

The Sixth Annual Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) Meeting
Johannesburg, South Africa | October 30 – November 1, 2018

Communiqué

Network Participants in Johannesburg

Endorse MPIs as a tool to meet Poverty-related SDGs and Call for Channels of SDG reporting for MPIs and Innovate in response to Demand

The network recognizes the significant contribution that alignment between multidimensional poverty indices (MPIs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) make to understanding and acting appropriately to address poverty.

That poverty is multidimensional is accepted. That it should be embedded throughout the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has now been widely accepted. Target 1.2 calls for halving poverty in all its forms by 2030. It also calls for leaving no one behind. In this regard deploying multisectoral integrated policies that reflect interlinkages across dimensions importantly drive the war on poverty forward.

The Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN), founded in 2013, is a platform of South-South Peer Support amongst countries. Over this period the practice of using MPIs amongst countries has reached heightened recognition, appreciation and utilization at the highest political level, especially in Latin America and increasingly so in Asia and Africa. In the recent release of Global MPI on the eve of the United Nations General Assembly, the typical association of MPI as a phenomenon in the global South was broken when Spain pledged to use MPI. Importantly on this occasion Nobel Laureate Professor Angus Deaton delivered a keynote address called on the United States to apply MPI as an approach to address its poverty problems and pockets. Increasingly the MPI in policy terms is synonymous to methodological rigour and practical value-added in measurement, prioritization, planning, resource optimization, implementation, monitoring and transparency. In this era in which governments are also aligning data, measures and policies with the SDGs, little doubt remains that MPI logically undergirds the cycle of planning and action.

Now is the time to mobilise the financial resources required to deal with the massive problem of poverty, and the stage for that is where business meets with policy, and that is Davos.

- 1. To accelerate progress towards the realization of National development plans and the SDGs, the network and its participants endorse the development and adoption of MPIs at the regional, national and subnational levels.**

The MPPN's core work is to offer peer support to a rapidly increasing number of policymakers and statisticians around the world who are working to establish multidimensional poverty measures and use them to powerfully fight human disadvantage and misery. Some MPPN members are designing their first official permanent national MPIs; others are energetically using official MPIs in public policy, communications, and engagement with the private sector.

MPPN members also interchange experiences, offer trainings in policy, measurement, and communications, and organise field trips and joint events. Many involve vulnerable groups in MPI design, because as the protagonists of poverty, their expertise is invaluable and their agency is essential to poverty eradication. Nearly all use the Alkire Foster (AF) methodology and the related set of empirical techniques developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI). As official permanent poverty measures, the MPI and monetary poverty measures complement each other. Each plays its own part in poverty reduction strategies. And together they make a strong pair.

National MPIs are being used for planning, for targeting, for evaluation, for the coordination of policies, for more effective budgeting, for improved communication and governance. Countries are using MPIs to plan integrated and multi-sectoral policies that prioritise the poor. By showing how different poverty-related SDGs overlap and interconnect, the MPI helps to break apart policy silos. And because it shows which groups or regions are experiencing poverty most acutely, it draws attention to the poorest groups and places, helping to ensure that no one is left behind.

National MPIs are tailored to the domestic context so cannot be easily compared; complementing these, the global MPI 2018 measures acute multidimensional poverty for 105 developing countries in a comparable way. National, Regional, and the global MPIs are all disaggregated to identify the poorest by location, age, and other relevant variables so as to leave no one behind.

The MPI is an important entry point for prioritizing countries' localized SDG agenda and processes as has been successfully done by many countries. It covers many goals, and addresses the core of the 2030 Agenda: “eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is the greatest global challenge and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development”.

SDG Target 1.2 and Indicator 1.2.2

Since 2017 MPPN has called for clear reporting channels in the SDG indicator framework for National MPIs (which reflect national definitions) and/or for nationally chosen measures such as the Global MPI, under Target 1.2 so that indicator 1.2.2 – for which countries are custodian agencies – is included in the SDG reporting framework and progress in its reduction is tracked.

However we note with concern that no channel is open for countries to report their indicator 1.2.2 in the global database on SDG indicators.

2. We therefore call for UNSD and the supporting agencies to open such a channel as initially agreed.

Such a channel would give due prominence to the MPI as a central indicator that reflects overlapping and interlinked poverty-related SDG indicators, and thus informs integrated and multi-sectoral policies.

Measurement and Policy

As work on multidimensional poverty obtains wide acceptance by countries and international institutions, we see an increase in the use of MPIs. While this is a huge accomplishment, the rise

of competing measures for the same or overlapping populations also poses challenges of confusing rather than clarifying priorities.

- 3. The MPPN calls for members to help one another clarify the trade-offs and ideal balance between complexity and simplicity. With the same emphasis on using metrics to accelerate poverty eradication, the MPPN also calls on experts and international agencies to defer to national priorities in the specification of national MPIs that are used to shape policy.**

Research and Innovation

One of the strengths of the MPI methodology is its rigor and accuracy. To continually sharpen this cutting edge,

- 4. The network will develop MPI-related tools to meet demands for evaluation, policy design and analysis, and to design measures for specific populations**

The MPPN will promote applied research in order to generate more tools for policy design as well as MPI design. It will advance research on a number of essential areas such as the practical linkages between poverty reduction and environmental sustainability and wellbeing, child poverty, and multidimensional impact evaluation. It will share lessons of how members appropriately involve stakeholders (including poor people and communities) in MPI design and analysis. It will also develop tools and processes that facilitate the communication of regional, national and/or subnational MPIs to citizens, the private sector, and policy actors.

New Participants

The MPPN invites other governments to join the Network, participate in its South-South exchanges and be part of this growing number of countries exploring and adopting rigorous yet clear and information-rich multidimensional poverty measures to guide policy.

The Network also welcomes international, regional and sub-national bodies that are using, supporting or advancing multidimensional measures of poverty and well-being.

We are grateful to South Africa for hosting the 6th Annual meeting, and look forward to the 7th Annual meeting, the location of which will be communicated imminently.

Background Note: The MPPN

Since its launch in 2013, the MPPN has grown considerably. It now draws together Ministers and senior officials from almost 60 governments and 15 international and regional institutions.

The Network enables early adopters to share their experiences with newcomers to multidimensional poverty measurement. It provides peer-to-peer technical and policy support, as well as input into the design and institutional arrangements for successful multidimensional poverty eradication. The Network supports policymakers to develop more effective poverty eradication efforts, grounded in multidimensional measures of poverty. Its vision is a world in which poverty in all its forms is measured, tracked over time – and eventually eliminated.

As of October 2018, ministers and senior officials from more than 50 countries participate in the Network, including: Afghanistan, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Burkina Faso, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, eSwatini, Grenada, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Jamaica, Malaysia, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Senegal, Seychelles, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Uruguay, and Vietnam. Representatives from 15 international institutions also participate in the network, including: the Federal Minister of International Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany, The Commonwealth Secretariat, the Economic Commission for Latin American Countries (ECLAC), the Inter-American Development Bank, the Islamic Development Bank, the Organization of American States (OAS), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS), the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI), the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida), the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), the Statistical, Economic and Social Research and Training Centre for Islamic Countries (SESRIC), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), the United Nations International Children's Fund (UNICEF), and the World Bank.