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# **MISSING DIMENSIONS OF POVERTY DATA**

## **A Proposal for Internationally Comparable Indicators of Psychological and Subjective Wellbeing**

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This document contains a modified version of the survey questions proposed in the paper *A Proposal for Internationally Comparable Indicators of Psychological and Subjective Wellbeing* (Samman 2007) prepared for the May 2007 Workshop on Missing Dimensions of Poverty Data. The paper recommended that these questions – or a refinement of them – might be considered a module that could be added to nationally representative individual or household surveys. This module proposes seven indicators of psychological and subjective wellbeing:

### *PSYCHOLOGICAL*

1. Meaning in life
2. Autonomy
3. Competence
4. Relatedness

### *SUBJECTIVE*

5. Overall life satisfaction
6. Domain-specific life satisfaction

The domains proposed are material wellbeing (food, housing, income), health, productivity (work), security (physical safety); intimacy (relations with friends and family); community (education, neighborhood, actively helping others); and wellbeing from spiritual/religious/ philosophical beliefs.

7. Happiness

This module also contains a question on whether the respondent practices a religion and one on the importance of religion to them, to assess its contribution to perceived wellbeing. (These questions are given too in OPHI's empowerment module, as they can be followed by the domain-specific questions on empowerment with respect to religious practice. These questions are also repeated here, for convenience.)

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<sup>1</sup> Samman, Emma (2007), *A proposal for internationally comparable indicators of psychological and subjective wellbeing*. OPHI Working Paper no. 5. Available at [http://www.ophi.org.uk/pubs/Samman\\_Psych\\_Subj\\_Wellbeing\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.ophi.org.uk/pubs/Samman_Psych_Subj_Wellbeing_FINAL.pdf) and in December 2007 *Oxford Development Studies* (35:4, p. 459-486).

**PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUBJECTIVE WELLBEING (RESPONDENT ONLY ANSWERS)**

<b>MV3 (MEANING IN LIFE).</b> Please take a few minutes to think about the things that make your life important. How true are the following statements for you? <b>SHOW CARD</b>	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Fairly true	Completely true	Don't know / No answer	<b>MV4 (AUTONOMY).</b> How true are the following statements for you? <b>SHOW CARD</b>	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Fairly true	Completely true	Don't know / No answer
a. My life has a clear meaning or purpose.	1	2	3	4	99	a. I feel free to decide for myself how to lead my life.	1	2	3	4	99
b. I have found a satisfactory meaning in life.	1	2	3	4	99	b. I generally feel free to express my ideas and opinions.	1	2	3	4	99
c. I have a clear sense of what gives meaning to my life.	1	2	3	4	99	c. I feel like I can pretty much be honest with myself in daily situations.	1	2	3	4	99

<b>MV5 (COMPETENCE).</b> How true are the following statements for you? <b>SHOW CARD</b>	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Fairly true	Completely true	Don't know / No answer	<b>MV6 (RELATEDNESS).</b> How true are the following statements for you? <b>SHOW CARD</b>	Not at all true	Somewhat true	Fairly true	Completely true	Don't know / No answer
a. People I know tell me I am competent/capable at what I do.	1	2	3	4	99	a. I get along well with people I come into contact with.	1	2	3	4	99
b. Most of the time I feel a sense of accomplishment from what I do.	1	2	3	4	99	b. I consider myself close to the people I regularly interact with.	1	2	3	4	99
c. I generally feel very capable.	1	2	3	4	99	c. People in my life care about me.	1	2	3	4	99

<p><b>MV1 (HAPPINESS).</b> Taking all things together, would you say you are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Very happy</li> <li>2. Fairly happy</li> <li>3. Not very happy</li> <li>4. Not at all happy</li> </ol>	
<b>MV1</b>	

<b>MV2(SATISFACTION WITH LIFE).</b> In general, how satisfied or unsatisfied are you with your: <b>SHOW CARD</b>	<b>Very satisfied</b>	<b>Fairly satisfied</b>	<b>Not very satisfied</b>	<b>Not at all satisfied</b>	<b>Don't Know / No Answer</b>
a. Life overall	1	2	3	4	99
b. Food	1	2	3	4	99
c. Housing	1	2	3	4	99
d. Income	1	2	3	4	99
e. Health	1	2	3	4	99
f. Work	1	2	3	4	99
g. Local security level	1	2	3	4	99
h. Friends	1	2	3	4	99
i. Family	1	2	3	4	99
j. Education	1	2	3	4	99
k. Free choice and control over your life	1	2	3	4	99
l. Dignity	1	2	3	4	99
m. Neighbourhood/town/community/	1	2	3	4	99
n. Ability to help others	1	2	3	4	99
o. Spiritual, religious or philosophical beliefs	1	2	3	4	99

<p><b>EMP13.</b> Do you practice any religion?</p> <p>1. Yes → <b>EMP13e</b> Which? Specify</p> <p>2. No → Go to <b>EMP15</b></p> <p><b>EMP14.</b> How important is religion in your life?</p> <p>1. Very important</p> <p>2. Somewhat important</p> <p>3. Not very important</p> <p>4. Not at all important</p> <p>99 DK/NA</p>		
<b>EMP13</b>	<b>EMP13e</b>	<b>EMP14</b>

NOTE: THESE QUESTIONS ON RELIGION SHOULD BE ASKED AS PART OF THIS MODULE, AS THEY MAY PROVIDE INSIGHT INTO DETERMINANTS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SUBJECTIVE STATES. THEY COULD BE FOLLOWED BY THESE QUESTIONS FROM THE EMPOWERMENT MODULE ON EMPOWERMENT AS IT PERTAINS TO RELIGION.

**EMP17\_1 Answer only if the interviewee declares they practice a religion, EMP15=1**

<p><b>EMP15.</b> Who normally makes decisions regarding whether to practice a religion and how to practice it?</p> <p>1. You</p> <p>2. You and your spouse or partner</p> <p>3. You along with someone else (not your spouse/partner)</p> <p><b>Alternatives 1 to 3 go to EMP17_1 for respondents who work; or 17_2 for respondents who do not.</b></p> <p>4. Your spouse/partner</p> <p>5. Other (Neither you nor your spouse/partner)</p> <p>6. The community / social organisation / neighbourhood board</p> <p><b>EMP16.</b> If you wanted to, would you be able to make these decisions?</p> <p>1. Yes</p> <p>2. No</p>	<p><b>EMP17_1</b> I will now ask you to express your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements, where 1 is greatly disagree with the statement and 4 is strongly agree, regarding why you practice a religion.</p> <p><b>Show Card</b></p>						
		<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Don't know/No answer</b>	
	a. I have to practice the religion I already practice.	1	2	3	4	99	
	b. I practice a religion because my spouse, another person, society, social organisations or my community obligate me to.	1	2	3	4	99	
<b>EMP15</b>	<b>EMP16</b>	c. I practice a religion according to what others expect of me or to obtain their approval. If I didn't, they might blame me.	1	2	3	4	99
		d. I practice a religion because I personally consider it important.	1	2	3	4	99

**EMP17\_2 Answer only if the interviewee declares they DON'T practice a religion, EMP15=2**

<b>EMP17_2</b> I will now ask you to express your level of disagreement or agreement with the following statements, where 1 is greatly disagree with the statement and 4 is strongly agree, regarding why don't you practice any religion. <b>Show Card</b>					
	<b>Strongly disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly agree</b>	<b>Don't know/No answer</b>
a. I can't practice a religion.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>99</b>
b. I don't practice a religion because my spouse, another person, society, social organisations or my community insist that I do not.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>99</b>
c. I don't practice a religion because it's what others expect of me or to obtain their approval. If I did, they might blame me.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>99</b>
d. I don't practice a religion because I personally consider it important not to.	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>99</b>