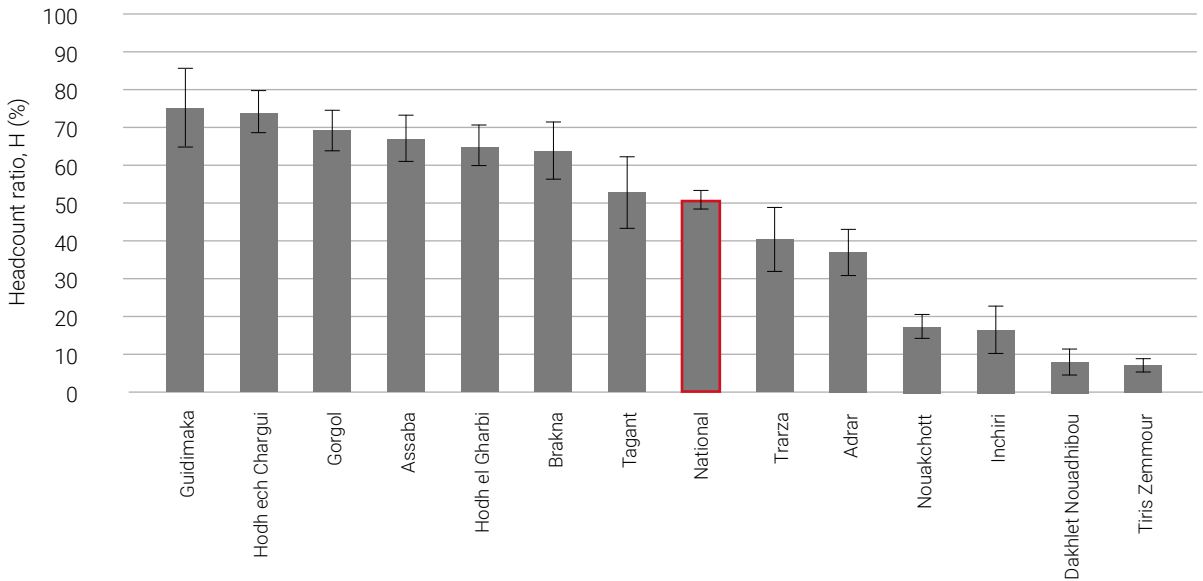
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

1.2 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: SUBNATIONAL STATISTICS

A key feature of the MPI is its ability to be disaggregated by subnational region. Global MPI data at the subnational level exist for all the IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries, with 224 subnational regions across the 15 countries. There are two subnational regions with an MPI above 0.500, both in Afghanistan: Nooristan, with an MPI of 0.555, and Urozgan with an MPI of 0.537. Urozgan also has the highest headcount ratio at 95.1%, while the intensity of poverty is highest in Nooristan at 61.0%. In contrast, there are five subnational regions with an MPI of less than 0.001, across Albania, Jordan and Tunisia. Focusing on the headcount ratio, in 22 subnational regions at least 7 out of 10 people are living in poverty, while in 60 of the 224 subnational regions, the majority of the population are multidimensionally poor. These regions are concentrated in Afghanistan, Mauritania, Pakistan, Sudan, and Yemen.

Breaking down the MPI by subnational region is useful in identifying those areas with the highest levels of poverty, that can then be targeted with resources accordingly. By way of example, Figure 5 presents the headcount ratios in the subnational regions of Mauritania. While the difference is not significant across the six regions with the highest ratios, there is significant difference between these regions and those with the lowest headcount ratios. While more than 7 out of every 10 people in Guidimaka (75.0%) and Hodh ech Chargui (73.8%) are multidimensionally poor, fewer than 1 out of 10 in Dakhlet Nouadhibou (8.3%) and Tiris Zemmour (7.4%) are poor. It is also important to bear in mind the relative population sizes of regions when targeting poverty interventions. In this example, the high headcount ratios in the six subnational regions to the left of Figure 5, from Guidimaka to Brakna, coincide with regions of relatively high population. Together, they account for 61% of Mauritania’s population, but are home to 83% of the country’s multidimensionally poor people.

Figure 5. Headcount ratio in Mauritania’s subnational regions



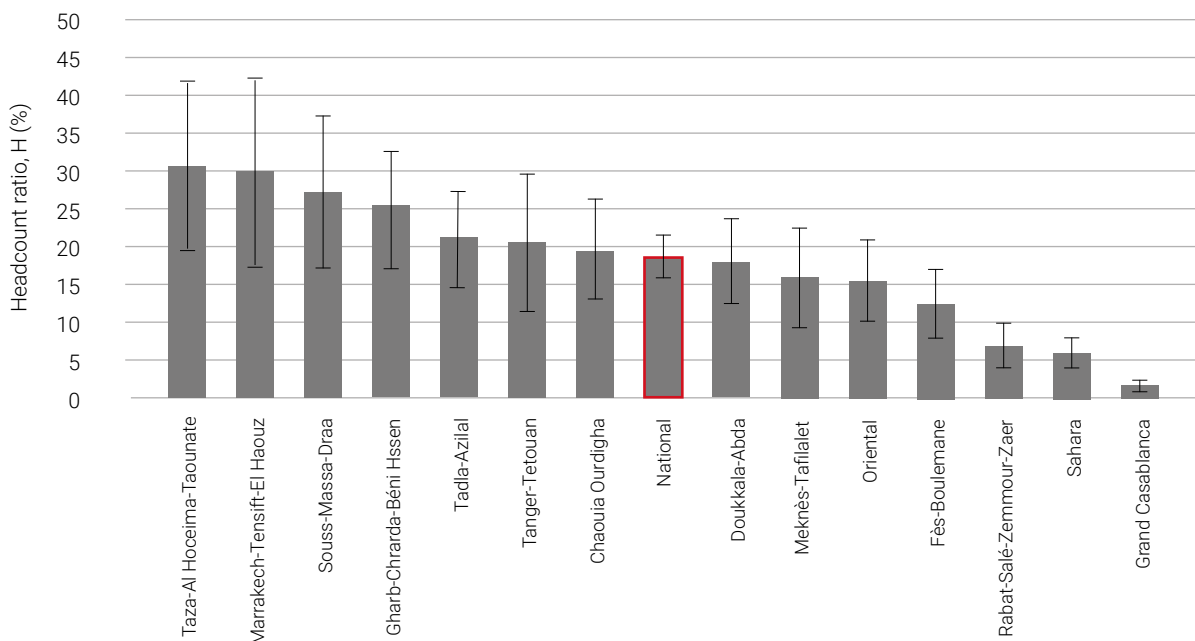
Notes: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Another example is Morocco, where the headcount ratios vary from 30.8% in Taza-Al Hoceima-Taounate to 1.8% in Grand Casablanca (Figure 6). Focusing on the actual numbers of people who live in these areas and are multidimensionally poor, the four subnational regions to the left of Figure 6 (from Taza-Al Hoceima-Taounate to Gharb-Chrarda-Béni Hssen) are home to a third (34%) of the country's population but more than half (52%) of those living in poverty.

1.3 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: URBAN–RURAL STATISTICS

The global MPI can also be broken down to compare multidimensional poverty across rural and urban areas (Table 2). Across the 15 MENA and Europe countries, the majority (57%) of the total population can be found in rural areas. This proportion varies greatly – 76% of the population in Afghanistan live in rural areas, while only 32% of the population in Tunisia and 11% in Jordan do so. Rural areas also have a larger share of the population that are poor – they are home to 84% of those who are multidimensionally poor across all Member Countries in these regions.

Figure 6. Headcount ratio in Morocco's subnational regions



Notes: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Table 2. Multidimensional poverty in IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries, by urban and rural areas

Country	Population share (%)		MPI (decimal)		H (% of population)		A (average % of weighted deprivations)		Number of poor people (thousands)	
	Urban	Rural	Urban*	Rural*	Urban*	Rural*	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
Afghanistan	24	76	0.094 (0.007)	0.328 (0.011)	21.2 (1.42)	66.9 (1.41)	44.4	49	1,893	18,890
Albania	58.4	41.6	0.003 (0.001)	0.003 (0.001)	0.7 (0.22)	0.7 (0.13)	38.2	40.3	12	8
Algeria	63.3	36.7	0.004 (0.001)	0.015 (0.002)	1.2 (0.15)	3.6 (0.37)	36.6	40.1	324	563
Egypt	37.2	62.8	0.012 (0.001)	0.024 (0.002)	3.3 (0.28)	6.3 (0.44)	35.8	38.2	1,214	3,869
Iraq	69.3	30.7	0.025 (0.002)	0.050 (0.005)	6.9 (0.56)	12.6 (1.31)	36.7	39.3	1,829	1,490
Jordan	89.2	10.8	0.001 (0.000)	0.004 (0.002)	0.3 (0.11)	1.1 (0.53)	35.5	35.1	31	12
Libya	87.8	12.2	0.007 (0.001)	0.007 (0.001)	2.0 (0.30)	1.9 (0.40)	37.1	37.1	118	15
Mauritania	47.5	52.5	0.117 (0.007)	0.391 (0.009)	25.6 (1.37)	73.1 (1.30)	45.4	53.5	536	1,690
Morocco	55.3	44.7	0.015 (0.001)	0.171 (0.014)	4.0 (0.34)	36.7 (2.54)	37.7	46.7	794	5,908
Pakistan	36.1	63.9	0.079 (0.008)	0.266 (0.016)	18.0 (1.70)	49.8 (2.50)	43.8	53.3	13,755	67,597
State of Palestine**	74.5	16.6	0.003 (0.001)	0.005 (0.001)	0.9 (0.15)	1.3 (0.38)	38.1	35.8	32	10
Sudan	31	69	0.122 (0.010)	0.351 (0.011)	26.3 (2.03)	64.0 (1.78)	46.1	54.7	3,418	18,456
Syria	54.5	45.5	0.021 (0.001)	0.039 (0.003)	5.6 (0.39)	9.6 (0.57)	36.8	40.4	517	736
Tunisia	68.3	31.7	0.001 (0.000)	0.007 (0.001)	0.3 (0.06)	1.9 (0.34)	33.7	37.3	21	70
Yemen	30.6	69.4	0.074 (0.006)	0.314 (0.009)	16.9 (1.30)	61.3 (1.38)	43.6	51.3	1,475	12,119

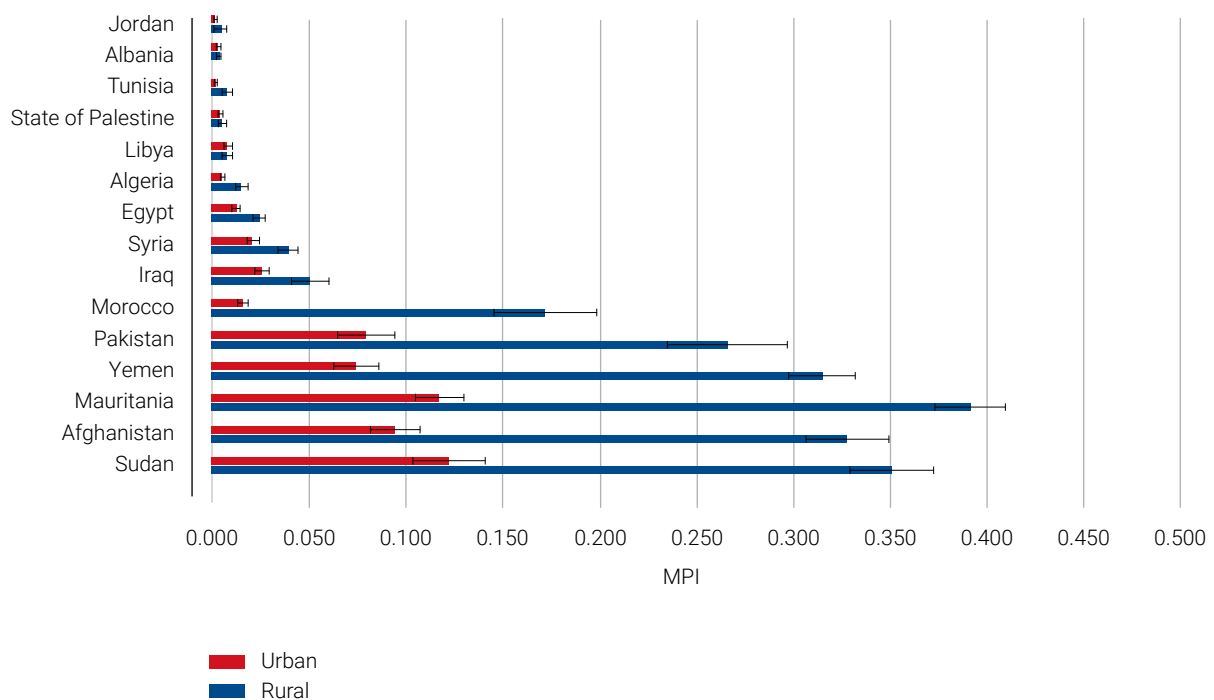
Note: * Figures in brackets represent standard error.

** The population sampled for the State of Palestine MICS 2014 survey includes refugee camps, classified as neither rural nor urban areas. We do not present the figures for camps in this table since figures presented in this table are limited to the dichotomous rural-urban indicator.

Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa (2020).

What is constant across every country is that multidimensional poverty is higher in rural areas than in urban areas (Figure 7). In Sudan, which has the highest country level MPI, the MPI in rural areas (0.351) is almost three times as high as the MPI in urban areas (0.122). In Yemen, the MPI in rural areas (0.314) is more than four times that in urban areas (0.074), while the difference is even larger in Morocco, where the MPI in rural areas is more than 10 times greater at 0.171 than the MPI in urban areas, at only 0.015. This again highlights the need for approaches to dealing with multidimensional poverty that target rural areas, taking into account the population share in these areas.

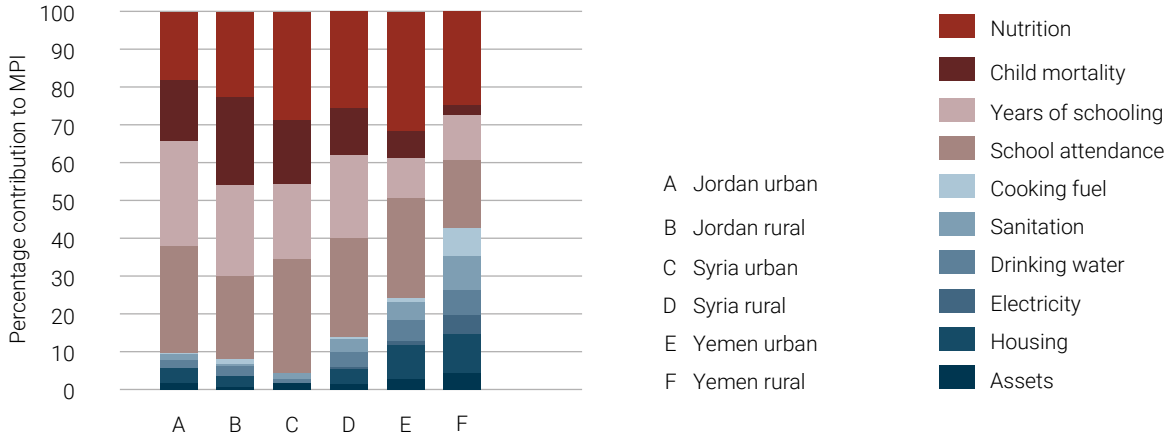
Figure 7. MPI by area for IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries (ordered by country MPI)



Notes: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.

Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

Figure 8. Percentage contributions of indicators to MPI for urban and rural areas in Jordan, Syria, and Yemen



Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

To inform such a targeted approach, it is useful to look at the percentage contributions of each indicator to the MPI for both rural and urban areas in a country. By means of example, Figure 8 shows these contributions for Jordan, Syria, and Yemen. Contrasting rural and urban areas in Jordan, the education indicators of school attendance (28.2%) and years of schooling (27.7%) are higher contributors in urban areas than in rural areas (22.8% and 24.4%, respectively). In rural areas, child mortality (23.2%) contributes more to the MPI than in urban areas (16.4%), as does nutrition (22.5% in rural and 17.9% in urban areas). In Syria, this is reversed, with nutrition a larger contributor in urban areas (28.9%) than in rural areas (25.4%) and child mortality also contributing more to the MPI in urban areas (16.6%) than in rural areas (12.4%). In Yemen, a country with a higher MPI, the living standards indicators play a larger contributory role than in Syria or Jordan. While the contribution of housing is similar across both urban (10.1%) and rural (10.5%) areas, water and sanitation combined add 10.3% to the MPI in urban areas and 15.8% to the MPI in rural areas.

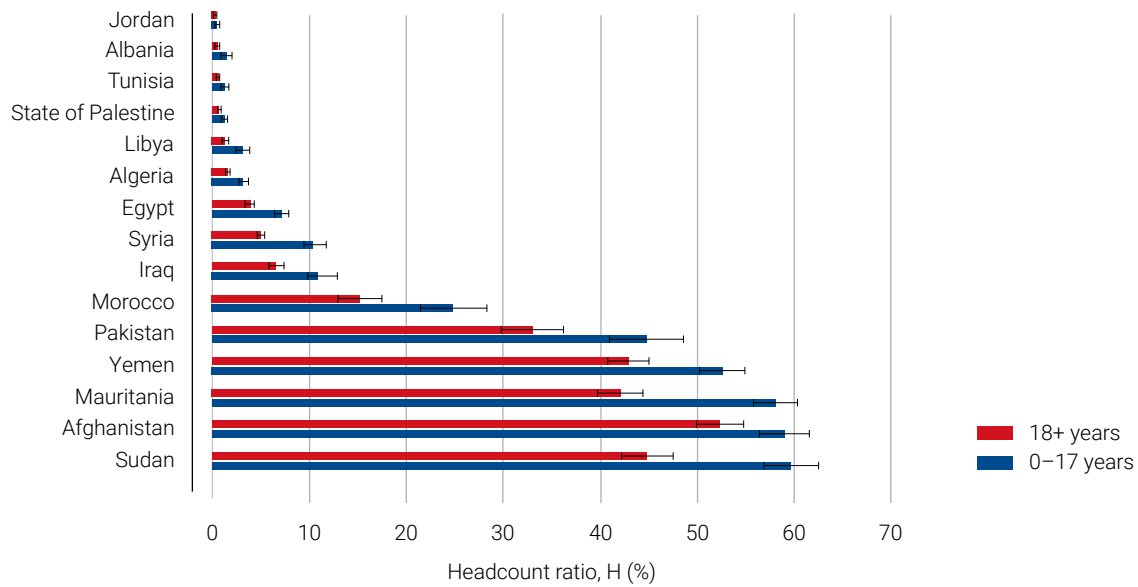
The MPI therefore enables policymakers to not only identify those areas in their country in need of intervention, but it also provides detailed information to inform the nature of that intervention across urban and rural areas.

1.4 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: AGE GROUP STATISTICS

The global MPI can also be disaggregated by age group. An initial analysis by two age groups – children under the age of 18 and those aged 18 and above – reveals that children under 18 are more likely to be multidimensionally poor than adults. Although they only constitute 43% of the total population across the 15 countries, children make up 54% of those who are poor. Figure 9 shows the headcount ratio for these two age groups for all the IsDB MENA and Europe countries. It reveals that the proportion of those that are poor was higher in every country for children under the age of 18. The difference in headcount ratio between children and adults is greatest in Mauritania (a difference of 16%), Sudan (15%) and Pakistan (12%).

The global MPI is also broken down into more age groups: children aged 0 to 9 years old; children aged 10 to 17; adults aged 18 to 59; and adults aged 60 and above. Using Albania as an example, Figure 10 indicates that the contributing factors to the MPI for each of these groups can be quite different. The years of schooling indicator is the largest contributor for three of the groups – contributing 33.2% to those aged 0 to 9, 29.3% to those aged 18 to 59, and 38.0% to those aged 60 and above. For the 10-to-17-year-old age group, however, school

Figure 9. Headcount ratio by age for ISDB MENA and Europe Member Countries (ordered by country MPI)

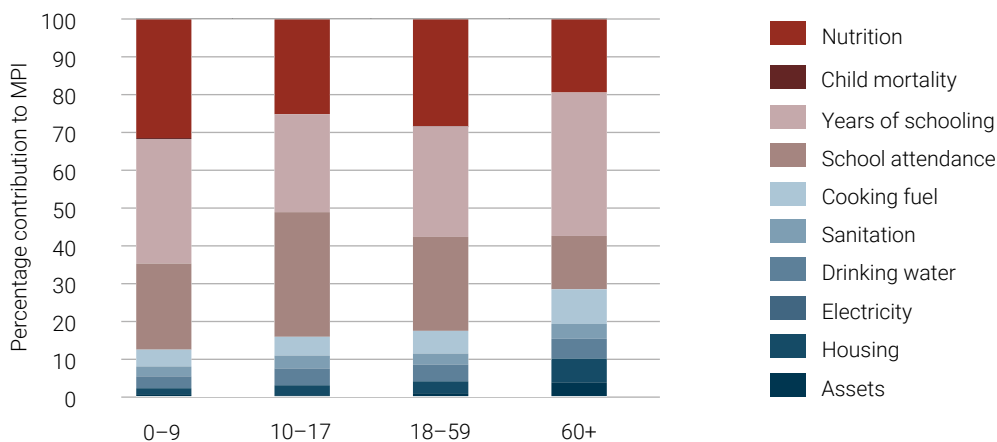


Notes: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.
Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

attendance was the single largest contributor (32.9%). Assets (3.8%), housing (6.1%) and cooking fuel (9.3%) made larger contributions to the MPI in the oldest age group than in any of the other groups. This underlines

the usefulness of the MPI and its statistics in providing evidence for policymakers to effectively tackle multidimensional poverty across different groups in society.

Figure 10. Percentage contributions of indicators to MPI by age group in Albania



Source: Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa (2020).

2. MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY REDUCTION OVER TIME

In terms of intertemporal trends among IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries, data ranges differ by country, with an average difference between the two time periods of 5.65 years. We include data for 10 of the 15 countries, excluding Algeria, Libya, Morocco, Syria, and Tunisia, for which we did not have available trend data.⁴

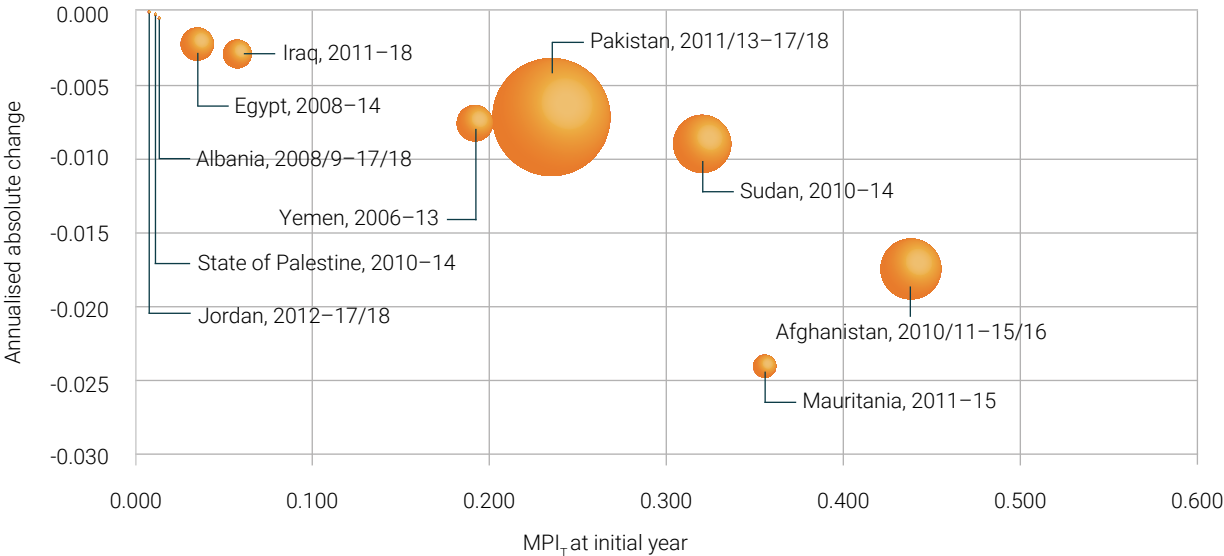
We report changes in multidimensional poverty over time in the harmonised global MPI (MPI_t) and its components – the headcount ratio (H_t), percentage of people identified as multidimensionally poor, and intensity (A_t) or the average percentage of deprivations that poor people experience simultaneously – as well as for the 10 indicators of the index. These global MPI_t estimates follow a strict harmonisation methodology using the same information from both the older and newer datasets to ensure that any differences in poverty are due to changes in the conditions of the country rather than changes in the questionnaire.⁵ All indicator definitions, weights, and poverty cutoffs used in the survey comparisons follow the same structure within countries. Such analysis

allows us to infer broad poverty alleviation trends over time, to investigate the contributions and levels of poverty by each indicator, and to focus on poverty reduction broken down by province, urban and rural areas, and age groups. We further interrogate which of the indicators drove progress and analyse where population growth competes with this progress. We also compare reductions in multidimensional poverty with trends in income poverty and economic growth.

2.1 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: POVERTY REDUCTIONS

Eight of the 10 countries observed a statistically significant reduction in the MPI_t between their two time periods, with the exceptions of Jordan and the State of Palestine.⁶ Mauritania had the greatest reduction per year (at -0.024 for 2011 to 2015), followed by Afghanistan (-0.017 for 2010/11 to 2015/16.) and Sudan (-0.009 for 2010 to 2014). Albania, which had the slowest absolute reduction per year in multidimensional poverty, nonethe-

Figure 11. Annualised absolute reductions in the MPI_t



Notes: The size of the bubbles is a proportional representation of the total number of MPI poor in each country in the initial year.
Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

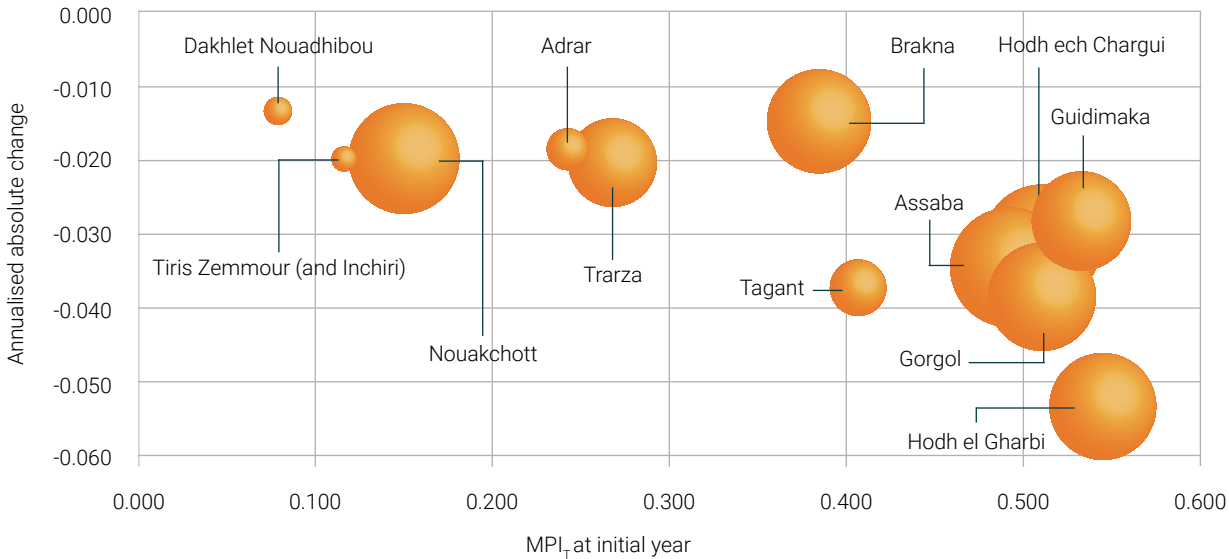
less had the greatest reduction relative to its initial poverty levels (at -11.0% per year for 2008/09 to 2017/18), followed by Egypt (-8.9%, from 2008 to 2014) and Mauritania (-7.6%, from 2011 to 2015).

Figure 11 plots the starting level of MPI_T poverty on the horizontal axis, with the poorest country, Afghanistan, furthest to the right. The vertical axis is the pace of reduction of the MPI_T , with the lower bubbles showing fastest absolute poverty reduction. Figure 11 shows a pro-poor reduction among the MENA and Europe Member Countries, with the poorer countries, such as Afghanistan and Mauritania, having faster rates of MPI_T reduction.⁷ All reductions are statistically significant, except for Jordan and the State of Palestine. Mauritania's impressive gains in poverty reduction may be linked to its strong economic growth rate and improved macro-economic stability during that period, although improvements in production, productivity, and income in rural areas following the restructuring of the agriculture and livestock sector, and other factors such as internal migration and changes in relative prices, may also play a role (World Bank, 2020). The variation in poverty reduction reflects the diversity of social, economic, and political contexts among the IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries. For example, the situation on the ground in Iraq differs greatly from that of Pakistan, even though they are both countries that face pockets of conflict and violence, and both are different again from the everyday life of the average multidimensionally poor household in Albania, a country with post-communist political and economic systems.

Of the 31 subnational regions included in these countries for which we have data,⁸ 22 experienced statistically significant reduction in their MPI_T . Among these 22 regions, we find reductions across all but one of Mauritania's twelve regions and Afghanistan's eight regions, three of Egypt's six regions, and one of the five regions in Pakistan.

Figure 12 highlights the example of Mauritania. It plots the starting level of the MPI_T poverty on the horizontal axis, with by far the poorest subnational region of Mauritania, Hodh el Gharbi in the south of the country, furthest to the right. Figure 12 clearly shows the pro-poor reduction among Mauritania’s subnational regions, as Hodh el Gharbi managed the greatest reduction in poverty in the country between 2011 and 2015, and indeed managed the fastest reduction among all 31 subnational regions. Improvements in the education and living standards indicators drove progress in the region, where, for example, the years of schooling censored headcount ratio fell from 67.6% in 2011 to 18.2% in 2015, and the drinking water censored headcount ratio fell 76.2% in 2011 to 44.6% in 2015. This pro-poor reduction was also seen in Egypt, where the three regions with significant reductions were also the three poorest regions in the starting year. Upper Egypt Rural, the poorest region in the initial year (with an MPI_T of 0.071), had the greatest reduction (at -0.006 for 2008 to 2014) among Egypt’s subnational regions.

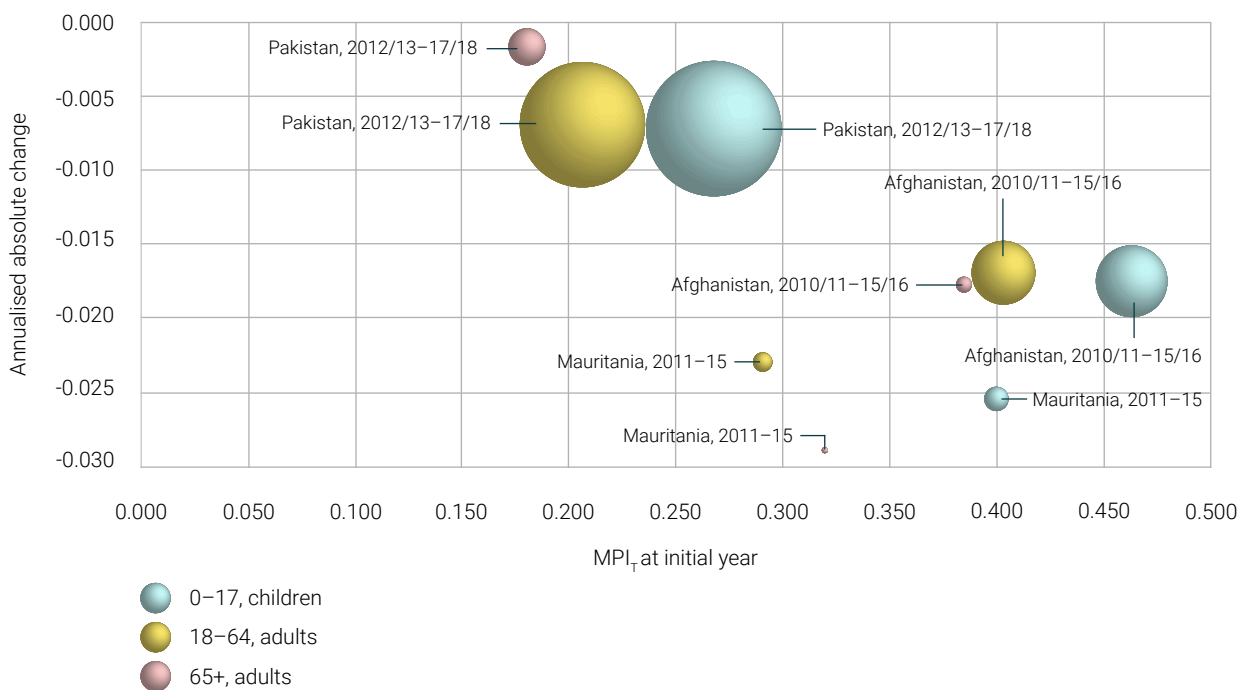
Figure 12. Annualised absolute reductions in the MPI_T of Mauritania



Notes: The size of the bubbles is a proportional representation of the total number of MPI poor in each region in the initial year.
Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

We can also break down the reductions in the MPI_T by age group. Looking at three demographic categories – children aged 0-17; adults aged 18-64; and adults aged 65 and above – we observe plenty of variation among the age of the population who are living in multidimensionally poor households. Figure 13 shows the reductions in the MPI_T for each country's disaggregated age groups. Egypt, Iraq, Pakistan, and Sudan see children with the largest gains in poverty reduction, whereas Afghanistan, Albania, Mauritania, and Yemen see adults aged 65 and above with the greatest gains. The MPI_T age group reductions were significant in all countries, except Jordan and the State of Palestine, and adults aged 65 and above in Pakistan. This demographic disaggregation reaffirms the move towards poverty eradication among almost all ages, but also highlights the different lived experiences within and between countries, through their initial levels of poverty, their relative share of the population, and their relative capability in pursuing lives they have reason to value.

Figure 13. Annualised absolute reductions in the MPI_T by age group



Notes: The size of the bubbles is a proportional representation of the total number of MPI poor in each country in the initial year.

Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.2 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: REDUCTIONS IN INCIDENCE AND INTENSITY

As Tables 3 A and B show, of the 10 IsDB MENA and Europe countries for which we have data on multidimensional poverty trends, the same eight countries reduced both the MPI_t and percentage of people identified as multidimensionally poor (incidence, H_t) of poverty significantly. Only three countries – Albania, Pakistan, and the State of Palestine – did not significantly reduce the average percentage of deprivations that these poor people experience simultaneously (intensity, A_t). Reductions in intensity were strongest in Mauritania and Afghanistan, once again touting a pro-poor reduction in MENA and Europe. With these two additional statistics in mind, Mauritania is the top performing of the IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries, being a top-three reducer in the MPI_t , H_t , and A_t , in both absolute and relative terms, with the only exception being in relative terms for H_t . Between 2011 and 2015, nearly a quarter of a million people left multidimensional poverty in Mauritania. Mauritania was also a low-income country in the first time period and graduated to lower-middle income by its second year. It therefore offers meaningful lessons for other countries.

Furthermore, we see great variation in the reduction of poverty incidence – the percentage of the population who are multidimensionally poor – among the urban and rural areas of the 10 countries (Figure 14). The incidence of poverty reduced significantly in the rural areas of all countries except Jordan, Pakistan, and Sudan, whereas the incidence of poverty reduced significantly only in the urban areas of Afghanistan, Egypt, Iraq, and Mauritania. While to some extent, this disaggregation compliments MENA and Europe Member Countries for their pro-poor reductions – in all countries, rural areas started out poorer than their urban counterparts, and significant poverty reduction was more consistently achieved in those rural areas – it also reveals the inequalities faced by urban and rural populations. Clearly, multidimensional poverty among MENA and Europe countries is more frequently experienced by their rural inhabitants. This reality must be taken into account to ensure that, when focused on ending poverty in all its forms and dimensions, no one is left behind.

2.3 COUNTRY PERFORMANCES: REDUCTIONS BY INDICATOR

Figure 15 presents the yearly reductions in the percentage of people who are poor and deprived in each of the 10 indicators. None of the indicators saw significant yearly reductions in all countries, although the sanitation indicator saw reductions in all countries except Jordan.⁹ Mauritania is the only country that observed significant reductions in all 10 indicators. Pakistan reduced the percentage of people who are poor and deprived in nutrition the fastest at 1.1% per year; Mauritania the fastest in child mortality (0.8% per year), years of schooling (5.5% per year), school attendance (3.0% per year), sanitation (2.8% per year), and drinking water (3.4% per year); and Afghanistan the fastest in cooking fuel (3.2% per year), electricity (5.2% per year), housing (2.1% per year), and assets (2.3% per year). Iraq saw significant reductions in all indicators except sanitation, as did Afghanistan in all indicators except child mortality.

Table 3 A. Annualised change in incidence (H_t) for IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries

Country	H_t (%)		Annualised change ^a			Number of poor people (thousands)	
	Y1	Y2	Absolute (p.p.)	Relative (%)		Y1	Y2
Afghanistan (2010/11–15/16)	76	64.1	-2.4	-3.4	***	22,538	22,366
Albania (2008/09–17/18)	2.1	0.7	-0.2	-11.3	***	62	20
Egypt (2008–14)	8	4.9	-0.5	-7.9	***	6,375	4,412
Iraq (2011–18)	14.4	9.3	-0.7	-6	***	4,427	3,591
Jordan (2012–17/18)	0.5	0.4	0	-3.5		42	43
Mauritania (2011–15)	63	50.5	-3.1	-5.4	***	2,268	2,045
Pakistan (2012/13–17/18)	44.5	38.3	-1.2	-2.9	**	84,180	80,523
State of Palestine (2010–14)	1.3	1	-0.1	-7.3		53	42
Sudan (2010–14)	57	52.4	-1.2	-2.1	**	19,691	19,889
Yemen (2006–13)	38	29.2	-1.3	-3.7	***	7,855	7,346

Notes: a) Where the survey was conducted over two years, the average of the years was used to compute the annualised changes. *** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.01$, ** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$, * statistically significant at $\alpha=0.10$.

Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

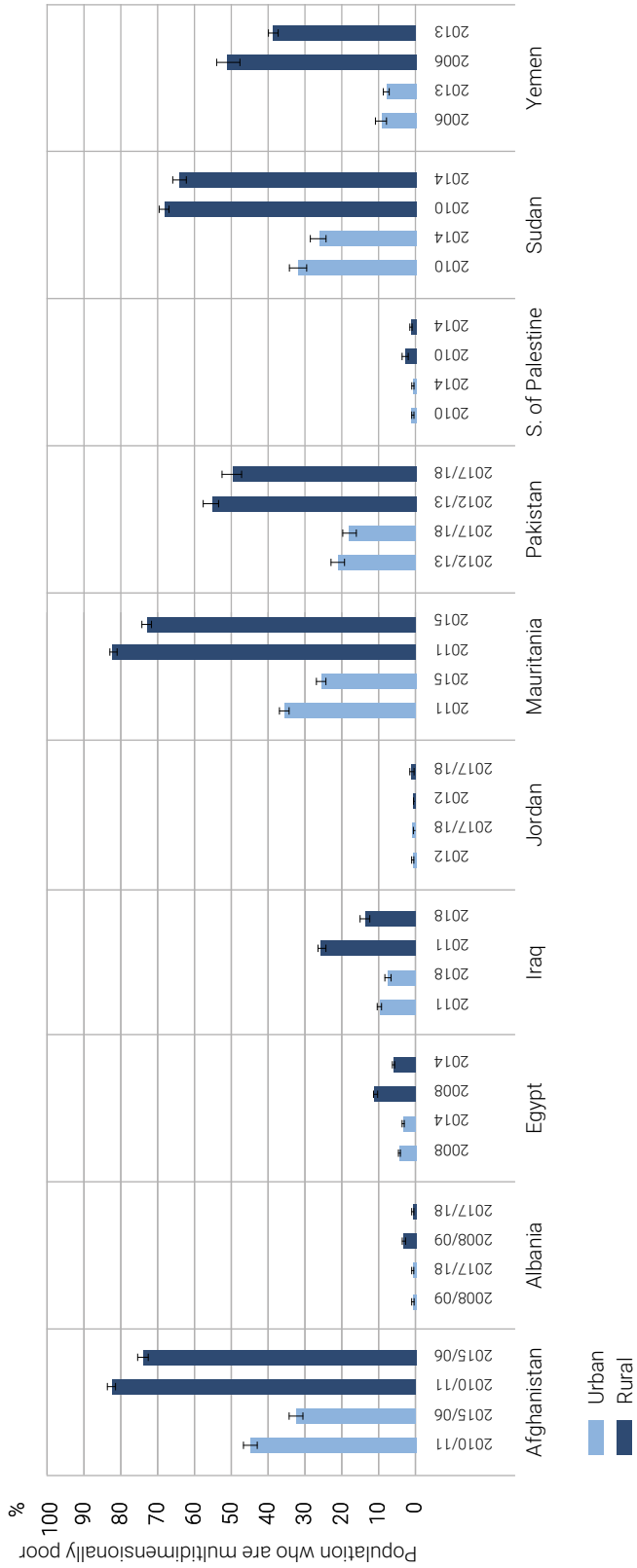
Table 3 B. Annualised change in intensity (A_t) for IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries

Country	A_t (%)		Annualised change ^a			Number of poor people (thousands)	
	Y1	Y2	Absolute (p.p.)	Relative (%)		Y1	Y2
Afghanistan (2010/11–15/16)	57.8	54.9	-0.6	-1	***	22,538	22,366
Albania (2008/09–17/18)	37.8	39.1	0.1	0.4		62	20
Egypt (2008–14)	40.1	37.6	-0.4	-1.1	***	6,375	4,412
Iraq (2011–18)	39.6	38.1	-0.2	-0.5	***	4,427	3,591
Jordan (2012–17/18)	33.8	35.3	0.3	0.8	**	42	43
Mauritania (2011–15)	56.7	51.5	-1.3	-2.3	***	2,268	2,045
Pakistan (2012/13–17/18)	52.3	51.7	-0.1	-0.2		84,180	80,523
State of Palestine (2010–14)	38	37.8	-0.1	-0.1		53	42
Sudan (2010–14)	55.5	53.4	-0.5	-1	***	19,691	19,889
Yemen (2006–13)	49.8	47.5	-0.3	-0.7	***	7,855	7,346

Notes: a) Where the survey was conducted over two years, the average of the years was used to compute the annualised changes. *** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.01$, ** statistically significant at $\alpha=0.05$, * statistically significant at $\alpha=0.10$.

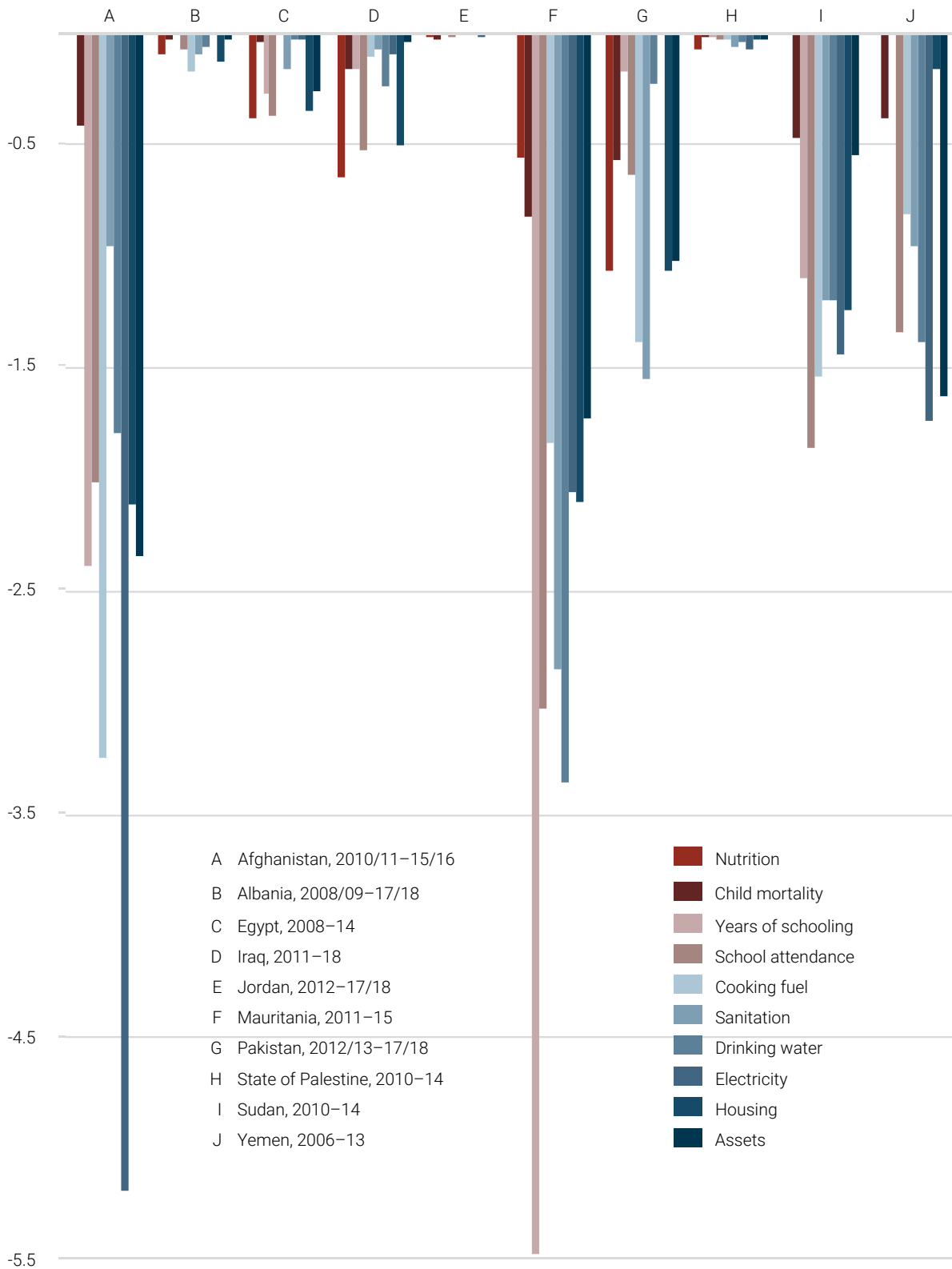
Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

Figure 14. Incidence of poverty over time by urban and rural areas



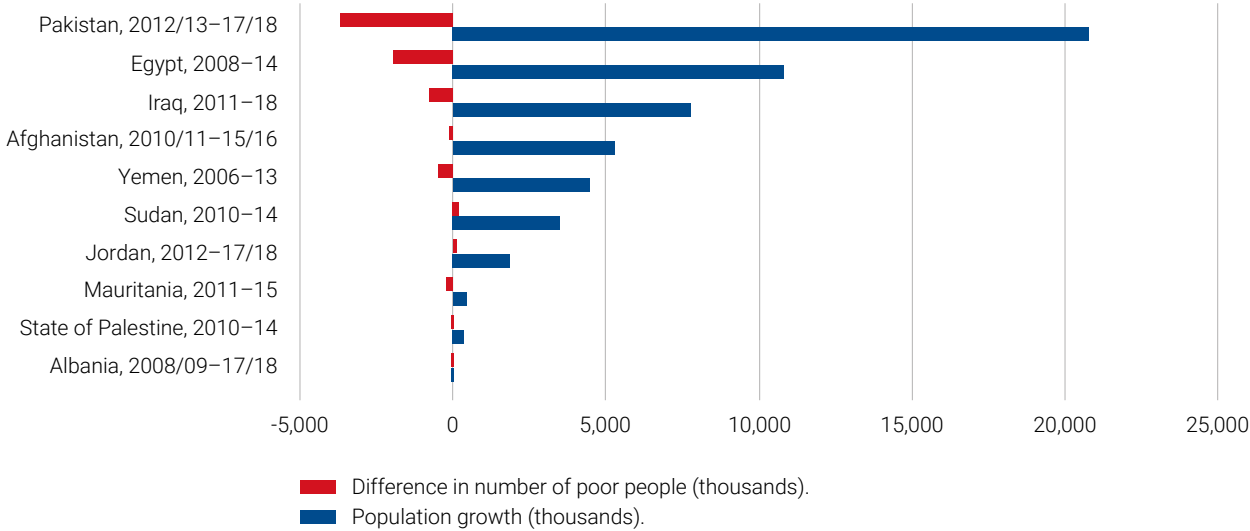
Notes: Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals.
 Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

Figure 15. Annualised change in censored headcount ratios



Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

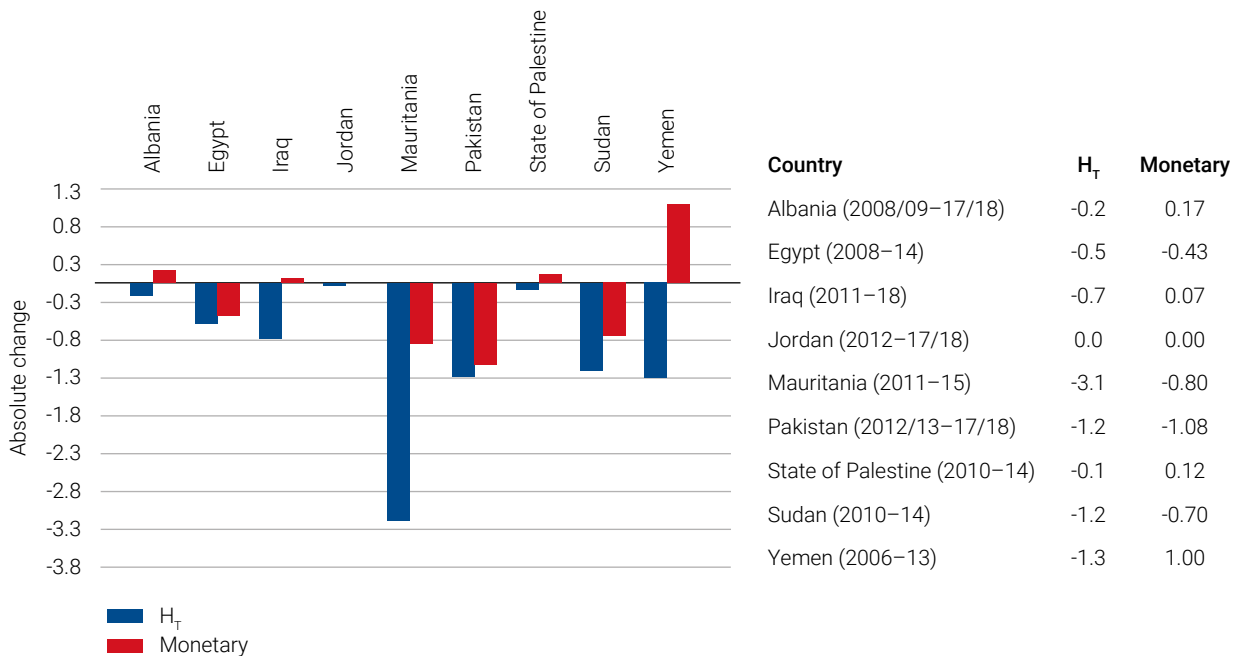
Figure 16. Population growth versus number of poor people in IsDB Europe/MENA Member Countries



Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.4 POPULATION GROWTH AND THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE LIVING IN POVERTY

In order to eradicate poverty, the speed of reduction in the multidimensional headcount ratio (H_T) must outpace population growth. All of the eight IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries that reduced the MPI_T significantly also observed overall population growth between the two time periods (Figure 16). Even with population growth taken into account, all but Jordan and Sudan reduced the number of poor people across the periods. In Pakistan, the number of poor people reduced by nearly 4 million; in Egypt, by nearly 2 million, and in Albania, the number of poor people fell from around 61,000 to 20,000. That exponential population growth did not overshadow the progress in poverty reduction within most of these countries is a victory worth celebrating.

Figure 17. Annualised absolute change in incidence of H_T and US\$1.90 a day

Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.5 COMPARING MULTIDIMENSIONAL AND MONETARY POVERTY

Multidimensional poverty incidence was larger than income poverty at the beginning of the comparison period in all nine of the ISDB MENA and Europe Member Countries for which we have monetary poverty data.¹⁰ The gap between the initial multidimensional and income poverty incidence varies from slight differences in Jordan (0.5% and 0.1%) to dramatic differences in Mauritania (63.0% and 8.4%) and Sudan (57.0% and 15.5%). Figure 17 depicts the annualised absolute rates of change in the incidence of H_T and US\$1.90/day poverty for the nine countries. Four countries had a reduction in poverty according to both measures, with multidimensional poverty reducing faster in Egypt, Mauritania, Pakistan, and Sudan. In Albania, Iraq, and Yemen, multidimensional poverty incidence reduced significantly while the incidence of monetary poverty increased.

If income and multidimensional poverty measures were perfectly correlated, and if they both identified the same people as poor, there would be no need for two separate measures. Instead, we observe important variations between both rates and, at times, the direction of change of these two poverty measures. This suggests that multidimensional poverty trends are not tracking with monetary poverty trends, and we must look at both 'sister' measures to understand the character of poverty around the world.

Table 4. Relative change in the MPI_t and GNI per capita growth

Country	Multidimensional poverty		GNI per capita ^a	
	MPI _t Year 1	Change per year, relative to initial poverty levels (%)	GNI per capita in Year 1, Atlas method (current US\$)	Average GNI per capita growth (annual %) ^b
Afghanistan (2010/11–15/16)	0.439	-4.3	520	–
Albania (2008/09–17/18)	0.008	-11	4,155	3.0
Egypt (2008–14)	0.032	-8.9	1,840	1.1
Iraq (2011–18)	0.057	-6.5	4,960	–
Jordan (2012–17/18)	0.002	-2.7	3,720	-1.3
Mauritania (2011–15)	0.357	-7.6	1,600	1.2
Pakistan (2012/13–17/18)	0.233	-3.1	1,165	2.7
State of Palestine (2010–14)	0.005	-7.4	2,510	3.4
Sudan (2010–14)	0.317	-3.1	1,190	5.9
Yemen (2006–13)	0.189	-4.3	810	–

Notes: a) GNI figures from the World Development Indicators (World Bank, 2021). Where the survey was conducted over two years, the average of the years was used to compute the GNI statistic.

b) The average is computed using the available annual values between the first and second time periods. Albania did not have data on 2008, so the statistic provided is the average of the annual values between 2009 and 2018. Afghanistan, Iraq, and Yemen did not have available data on GNI per capita growth (annual %).

Source: Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020).

2.6 GROWTH IN GNI PER CAPITA AND POVERTY REDUCTION

The level of success in translating the gains of economic growth into poverty reduction varies across countries and, at times, across periods (Table 4). For instance, in the periods under analysis, Egypt and Mauritania registered similar rates of growth in GNI per capita, while Mauritania led the countries in annualised absolute poverty reduction and Egypt saw a much slower significant reduction in multidimensional poverty. Further, between 2011 and 2015, although Mauritania grew nearly five times slower than Sudan – which far outpaced the others in GNI per capita growth – the former reduced the MPI_t far faster, despite a higher starting level of multidimensional poverty. Like the comparison with income poverty, the juxtaposition of multidimensional poverty trends and GNI per capita growth trends reveals the im-

portance of both measures for capturing the experience of global poverty. While governments may pursue lightning-quick economic growth rates, without proper attention to the human development on the ground, they will struggle to meet both the needs of their citizens and their target of ending poverty in all its forms by 2030.

3. COVID-19 AND MULTIDIMENSIONAL POVERTY

The global MPI 2020 data (Alkire, Kanagaratnam and Suppa, 2020) uses household surveys between 2009 and 2019, before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic that has shaken the world. Few countries have been spared the devastation caused by the pandemic, which has had an impact not only on health systems but also on the world's economic and social systems. Widespread data are not yet available to gauge the full impact of the pandemic, especially its impact on levels of multidimensional poverty, but insights can be gleaned on the risk that the pandemic poses for poor people across IsDB Member Countries. This section briefly examines the risk profile of IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries, the data available on deaths to date, and some of the strategies and responses that countries have adopted to try and mitigate the risk of COVID-19 and its consequences.

3.1 THE RISK PROFILE OF MENA AND EUROPE MEMBER COUNTRIES

The global MPI can be used to identify populations at higher risk of COVID-19, using three of the indicators that lead to increased risk.¹¹ Alkire, Dirksen, et al. (2020a) outline the reasons behind the selection of these indicators – nutrition is selected because ‘undernutrition is strongly associated with weakened immune systems, morbidity, and mortality’, drinking water is selected because ‘unsafe drinking water is associated with much of the global disease burden and weakened immune systems’, and cooking fuel is selected because ‘deprivation in clean cooking fuel is associated with indoor air pollution and acute respiratory infections’. The analysis profiles those individuals within a country who are at risk – defined as those deprived in at least one of the indicators – and

Table 5. MPI and COVID-19 risk in the IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries

Country	At risk (%)	At high risk (%)	MPI poor and at risk (%)	MPI poor and at high risk (%)
Albania	42.6	0.1	0.6	0
Algeria	25	0	1.7	0
Iraq	14.4	0	5.3	0
Jordan	4.6	0	0.2	0
Libya	48.1	0	1.7	0
Mauritania	78.4	14.1	49.1	14
Morocco	34.9	1.7	15.8	1.7
Pakistan	69.3	5.7	37.1	5.3
State of Palestine	43.4	0.1	0.9	0
Sudan	74.2	16.8	51.1	16.7
Syria	25.7	0	5.3	0
Tunisia	8.6	0	0.5	0
Yemen	76.5	14.3	46.4	14.2

Source: Alkire, Dirksen, et al. (2020c).

those who are at high risk as they are deprived in all three indicators at the same time.

Table 5 details the proportion of a country's total population who are at risk or at high risk.¹² Approximately three quarters of the population in Mauritania (78.4%), Yemen (76.5%) and Sudan (74.2%) are at risk. These countries also have the highest proportions of high-risk population. One in six people (16.8%) in Sudan are at high risk, deprived in all three indicators of nutrition, drinking water and cooking fuel. In Yemen (14.3%) and Mauritania (14.1%), one in seven people are at high risk. Focusing on the MPI poor population at risk, Table 5 also shows that approximately half of the population in Sudan (51.1%), Mauritania (49.1%) and Yemen (46.4%) are multidimensionally poor and at risk.

As of 15 April 2021, the global death toll from the COVID-19 pandemic is nearing 3 million people. Across the IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries, there have been almost 90,000 recorded deaths due to COVID-19, with Pakistan, Iraq, and Egypt reporting the highest number of deaths (Worldometer, 2021).

Responses to the pandemic have also varied from country to country. During the course of 2020, Gentilini et al. (2020) tracked governments' responses across a range of different social protection measures and jobs responses,¹³ according to three different categories: social assistance (including cash-based transfers, public works programmes and in-kind support); social insurance (including unemployment, pension and disability benefits) and labour markets (such as wage subsidies and training support).

There are 57 measures recorded across the 14 Member Countries for which there are data.¹⁴ Table 6 details how social assistance transfers are the most widely used class of measure (accounting for approximately 60% of all measures, or 35 types). These are complemented by 18 social insurance measures, but only four labour market-related measures. Among the social assistance measures, all the countries in MENA and Europe had some form of in-kind food assistance or school feeding schemes in place. Thirteen of the fourteen countries also had cash transfer measures.

Some countries in the regions have been able to use their MPI data to improve their COVID-19 response policies and interventions. These data may also prove useful as countries begin to build back and develop equitable recovery strategies.

Table 6. Social protection and jobs responses to COVID-19 in ISDB MENA and Europe Member Countries

Country	SOCIAL ASSISTANCE				SOCIAL INSURANCE				LABOUR MARKETS			
	Cash-based transfers	Public works	In-kind (in-kind/school feeding)	Utility and financial support	Paid leave / unemployment	Health insurance support	Pensions and disability benefits	Social security contributions (waiver/ subsidy)	Wage subsidy	Activation (training)	Labour regulation adjustment	Reduced work time subsidy
Afghanistan	✓		✓	✓								
Albania	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
Algeria	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓				
Egypt	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓		✓			
Iraq	✓		✓	✓	✓							
Jordan	✓		✓		✓			✓	✓			
Libya			✓									
Mauritania	✓		✓	✓								
Morocco	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			
Pakistan	✓		✓	✓								
Sudan	✓		✓									
Syria	✓		✓	✓	✓							
Tunisia	✓		✓		✓	✓	✓					
Yemen	✓		✓									

Source: Gentilini et al. (2020).

4. CONCLUDING REMARKS

The first quarter of 2021 continues to reveal the devastating and multifaceted nature of the global COVID-19 pandemic. Without proper attention to the impacts of this public health crisis and the varied conditions among poor people, governments risk jeopardising the last two decades' progress towards eradicating poverty. Governments and policymakers need more information to cope with the multidimensional effects of the pandemic, to act against its adverse consequences, and to protect and improve the lives of the most deprived. To this end, this brief has synthesised data on where the IsDB MENA and Europe Member Countries stand in terms of poverty levels and trends, so as to better understand the way ahead.

The case of Mauritania is a good closing example for several reasons. On the one hand, more than half of Mauritania's population was living in multidimensional poverty according to the most recent information from 2015. Mauritania also has stark differences between the MPI of its urban and rural populations (0.117 and 0.391, respectively), and the incidence of poverty among its subnational regions varies from as little as 7.4% in Tiris Zemmour to 75.0% in Guidimaka. On the other hand, Mauritania illustrates the progress possible in turning the tide of poverty dynamics. Between 2011 and 2015, Mauritania's reduction in its MPI was the largest in the region (an annualised absolute rate of -0.024 per year), as well as in incidence (an annualised absolute rate of -3.1 per year) and in intensity (an annualised absolute rate of -1.3 per year). Despite its inequalities, Mauritania managed to become a global leader in poverty reduction, illustrating that progress is feasible despite high and generalised initial levels of poverty.

These findings reveal a very heterogeneous experience of acute multidimensional poverty in the region. The brief shows that as the COVID-19 pandemic risks reversing hard-won advances in poverty reduction, better data can improve decision-making in a context of limited fiscal resources. For example, the information on overlapped deprivations analysed in this brief may help to set some principles for identifying those who are most prone to the severest adverse effects of the pandemic. This information, in line with Sustainable Development Goal

Target 1.5, could serve as a guide for countries to create tailored policies at subnational levels. For instance, as in the case of Mauritania, where 78.4% of the population are at risk (without either appropriate nutrition, drinking water, and cooking fuel), even as only 49.1% of that figure are also MPI poor. To build back better in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence-driven policymaking must centre the diverse and multidimensional realities of poor people globally or else risk losing the gains of the first two decades of the twenty-first century.



ENDNOTES

- 1 For details on the global MPI, see also the accompanying data tables in Alkire, Kanagaratnam, and Suppa (2020); and UNDP and OPHI (2020).
- 2 Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Libya, Mauritania, Morocco, Pakistan, the State of Palestine, Sudan, Syria, Tunisia, and Yemen.
- 3 In Afghanistan and Egypt, the MPI is computed using 9 of the 10 indicators, as in Afghanistan the survey did not collect information on nutrition, and in Egypt it did not collect information on cooking fuel (Alkire et al., 2018).
- 4 Like with the global MPI, we do not have trend data on the other IsDB Member Countries in MENA and Europe (Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and the UAE).
- 5 The harmonisation process is covered in greater detail in Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. (2020, sec.3).
- 6 All statistical significance is evaluated at the level of $\alpha=0.01$, except for Pakistan, at $\alpha=0.05$.
- 7 Absolute changes are easy to compare across countries and are key comparisons to make, but for countries with lower initial poverty levels, large absolute reductions are far more difficult to achieve (Figure 11). The annualised absolute rate of change is the difference in the relevant point estimate (e.g., MPI_t) between two periods, divided by the difference in the two time periods, whereas the annualised relative rate of change is the compound rate of reduction in the point estimate per year between the initial and the final periods. We can also look at annualised relative reductions to understand the changes in poverty for countries with low absolute poverty levels.
- 8 Albania, Iraq, Jordan, the State of Palestine, Sudan, and Yemen could not be disaggregated by subnational region, as either: the survey reports established that the results were not representative at the subnational level; the national MPI_t estimate and poverty headcount ratio were not large enough (>0.005 and $>1.5\%$, respectively) to enable disaggregation at the subnational level with meaningful estimates; or administrative changes in the subnational unit definitions between the two time periods were incomparable (Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. 2020).
- 9 Afghanistan and Yemen's MPI_t values are computed using 9 of the 10 indicators, excluding nutrition, while Egypt's MPI_t is computed using 9 of the 10 indicators, excluding cooking fuel (Alkire, Kovesdi, Mitchell, et al. 2020).
- 10 Bangladesh, Chad, Egypt, Gambia, Iraq, Kazakhstan, Mali, Nigeria, Pakistan, Sudan, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan.

ENDNOTES

- 11 See Alkire, Dirksen, et al. (2020a, 2020b, 2020c and 2020d) for more detail on the method and the analysis possible.
- 12 Afghanistan and Egypt are excluded from this analysis as the survey in Afghanistan did not collect information on nutrition (Alkire and Robles, 2017) and in Egypt it did not collect information on cooking fuel (Alkire and Robles, 2015).
- 13 Data do not exist for the State of Palestine.
- 14 A measure, such as a cash-based transfer, could be made up of a number of different interventions or programmes.

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