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A review of the use of multidimensional poverty measures

Informing advocacy, policy and accountability to address child poverty

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Acronyms

CA	Consensual Approach
CEQ4C	Commitment to Equity for Children
CFC	Child Friendly City
CIDP	County Integrated Development Plans
CMEPSP	Commission on the Measurement of Economic Progress and Social Progress
c-MPI	Child Multidimensional Poverty Index
CONEVAL	National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (Mexico)
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CREDD	Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development (Mali)
CSA	Central Statistical Agency
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DACF	Districts Assembly Common Fund (Ghana)
DANE	National Administrative Statistics Department (Colombia)
DCS	Department of Census and Statistics (Sri Lanka)
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EPRC	Economic Policy Research Centre
EPRI	Economic Policy Research Institute
FZTF	From Zero to Forever (Colombia)
GCECP	Global Coalition to End Child Poverty
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSO	General Statistics Office (Viet Nam)
GSS	Ghana Statistical Service
HDI	Human Development Index
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
IDS	Institute of Development Studies
INEGI	National Institute of Statistics and Geography (Mexico)
ISCI	International Society for Child Indicators
KNBS	Kenya National Bureau of Statistics
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies (Ghana)
MDRI	Mekong Development Research Institute (Viet Nam)
MENA	UNICEF Middle East and North Africa
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MLGRD	Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (Ghana)
MMDAs	Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (Ghana)
MODA	Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis
MOLISA	Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (Viet Nam)
MPI	Multidimensional Poverty Index
MPM	Multidimensional Poverty Measure
MPPN	Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network
MTDPF	Medium Term Development Planning Framework (Ghana)
NDP	National Development Plan (Colombia)
NDPC	National Development Planning Commission (Ghana)

NESDC	National Economic and Social Development Council (Thailand)
NGO	Non-government organization
NSS	National Statistical Service (Armenia)
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
ODID	Oxford Department of International Development
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
PEP	Partnership for Economic Policy
PMT	Proxy Means Test
RAF	Resource Allocation Formula
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPRI	Social Policy Research Institute
SSL	Statistics Sierra Leone
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UN-ESCWA	United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VASS	Viet Nam Academy of Social Sciences
VNR	Voluntary National Review
WASH	Water, Sanitation and Hygiene

Executive Summary

With its inclusion in the SDGs, multidimensional poverty measurement, including multidimensional child poverty, is now firmly established as a fundamental approach to understanding the situation of children in poverty as well as holding governments to account to respond to it. Work on multidimensional poverty had been growing significantly before its inclusion in the SDGs; to date, UNICEF has supported governments in producing over 100 national child poverty reports, and continues to support measurement and analysis in many more countries.

While there has been extensive work undertaken on approaches to the measurement and analysis of multidimensional poverty, there has been relatively little work in understanding the ways that measurement and analysis can impact on national policies, programmes and accountability mechanisms and ultimately lead to the reduction of multidimensional child poverty.

This review aims to fill this gap. It is based on an extensive review of the literature, complimented by qualitative interviews with key stakeholders working in the area. Its focus has been on actual examples and use rather than prospective or possible avenues in which multidimensional poverty measures could influence policies and programmes. While UNICEF's focus is on children, there is much to be learned from broader multidimensional poverty measures and how they have changed policies and programmes that pertain to children as well as impact children directly. As such, the focus of the review was multidimensional poverty analysis in general, with specific attention on multidimensional child poverty where possible

Over 90 reports and papers on the topic of multidimensional poverty were reviewed, followed by an in-depth analysis of 25 reports, zooming specifically in on the policy recommendations included in multidimensional poverty analytical reports. Key informant interviews were conducted with 24 stakeholders involved in both the measurement and the use of multidimensional poverty measures, including academics, researchers, and policymakers in government and international organizations. Country case studies were gathered from key literature as well through recommendations from key stakeholders. The review provides documentation of 33 country examples documenting experiences from six regions, featuring diverse political and economic contexts.

Impact pathways from multidimensional poverty and child poverty measurement to policy and programme change

A clear outcome of the review is the impact multidimensional poverty has on national policies, programmes and accountability mechanisms. However, behind this, the review found significant nuance in the pathways leading to these impacts and limitations on what can be expected of multidimensional poverty and child poverty measures. Following the typology of impact pathways emerging from the review, the key conclusions are:

Impact pathway 1: Child poverty advocacy – raising awareness and changing the language and concept of poverty.

- ✓ Through advocacy, multidimensional poverty measurements, including those focusing on children, have consistently played a critical role in changing the understanding of poverty to go beyond income and to encompass the multiple dimensions of poverty, including the specific deprivations faced by children.
- ✓ Multidimensional child poverty measures have supported efforts to raise awareness about the scale and intensity of the problem, revealing the proportion and number of children living in multidimensional poverty and the characteristics of children living in poverty
- ✓ Child poverty reports have highlighted the importance of addressing child multidimensional poverty, including – almost universally – its higher prevalence compared to adult poverty.
- ✓ Multidimensional poverty measures have a strong ability to generate media attention and have been used effectively to reach wide and diverse audiences, gaining the attention of both the public and policymakers, and mobilizing support for comprehensive policy actions to tackle multidimensional poverty and child poverty.
- ✓ Where advocacy has been combined with clear policy actions and recommendations, the pathways to changes in policies can be seen clearly. This is considered in detail in the following section on the foundations needed to successfully impact poverty policies and programmes.
- ~ The pathways through which advocacy leads to policy and programme change are often indirect. They lay important groundwork, but it is often difficult to directly attribute changes to their influence.

Considerations: Multidimensional poverty measurement is commonly and effectively used for advocacy. Depending on advocacy areas of focus and the audience in question, some measures may be more effective for advocacy. For example, comparing adults and children might be useful to highlight that children are more likely to be in poverty than adults and connect to overall poverty debates, which has been done with disaggregated measures such as the MPI. At the same time, advocacy focused specifically on children and more connected to rights-based approaches have been conducted effectively with both the MODA and Bristol methodologies.

Impact pathway 2: Using multidimensional poverty measures to identify policies and programmes to reduce child poverty. Examples show a common set of policy recommendations emerging from multidimensional poverty analysis in general and multidimensional child poverty analysis specifically. The four most common key policy recommendations emerging from multidimensional poverty analysis are:

1. **The broad targeting of geographic areas and groups in poverty based on a multidimensional poverty measure:**
   - ✓ Reports frequently highlight disparities in multidimensional poverty rates across geographic areas and particular groups (for example by ethnicity and gender) and recommended broad shifts in policy in response.
   - ✗ However, due to limitations in the surveys from which multidimensional poverty measures are developed, national multidimensional poverty measures are not commonly used to target programmes at household or individual level.

2. **The importance of multidimensional poverty measures in guiding multisectoral investment and coordination:**
   - ✓ Corresponding to the multisectoral nature of multidimensional poverty, reports frequently point to the need for investment across sectors and better coordination, often pointing to areas of deprivation overlap.
   - ~ Multidimensional poverty measures have occasionally been used to direct focus for the implementation of multisectoral programmes, for example for identifying priority geographical areas for multisectoral interventions.
   - ✗ There have been some efforts to analyse multidimensional poverty to identify an overall optimal policy package to respond, but they are complex and have not been used in practice.
3. **The use of multidimensional poverty measure to guide and influence national and sub-national budgets:**
   - ✓ Recommendations from multidimensional analysis include the importance of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of budgeting to reduce multidimensional poverty.
   - ~ There are some limited examples of multidimensional poverty measures being used to directly guide internal budget allocation formulas (Nepal and Bhutan, both using MPI). But these are currently rare.
4. **Social protection is commonly included as a policy recommendation for addressing multidimensional poverty.**
   - ✓ As a programme with multisectoral impacts, social protection frequently emerges as an important policy direction. Within UNICEF, this may also reflect that social policy teams work on both child poverty and social protection.
   - ~ However, there are not examples of multidimensional poverty measures being used to specifically target social protection programmes to households/individuals. This has been done but with secondary data collection efforts and applying a multidimensional poverty measure which differs from the national multidimensional poverty measure.

Considerations: As multidimensional poverty measures most commonly identify broad policy conclusions, the choice of measure will generally not produce different policy recommendations. Accordingly, advocacy and ownership considerations might best drive choice of measure, and those working on multidimensional poverty should be prepared for extra research and analysis beyond the multidimensional poverty measure to identify specific policy recommendations. Some important exceptions to this are the guiding of budget allocation formulas in two countries (Bhutan and Nepal), and the example of Mexico, where the national multidimensional poverty indicator is linked directly to progress in sectors and triggers shifts in government focus to reduce multidimensional poverty.

Impact pathway 3: Embedding multidimensional poverty in government agendas and strengthening accountability. Including multidimensional poverty in key national development plans or poverty reduction strategies can contribute to the creation of high-level political commitment at national or sub-national levels, laying the foundation for increased and more coordinated actions to combat child poverty, as well as funding to ensure implementation. They can also provide a mechanisms for accountability through monitoring progress towards agreed child poverty targets.

- ✓ In several countries' multidimensional poverty measures, including for children, have been included in key national development frameworks and plans. This provides long-term commitment for addressing child poverty and gives clear accountability to governments.
- ✓ Increasingly, and supported by the push of the SDGs, multidimensional child poverty (baseline indicators and targets) has been included as a key indicator in national monitoring and evaluation frameworks, again underlining the clear accountability of governments.
- ~ While these approaches increase long-term commitment and government accountability, their ultimate impact on children depends on national commitment and capacity to execute established plans.

Foundations for effectively using multidimensional poverty for policy and programme change

The review also highlighted important foundations in the processes of developing and using multidimensional poverty and child poverty measures to ensure impact. While measurement and analysis are necessary steps leading to policy and programme change on child poverty, there are many important considerations in both the process and the country context that are important to achieving impact. These include:

- ✓ Coalition building and the importance of leadership
  - ° Building relationships with a wide range of partners adds crucial strength and momentum to advocacy work. It enables broader reach of analysis findings, promotes the exchange of knowledge and expertise, builds the capacity of the actors involved, facilitates access to decision makers who can influence policy decisions, and supports resource mobilization.
  - ° Strong leaders or champions to support approaches which address multidimensional poverty have been crucial in many instances. These champions don't have to be high-level political figures, but those who strongly believe in the approach and will support and sustain it over time.
- ✓ Awareness of the politics in policymaking processes
  - ° The politics surrounding social policy formulation and implementation is complex, often involving a number of stakeholders. Understanding and engaging in these political aspects has an impact on the adoption and effectiveness of multidimensional poverty measures.
- ✓ Considerations regarding which multidimensional poverty approach to select
  - ° Depending on the dimensions, indicators, approach to aggregation and level of analysis, different measures can produce different results.
  - ° However, based on our review of how multidimensional poverty and child poverty measures influence policies, different measures rarely produce different policy conclusions. Regardless of the approach, multidimensional poverty measurements can have broad indirect impact through bringing together stakeholders, improving coordination among sectors, and building a foundation for broad policy recommendations.
  - ° Accordingly, advocacy and ownership are important considerations in driving the choice of measure for policy and programme change.
  - ° There are some important but limited exceptions where the choice of measure will produce different policy conclusions. For example, in the rare example where a multidimensional poverty measure has been directly used as criteria for budget formula, the choice of measure may produce significantly different results.
- ✓ The importance of further analysis – beyond the multidimensional poverty measure
  - ° Measuring poverty with a multidimensional approach can provide a more nuanced picture of how children experience poverty, identifying who the most vulnerable are and in what ways they are deprived, and providing important insights for designing and implementing anti-poverty policies.
  - ° To determine the specific mix of multisectoral interventions that can reduce child deprivations effectively and sustainably, further analysis, data and evidence need to be conducted and considered.

Future directions

While the review focused on the existing uses and experiences of multidimensional poverty measures, some important possible avenues for future work also emerge, including better understanding the policy mix to address multidimensional poverty, improving data collection for stronger indicators to capture individual child deprivations and the potential of adapting multidimensional poverty measures to inform fragile and humanitarian setting, including their use during a crisis.

Finally, the review and interviews conducted during the qualitative assessment also revealed that many powerful examples, including the details of influence and political engagement, have not been documented. While challenging, increasing this documentation would strengthen the knowledge base and help further improve the understanding effectiveness of using multidimensional poverty analysis to reduce child poverty.

Introduction

Although poverty is often interpreted as lack of income, consumption, or assets, it is being increasingly understood and defined in terms of the multiple deprivations people face in their daily lives, or multidimensional poverty. The capability approach, first articulated by Amartya Sen in the 1980s, shifted the discourse from traditional economic-based welfare approaches to explore poverty in a wider sense and measuring what people are capable of, a precursor to the Human Development approach introduced by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990. The multidimensional approach now underpins the measurement of poverty and well-being in many countries, in particular in some high-income countries, and is gradually being recognized as a key indicator of poverty in low- and middle-income countries.

Multidimensional poverty measurement refers to how people are deprived of the basic needs in their life, and commonly measures the deprivations of specific rights or capabilities, with these deprivations defined according to international and/or national standards. There are different approaches to measuring multidimensional poverty, but most commonly multidimensional poverty measures show how people are simultaneously deprived in key dimensions such as education, health, housing, water, and sanitation. Multidimensional child poverty measures, specifically, refer to either either the disaggregation (usually for the age group 0-17 years) of national or global measures, or refer to multidimensional poverty measures which are designed specifically for children, where the child, not the household, is the unit of analysis.[1]

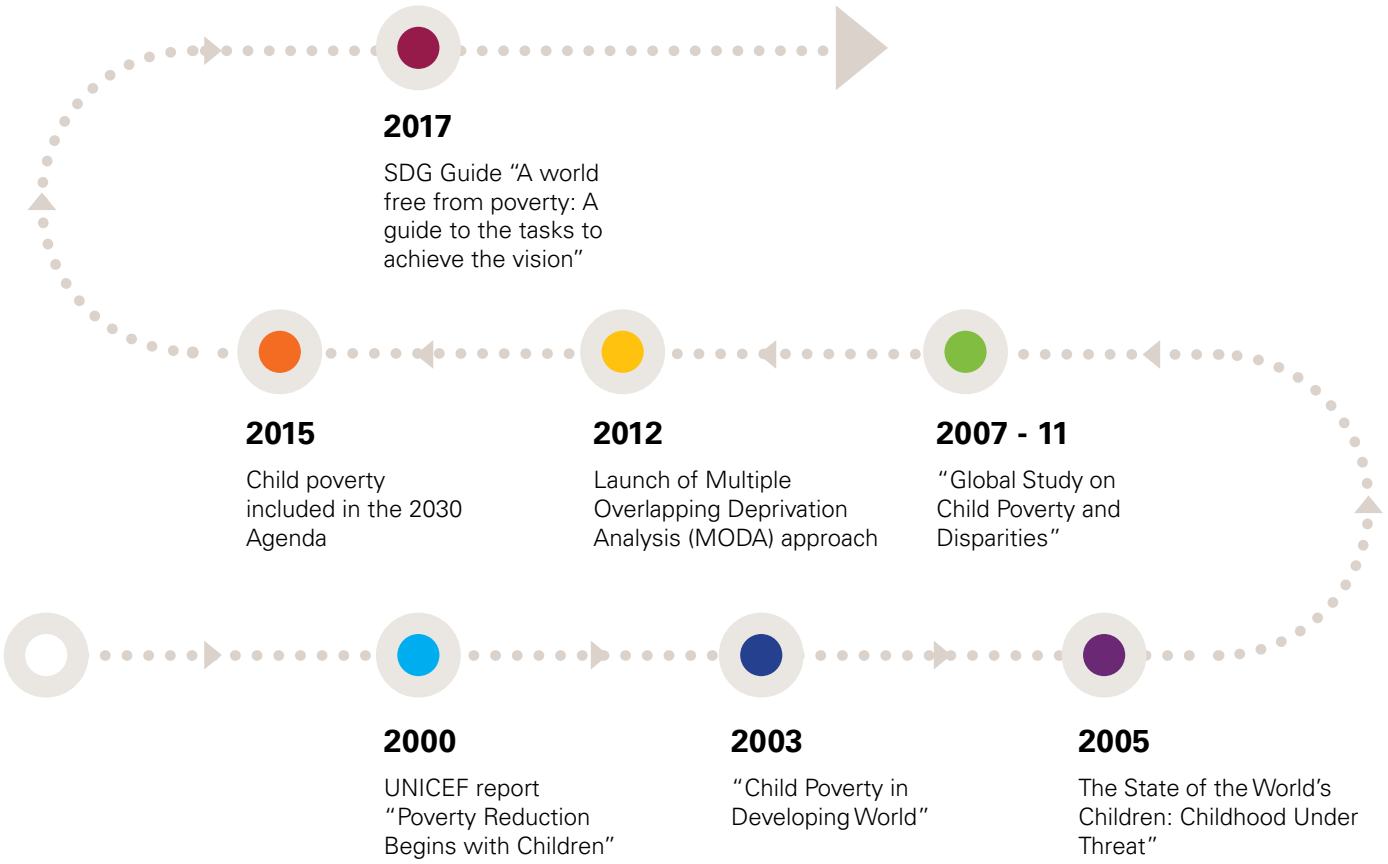
Multidimensional poverty measures are now being used as stand-alone measures, or to complement monetary poverty. And indeed, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) require countries to reduce, by 2030, at least by half the proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) – the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history – also holds governments accountable for taking appropriate measures to ensure "the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development" (CRC, Article 27). The COVID-19 pandemic and recession have further highlighted the importance of measuring poverty using both monetary and multidimensional poverty measures. In short, monetary-based measures alone are not able to encompass all the critical aspects of well-being, while multidimensional poverty measures may identify different groups of people who are poor and deprived.

UNICEF has a long history of measuring multidimensional child poverty, dating back to 2000 as shown in Figure 1. UNICEF engages with governments to develop multidimensional child poverty measures and, to date, over 100 national multidimensional child poverty reports have been published.[2]

1 For further information on multidimensional poverty measures refer to the "SDG Guide to End Child Poverty" and the World Bank, UNDP and UNICEF "A Roadmap for Countries Measuring Multidimensional Poverty

2 These multidimensional child poverty reports are available here: http://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org/child-poverty-reports

Figure 1: History of child poverty measurement milestones



Objective

Despite the increased prominence and adoption of multidimensional poverty measures both globally and nationally, there have been few, if any, comprehensive assessments on the policy and programme use of multidimensional poverty measures. The objective of this review is to fill this knowledge gap, to comprehensively assess the policy and programme use of multidimensional poverty measures in order to guide policymakers and practitioners in the area of poverty reduction.

To achieve this objective, the review provides examples of how multidimensional poverty measures have been used in practice to reduce multidimensional poverty and child poverty and outlines some preliminary thinking on their potential use in the future.

In summary:

- The key objective is to provide clarity on what can and what cannot be expected of multidimensional poverty measures and their use for programming and policies.
- The review hopes to be of value for all partners and stakeholders working in the area of multidimensional poverty, including within UNICEF.
- The focus of the review is multidimensional poverty analysis in general, with specific attention on multidimensional child poverty where possible. There is much to be learned from broader multidimensional poverty measures and how they have changed policies and programmes, but as children are part of the general population living in multidimensional poverty, these broad multidimensional poverty measures can have direct impacts on the policies and programmes that reduce child poverty.

- It is an extensive review, documenting the known use of national multidimensional poverty measures which have influenced national policies/programmes to reduce poverty.
  - The review is complemented by 33 country case studies of these measures in use. Brief country examples are given in the sections of the review, and Annex 1 provides further details on each country example.
  - These country examples are exhaustive, to our knowledge, of the known policy and programme uses of multidimensional poverty measures. However, we do not exhaustively assess the way multidimensional poverty measures have broadened the concept/definition of poverty in countries, nor how multidimensional poverty measures have been used for advocacy purposes; there are more countries who have used multidimensional poverty measures for these purposes than we were able to document in this review.
- The review does not engage in a methodological debate on how to measure multidimensional poverty. The main validated approaches to measuring multidimensional poverty, including those that disaggregate for children and those that focus specifically on children, are extensively discussed elsewhere.[3] Throughout the review, unless specified, we refer to all the different well known and established approaches when referring to multidimensional poverty measures. However, where relevant, implications for measurement are discussed.
- The final section focuses on the future potential uses of multidimensional poverty measures.

The review is structured into the following chapters:

Section 1 introduces a framework of impact pathways and reviews the evidence for how multidimensional poverty measures have led to reductions in child poverty.

Section 2 discusses lessons learnt and best practices in enhancing the process and impact of multidimensional poverty measures to effectively influence policy and programme change.

Section 3 poses questions for the future directions of multidimensional poverty measures, including identifying the best policy mix and approach to data collection to address multidimensional child poverty. This section also highlights how multidimensional poverty measures can inform crisis response, with particular reference to the use of multidimensional poverty measures during the COVID-19 crisis.

Box 1: Well-known multidimensional poverty measures

There are many approaches to measuring multidimensional poverty; some of the more prominent ones are outlined below.

a) **The Bristol Approach** was developed by the University of Bristol. The approach builds a set of dimensions based on the CRC and measures deprivations at the level of the child. It reflects deprivation according to seven dimensions: education, health, nutrition, water, sanitation, shelter and information. This approach was used in UNICEF's *Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities* (2007).

b) **The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI),** developed by the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and prominently featured by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), measures poverty by capturing deprivations in health, education, and living standards. MPIs can be disaggregated to highlight children living in multidimensionally poor households. In addition to indicators that focus on the situation of children, namely school attendance and nutrition, a child-specific MPI (c-MPI) identifies poverty at the level of the child combining deprivations that affect all household members (e.g. lack of improved sanitation) with deprivations that directly affect that child.

c) **Multiple Overlapping Deprivations Analysis (MODA)** .was launched in 2012 by UNICEF, building on the Bristol Approach and MPI, with a focus on children. Its analysis focuses on how different dimensions overlap with each other, providing important information for cross-sectoral interventions. MODA measures child poverty at the individual level, providing a detailed picture of multidimensional poverty throughout the lifecycle.

d) The **Multidimensional Poverty Measure (MPM)** was launched by the World Bank (WB) in 2018. Six indicators placing a monetary measure of well-being alongside non-monetary dimensions are selected and mapped into three dimensions (monetary standard of living, education and basic infrastructure services) to construct

3 See, for example, the SDG Guide to End Child Poverty (2017) and various subsequent pieces published since, such as the UNICEF China and OPHI options paper on measuring multidimensional child poverty (forthcoming). See also UNICEF's 2020 technical note on measuring multidimensional child poverty at the level of the child: https://data.unicef.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Measuring-monitoring-poverty-position-paper-English_2020.pdf

Methodology

The review is based on an extensive analysis of key documents, consultations and qualitative assessments. For a detailed outline of the methodology, please see Annex 2. The key documents reviewed as part of this review include, among others: UNICEF and the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty's *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty* (2017); UNDP and OPHI's *Handbook: How to Build a National Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)* (2019); the UNICEF Office of Research Innocenti Working Paper *Step-by-Step Guidelines to the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis* (2012); the World Bank's *Monitoring Global Poverty* (2017); the National multidimensional child poverty reports available on the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (GCECP) website; and the World Bank's Handbook on poverty and inequality (Haughton and Khandker, 2009).

An initial review of 20 multidimensional child poverty reports was carried out to tease out the main proposed recommendations and uses of the measure and analysis, followed by a systematic review of 92 reports/papers on the topic (including but also beyond a multidimensional child poverty focus) assessed from key internet sites/ repositories. From these 92 reports, an in-depth analysis of 25 full reports was conducted using various approaches.[4]

A qualitative assessment was also carried out by conducting key informant interviews on-line with 24 stakeholders involved in both the measurement and use of multidimensional poverty measures, including academics, researchers, and policymakers in government and international organizations. The results of the qualitative assessment will be available in a separate report.

Case studies of country examples were initially gathered by reviewing the *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty* and *How to Build a National Multidimensional Poverty Index*, then further expanded with a review of UNICEF country office annual reports, and finally through country example recommendations from stakeholders in the field of multidimensional poverty measurement and use. In total, this review provides documentation on over 30 country examples documenting experiences from six regions, featuring diverse political and economic contexts.

In addition, UNICEF held internal UNICEF consultations with colleagues, including, among others, a UNICEF Yammer discussion in September 2018 (internal to UNICEF) and discussions/deliberations during UNICEF's Social Policy Network meetings in October 2017 and May 2019.

Figure 2: Map of country examples featured in the review

4 Of the 25 reports analysed, 11 used MPI, 11 used MODA, and 3 used c-MPI.

Limitations and challenges

While this review explores all approaches to multidimensional poverty measures, and their impact on policies and programmes, extra attention has been devoted to child-specific multidimensional poverty measures to reflect the large proportion of literature related to multidimensional child poverty measures. In most countries where UNICEF supports governments with the measurement of multidimensional poverty, the analysis is commonly published in a comprehensive report which includes policy recommendations. In addition, the analysis and the subsequent policy impact will generally be documented in UNICEF´s annual reporting mechanisms. This is not always the case with other multidimensional poverty analysis, where there might be engagement and policy impact based on the measure, but this may not always be well documented. In addition, more focus is placed on examples written in English (although the assessment is not limited to English), which may inevitably overlook examples of policy impact of multidimensional poverty measures documented in local languages.

In the multiple reports reviewed, as well as during the qualitative assessment, tracing the pathway from the development of a multidimensional poverty measure to tangible change in policies and programmes was often a complex process, with assessments ranging from straightforward to vague (see Box 2). We addressed this by drilling down on each example, often requiring multiple exchanges with countries. Where the impact pathway was completely intangible, those country examples were not included in the review.

Box 2:
Identifying the impact of multidimensional poverty measurement

Direct: *"[It] has been used as one of the five criteria for allocation of national resources to local government since 2013."*

Indirect: *"[The] commissioned multidimensional child poverty study generated outstanding media coverage, and supported advocacy to increase investment for children and adopt national routine child poverty measurement to assess progress on SDG 1."*

Section 1:
Impact pathways from multidimensional poverty and child poverty measurement to policy and programme change

The focus of this review is to identify how, in practice, multidimensional measures have influenced policies and programmes to reduce child poverty. However, tracking the influence of evidence on changes made to policies and programmes, in this case multidimensional poverty measures, is a complex process influenced by a range of factors which are not always easily understood or straightforward. These pathways are a topic of extensive research.[5] An important distinction that emerges is between direct and indirect impacts,[6] underlining that research can be utilized in policy in various ways, ranging from instrumental uses to conceptual ones which are often described in terms of policymakers experiencing an 'enlightenment'[7] (see Box 3).

While the relationship between evidence generation and policy and programme change is complex, it is clear from the review of documents and the qualitative assessment that multidimensional poverty measures have led to an array of impacts. To organise and evaluate these impacts, this review builds on the milestones of the *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty*, and is organized by three key areas or 'impact pathways' (see Figure 3).

5 See, for example, *Evidence & Policy: A Journal of Research, Debate and Practice*, which provides a critical assessment of the relationship between research evidence and the concerns of policymakers and practitioners.
6 Nutley, Walter and Davies (2007).
7 Weiss (1979).

Figure 3: Milestones on a pathway to address child poverty and the corresponding review organizing framework

Box 3:
The challenges in identifying the role multidimensional poverty measures play in policy and programme change – the views of stakeholders

Interviewees in the qualitative assessment perceived one of desired outcomes of multidimensional poverty analysis as the translation of insights emerging from multidimensional poverty measurement into policy and programmes – for example inspiring specific policy and programmes or budgetary decisions. However, interviewees discussed two important challenges linked to both achieving these changes and highlighting the role of multidimensional poverty impact in influencing change:

- **Prolonged timelines,** i.e. the direct impact might not be achieved in a short timeframe.
- **Issues with attribution,** i.e. interviewees suggested that multidimensional poverty measurement and the related process were perceived as a 'roadmap' rather than a direct step towards policy change, with direct changes to policy/programmes not necessarily attributable solely to the measurement. Therefore, although the 'roadmap' can also be seen as a strength of multidimensional poverty measures in achieving policy change, a broader evidence base and mix of tools are sometimes seen as necessary to achieve direct, instrumental change.

This approach was identified by an expert interviewed as part of the qualitative assessment:

> *The way it [multidimensional poverty measurement] impacts, even with a government that's hostile to using it, is what's called the 'enlightenment' idea of how the policy works, how research works in policy. You basically change the conversation. It becomes common sense rather than a kind of 'engineering model' that many believe in - the government commissions research, you do the research, come up with a solution, implement it, and everyone lives happily ever after. That very rarely happens. That's not the way policy works, [it is] much messier. One of the ways that multidimensional poverty has influence across the European continent is by changing the way people think about poverty. They define the measure and, therefore, what is defined as the problem. (Interviewee 2)*

The three impact pathways are:

1. **Child poverty advocacy - raising awareness and changing the language and concept of poverty** (aligned with Milestone 3 in the *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty*);
2. **Using multidimensional poverty measures to identify policies and programmes to reduce child poverty** (aligned with Milestone 4 in the *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty*); and
3. **Embedding multidimensional poverty government agendas and strengthening accountability** (aligned with Milestone 5 in the *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty*).

The following sections explore these pathways in detail.

Impact pathway 1:

Child poverty advocacy - raising awareness and changing the language and concept of poverty

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ Through advocacy, multidimensional poverty measurements, including those focusing on children, have consistently played a critical role in changing the understanding of poverty to go beyond income and to encompass the multiple dimensions of poverty, including the specific deprivations faced by children.
- ✓ Child poverty reports have highlighted the importance of addressing child multidimensional poverty, including – almost universally – its higher prevalence compared to adult poverty.
- ✓ Multidimensional poverty measures have a strong ability to generate media attention and have been used effectively to reach wide and diverse audiences, gaining the attention of both the public and policymakers, and mobilizing support for comprehensive policy actions to tackle multidimensional poverty and child poverty.
- ✓ Where advocacy has been combined with clear policy actions and recommendations, the pathways to changes in policies can be seen clearly. This is considered in detail in the following section on the foundations needed to successfully impact poverty policies and programmes.
- ~ The pathways through which advocacy leads to policy and programme change are often indirect. They lay important groundwork, but it is often difficult to directly attribute changes to their influence.

Multidimensional poverty measurement is commonly and effectively used for advocacy. Depending on advocacy areas of focus and the audience in question, some measures may be more effective for advocacy.

This section assesses the impacts of advocacy, both how the conversation and language around poverty have changed because of advocacy on multidimensional poverty, and in particular how the focus on children living in multidimensional poverty has been lifted. Indeed, the most common, bordering on universal, use of multidimensional poverty measures has been for advocacy, both to engage with policymakers and the public. Of all the impact pathways assessed in this report, this was the one area where it was beyond our capacity to undertake a comprehensive review and assessment of the extent of practice and examples.

A. Changing the conversation: highlighting the multiple dimensions of poverty

Poverty is still largely defined and understood in terms of monetary poverty using income or consumption measures. While assessing monetary poverty is essential, gauging progress in poverty eradication by reference to monetary poverty alone fails to capture the deprivations experienced by a large segment of societies living in multidimensional poverty, deprived of their basic rights regardless of income status. Establishing multidimensional poverty measures and analysis alongside strong relationship building and advocacy, can change the political and public discourse on how poverty should be defined and addressed. Indeed, UNDP's Human Development Report which includes the Human Development Index (HDI) was devised in response to the narrative of monetary metrics of development.

67% of those interviewed for the qualitative assessment mentioned the richness of information derived from multidimensional poverty measures as a key strength.

Almost by definition, developing and advocating the use of a multidimensional measure stresses the importance of the need for a broader view of poverty, and as such is essential across work on multidimensional poverty. This was highlighted as a key strength of multidimensional poverty measurement by all but one of the 24 interviewees of the qualitative assessment and is stressed in all multidimensional poverty related reports. The ability of multidimensional poverty measures to go beyond a monetary view of poverty and to capture a broader understanding of poverty is described in the following expert interview:

> *I think in terms of its use, what is really powerful is that it indicates in a more tangible way that poverty isn't just about a lack of money. And I think that holds maybe even more so in high-income countries than in low-income countries.[…] I think if you use multidimensional measures in those contexts, it really brings to light that actually children are going hungry or they are living in houses with damp or mould or they can't join schools trips [….] And that's for the general public but also for policymakers. It gives it more meat, what it means to live in poverty. (Interviewee 10)*

B. Moving the focus from the whole population to advocating for children living in multidimensional poverty

Most poverty debates focus on adults, with children living in poverty receiving limited attention. Since the release of the World Development Report in 1990, the World Bank has been tracking global poverty according to international poverty lines. However, it wasn't until 2016, 26 years later, and following extensive consultation and advocacy, that the World Bank and UNICEF produced child poverty estimates according to international definitions.[8] The conclusions of these disaggregated analyses are consistently striking and relevant for policy: children are twice as likely as adults to live in extreme poverty. In the case of disaggregation of the global MPI undertaken by UNDP and OPHI, the results are the same: children are twice as likely to live in multidimensional poverty than adults.

Key policy and advocacy messages that emerge on multidimensional child poverty are:

- **Children are disproportionately affected by multidimensional poverty:** Overall, multidimensional poverty measurements disaggregated by age have shown how children are disproportionately affected by poverty, and how a child focus in poverty reduction is a must if countries are to reduce poverty in all its forms and reach the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030.
- **The scale of multidimensional child poverty is significant:** Multidimensional child poverty measures have supported efforts to raise awareness among the public, media, and more importantly politicians and top officials, about the scale and intensity of the problem, by revealing the proportion and number of children living in multidimensional child poverty.
- **Multidimensional poverty measures reveal the characteristics of children living in poverty:** These include particularly vulnerable age groups, geographic areas, household characteristics and factors

8 https://www.unicef.org/publications/index_92826.html

contributing to child poverty such as lack of proper housing, sanitation, or access to education (see box 4).

- **Finally, and crucially child poverty messages have linked to and highlighted key policy responses that can reduce multidimensional poverty** (these are discussed in more detail in the rest of this section).

C. Connecting advocacy to policy and programme recommendations

Changing the narrative to focus on the multiple dimensions of poverty, as well as highlighting the particular situation of children, can play a crucial foundational role and lay the groundwork for policy and programme change. But changes are more likely to happen when child poverty measurement, analysis and advocacy is directly linked to recommendations for policy and programme change. The crucial issue of understanding how multidimensional poverty measures have been used to identify and advocate for policy and programme change is the subject of the next section.

Examples of child poverty advocacy using multidimensional poverty measures in practice:

- **Global: Children disproportionately affected by multidimensional poverty.** Since 2017, the Global MPI, spearheaded by UNDP and OPHI, has provided disaggregation by child population aged 0-17 years. This analysis is updated annually and has consistently shown that children are twice as likely as adults to be living in multidimensional poverty, with one in three children poor compared to one in six adults.In their 2019 analysis which included trends, the Global MPI showed that although multidimensional poverty has reduced globally, there was either no reduction in multidimensional poverty for children, or the MPI value fell more slowly for children than for adults.
- **Afghanistan: Using multidimensional poverty estimates for advocacy.** Multidimensional poverty estimates (including disaggregated MPI) produced since 2019 have captured the attention of government and development partners on the challenges faced in the country. The President's speech at the 2020 Afghanistan Pledging Conference used multidimensional poverty trend analysis to highlight the challenge of poverty and the need for continued donor support.
- **Argentina: Multidimensional poverty analysis for child poverty advocacy.** A UNICEF-commissioned multidimensional child poverty study generated outstanding media coverage, and supported advocacy to increase investment for children and adopt national routine child poverty measurement to assess progress on SDG 1.[9] Although there isn't an agreed official measurement of multidimensional poverty in Argentina (as of 2020), key stakeholders including local governments, civil society organizations (CSOs), the public and others, have acknowledged the indicators proposed, and the analysis has been used.
- **Brazil: Using multidimensional child poverty analysis for public and political advocacy.** During the 2018 election campaigns in Brazil, UNICEF launched an advocacy campaign 'More than Promises' (Mais Que Promessas) built around six key problems faced by children and adolescents. Based on UNICEF-supported multidimensional child poverty analysis, the campaign proposed actions to be taken by candidates. The campaign yielded massive media coverage and reached over 130,000 through digital media. This visibility also helped secure political commitments: five candidates running for the presidency pledged to prioritize children and adolescents.
- **Malaysia: Multidimensional poverty analysis prompting government commitment to address child deprivations.** Multidimensional child poverty analysis helped attract increased attention to poor children living in urban areas and the deprivations they face. The study not only received significant media attention, but also political attention, prompting policy commitments by top government officials to address malnutrition.[10]
- **Thailand: Taking progressive steps towards redefining the concept of poverty.** Thailand has predominantly used monetary measures to assess poverty, including for children. In its MDG progress report, the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) – the Royal Thai Government's primary planning agency – acknowledged multiple dimensions of poverty and the importance of a holistic approach to reduce poverty, which laid the foundations

9 https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Argentina_2018_COAR.pdf
10 https://www.unicef.org/media/54901/file/Global_Annual_Results_Report_2018_Goal_Area_5.pdf.pdf

of multidimensional child poverty measurement in the country. The country took one step further in updating the concept of poverty, as they adopted a child multidimensional poverty index (c-MPI) as the official measure to assess progress towards SDG 1, with technical support from OPHI and UNICEF. Thailand's c-MPI has also been instrumental in strengthening advocacy efforts for children, by providing rich information about poor children: the extent, geography, and experience of multidimensional child poverty. The multidimensional child poverty report launch in 2019 generated strong media coverage, with 25 mentions in top tier media outlets, and extensive views on social media, creating greater visibility among the public about multidimensional nature of child poverty, and the need for a coherent and coordinated response to reduce it. In addition to public advocacy, presentation of the results to the NESDC Board helped strengthen political advocacy, highlighting the need to invest in children to achieve human development targets relating to the country's long-term development strategy among influential policymakers.

Box 4:
Multidimensional poverty profiling for a deeper understanding of poverty

Profiling is a key part of multidimensional poverty analysis and advocacy, providing background information which can be used in a range of areas. Profiling includes detailed analysis of deprivations faced by the multidimensionally poor, including profiling by various characteristics such as age, geography, ethnicity, gender etc. and in some cases analysis of drivers of poverty, such as education of household head. This rich profiling can broadly inform and influence policies and programmes, and change the poverty narrative. Multidimensional poverty measurement is therefore a powerful analytical tool which is information-rich and provides insights which can be used both to inform and persuade policymakers.

An overview of some of the key profiles which can be derived from multidimensional poverty analysis in order to inform advocacy and policy discussions is provided below:

Headline statistics on multidimensional poverty: Multidimensional poverty measures provide a headcount, i.e. the percentage of multidimensionally poor, alongside the intensity of deprivations i.e. the average deprivations among those deprived, as well as an adjusted headcount (intensity*headcount). Further, Bristol and MODA often explore whether children are moderately deprived (for example suffering from two or more 'moderate' deprivations) or severely deprived (for example suffering from two or more 'severe' deprivations). When exploring a national measure, for example the MPI, it can be impactful to show a disaggregated measure highlighting how children are disproportionately affected by multidimensional poverty.

Informing sectors of overlapping/joint deprivations: Multidimensional poverty measures frequently highlight which deprivation combinations are most common, which may differ based on factors such as geographic location or age group. This includes identification of key deprivation areas contributing to the overall poverty and the extent that they are experienced simultaneously by poor children. The MODA methodology places emphasis on these overlapping deprivations. For example, a cross-country MODA analysis in sub-Saharan Africa showed that children deprived in health and education were likely to be deprived in several other dimensions: in rural areas, for instance, half of the children who had no or limited access to health and education were deprived in three to five other areas.

Deprivations across the life cycle: When measurement is done at the individual child level, child poverty profiling can be used to highlight the different needs of children across their life cycle. For example, for children aged 0-23 months, certain services are critical, such as adequate nutrition, full immunization, living in adequate housing etc. For older age groups, for example 15-17 years, the needs may be more focused on quality education, finishing school on time, having access to information, safe water etc. The MODA approach pioneered the life cycle analysis, and such analysis can only be done when measuring poverty at the individual level (not household level). This life cycle approach can, however, be limited by the fact that there are generally fewer indicators available on children aged 5 years and over.

Overlaps and differences between multidimensional and monetary poverty: Comprehensive child poverty analysis often includes, if data allows, an overview of children in monetary poverty as well as children in multidimensional poverty, and analysis on the overlap between the two (see Figure 4). Monetary and multidimensional poverty measures are complementary and together can provide critical policy lessons. Such analysis can provide important insights into the drivers of poverty, for example whether financial barriers may be driving deprivations, pointing to policy tools such as cash transfers to alleviate the problem. However, where children are in multidimensional poverty but not monetary poverty, this may point to challenges with the quality and availability of services.

Exposing disparities/inequities: Multidimensional child poverty analysis can expose inequities in health, nutrition, education, water, sanitation, housing, information and other key deprivations across gender and geography. For example, a study from Laos showed gender inequalities in education, and identified adolescent girls among the most vulnerable group facing high risk of multidimensional poverty. In Mozambique, girls also suffer deprivation in education, as indicated by remarkable differences in primary school completion rates, which are almost twice as low for girls compared to boys. By helping uncover these inequities, multidimensional child poverty analysis can bring attention to groups of vulnerable children left behind.

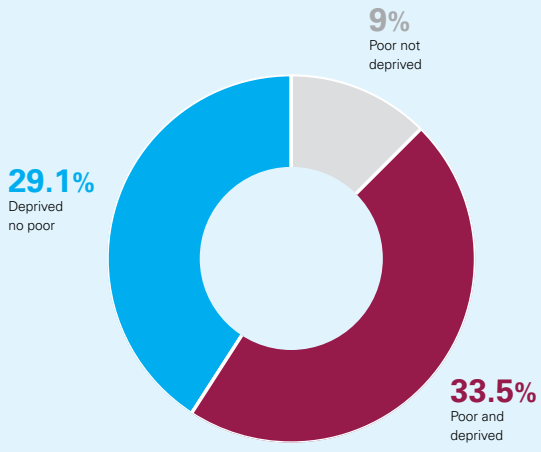


Figure 4: Overlap between monetary poverty and deprivation

Impact pathway 2:

Using multidimensional poverty measures to identify policies and programmes to reduce child poverty

KEY FINDINGS

The four most common key policy recommendations to emerge from multidimensional poverty analysis are as follows:

1. **The broad targeting of geographic areas and groups in poverty based on a multidimensional poverty measure.**

   ✓ Reports frequently highlight disparities in multidimensional poverty rates across geographic areas and particular groups (for example by ethnicity and gender) where data is available and recommend broad shifts in policy in response.

   ✗ However, due to limitations in the surveys from which multidimensional poverty measures are developed, national multidimensional poverty measures are generally not used to target programmes at household or individual level.

2. **The importance of multidimensional poverty measures in guiding multisectoral investment and coordination.**

   ✓ Corresponding to the multisectoral nature of multidimensional poverty, reports frequently point to the need for investment across sectors and better coordination, often pointing to areas of deprivation overlap.

   ~ Multidimensional poverty measures have occasionally been used to direct focus for the implementation of multisectoral programmes, for example for identifying priority geographical areas for multisectoral interventions.

   ✗ There have been some efforts to analyse multidimensional poverty to identify an overall optimal policy package to respond, but they are complex and have not been used in practice.

As outlined in the previous section, the impact of advocacy with multidimensional poverty measures is most effective with clear policy and programme recommendations. This section looks specifically at how analysis of multidimensional poverty measures has been used to identify the policies and programmes to reduce child poverty.

The qualitative assessment underlined the great potential of multidimensional poverty measures in policy engagement, as the multidimensional aspects of poverty were seen by interviewees as being better aligned with policymakers' aims and practices. In particular, interviewees noted how the multidimensional meaning of poverty reflects the breadth of the existing – and potential – poverty programmes. Interviewees characterized multidimensional poverty measurement as being more responsive to policy initiatives aimed at poverty reduction, a major attraction to policymakers. This view was reflected in the following quote:

3. The use of multidimensional poverty measure to guide and influence national and sub-national budgets.

✓ Recommendations include the importance of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of budgeting to reduce multidimensional poverty.

~ There are some limited examples of multidimensional poverty measures being used to directly guide internal budget allocation formulas (Nepal and Bhutan, both using MPI). But these are currently rare.

4. Social protection is commonly included as a policy recommendation for addressing multidimensional poverty.

✓ As a programme with multisectoral impacts, social protection frequently emerges as an important policy direction. Within UNICEF, this may also reflect that social policy teams work on both child poverty and social protection.

~ However, there are not examples of multidimensional poverty measures being used to specifically target social protection programmes to households/individuals. However, targeting social protection programmes has been done with secondary data collection efforts and applying multidimensional poverty index which differs from the national multidimensional poverty index.

The examples of using multidimensional poverty measures for policy identification are in general broad. **More specific recommendations do emerge, but they require additional contextual data, research and analysis to complement the multidimensional poverty measure.**

Considerations: As multidimensional poverty measures most commonly identify broad policy conclusions, the choice of measure will generally not produce different policy recommendations. Accordingly, advocacy and ownership considerations might best drive choice of measure, and those working on multidimensional poverty should be prepared for extra research and analysis beyond the multidimensional poverty measure to identify specific policy recommendations. Some important exceptions to this are the guiding of budget allocation formulas in two countries (Bhutan and Nepal), and the example of Mexico, where the national multidimensional poverty indicator is linked directly to progress in sectors and triggers shifts in government focus to reduce multidimensional poverty.

Let me compare this to income poverty... Income poverty only can be changed or reduced every time households have more income […] And therefore, any other efforts on public policy regarding education, regarding housing, regarding health, which [don't] have an impact on income in the short run, then every effort doesn't reduce poverty. So, you might be placing a child at school, that fact doesn't change income a bit on for that household. Therefore, you are doing something very important for the child, which is not linked to the poverty indicator. Well, I'm doing so many things, but the poverty indicator is not shown there. When you have multidimensional poverty, various social policy programmes may have an impact on poverty because they don't go through income. (Interviewee 14)

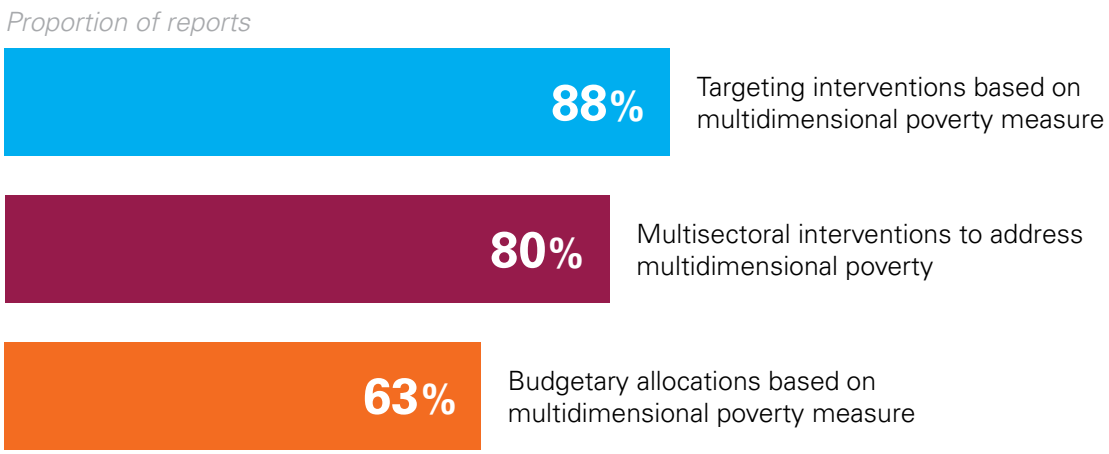
This section assesses how multidimensional poverty measures have used these strengths and been utilized to identify national policies and programmes to address child poverty.

Following the initial review of 92 reports, an in-depth analysis was conducted for 25 reports based on a range of multidimensional poverty approaches (11 reports were based on MODA, 11 reports were based on MPI, and 3 reports were based on c-MPI). Finding from this in-depth analysis showed that targeting is the most recommended policy use for addressing multidimensional poverty: 22 reports recommended targeting based on profiles (for example, by age and/or geographical region); 20 reports recommended multisectoral policies; and 14 reports recommended using the profiling of multidimensional poverty analysis to guide and influence national budgets.

In addition to this, the country examples documented for this assessment and the interviews with stakeholders in the field of multidimensional poverty, point towards these four common recommendations: 1) The broad targeting of geographic areas; 2) The importance of multisectoral investment and coordination; 3) The importance of guiding national and sub-national budgets; and 4) Social protection as a policy recommendation.

This section reviews policy and programme recommendations across these areas to understand in detail the extent to which multidimensional poverty analysis can be used to identify policy and programme responses to address multidimensional child poverty. As well as highlighting good existing practice, this section also tries to understand the limits to identifying policy and programme change from multidimensional poverty measurement and where additional research and analysis is needed. The types of impacts which have been demonstrated can also have important implications for measurement.

Figure 5: Common policy recommendations to address child poverty



A. Broad prioritization and targeting of geographic areas

Broad prioritization and targeting of geographic areas and groups in poverty is the most recommended policy use for responding to multidimensional poverty: 88 per cent of the reviewed multidimensional poverty reports concluded with this recommendation. Multidimensional poverty measures can be applied for prioritization or targeting in two senses: prioritizing the poorest area or social group or going a step further to target households that are eligible to benefit from certain programmes. The first application of targeting is very common, the second less so. From the review of documents conducted for this assessment, 22 reports recommend using multidimensional poverty analysis for directing policies and programmes based on profiles by age, residency, or indicators/dimensions denoting greater multidimensional poverty.

Prioritizing by geography: In general, multidimensional poverty measures produce data that can be used to identify which geographical areas have the highest rates of multidimensional poverty. Depending on the survey, some countries may have data available at sub-national levels. Where multidimensional poverty measures are routinely available over time, they have been used to monitor whether these areas/regions are making progress in reducing poverty or if they are being left behind. Specific recommendations vary according to a broad regional focus, for example recommendations regarding budget focus or specific programmes.

Prioritizing by age, gender, ethnicity, language, religion and disability: In the same way that multidimensional poverty assessment is able to identify geographic areas with higher rates of poverty, in principle where there is information on individual characteristics such as age, gender, ethnicity, language and religion or disability status of household members, surveys should be able to identify groups with higher rates of poverty. Most reports, for example, will include analysis of multidimensional poverty according to female and male (and/or girls and boys). Moreover, in countries where there are significant disparities according to ethnicity/language, for example, and information is available on this in the national household surveys used for the development of a multidimensional poverty measure, the general practice is to disaggregate the measure by these important factors.

Examples of broad targeting based on multidimensional poverty measure in practice:

- **Burkina Faso: Multidimensional poverty analysis informing cash targeting.** Multidimensional child poverty analysis informed the implementation of a cash plus programme in Burkina Faso. The cash plus programme, with components on WASH and nutrition, will be implemented in four regions with high incidence of multidimensional child poverty, providing regular cash transfers and behaviour change communication trainings for vulnerable families identified through consensual targeting approach.
- **Jordan: Targeting programme clients through two-step multidimensional vulnerability assessment.** To address the needs of the most vulnerable refugee children and ensure access to educational opportunities, UNICEF and partners launched an integrated cash transfer programme in 2017, targeting all children in need regardless of their nationality or refugee status. The Hajati programme uses a two-fold approach to identify and target households: the first step is geographical targeting, where districts with high multidimensional vulnerability, high pressure on public services (measured by the presence of double shift schools) and the availability of complementary services (for example, the presence of UNICEF-supported Makani child protection centres) are identified. The geographic targeting is then followed by household targeting, based on a separate survey. This approach was also used in 2020 amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, to rapidly assess the need of crisis-affected populations.
- **Oaxaca, Mexico: Using a multidimensional poverty measure to target municipalities.** Multidimensional poverty measurements have provided useful information on the degree of poverty in the 570 municipalities of Oaxaca and the extent of the most pressing deprivations. Using multidimensional poverty analysis, a strategy to fight poverty in 40 top-priority municipalities was developed, with a focus on the areas with the greatest concentration of poor people, in terms of absolute numbers and percentages. Using CONEVAL's data they were able to identify the number of homes lacking basic services such as drinking water, electricity, drainage, a solid roof or floor, and the number of people without access to

healthcare services, social security, or education. Interactive maps were created to illustrate the degree and intensity of deprivations in each municipality, even indicating by street the areas with the highest concentration of the population experiencing the given deprivation, in order to identify the areas of the municipality requiring extra interventions.

- **Panama: Using national and child-specific MPI to inform the national poverty reduction plan.** In Panama, the national MPI and child-specific MPI were used to select 63 priority districts and 300 townships for the national poverty reduction plan (Plan Colmena), complementing income-based measures and other assessments.

Targeting at household or individual level

Using multidimensional poverty measurement for directly targeting cash transfers or other programmes is complex. First, household surveys used to develop multidimensional poverty measures are sample based, i.e. they don´t provide information on all individuals in a country to be targeted for a programme. However, using a multidimensional poverty measure to identify programme clients, either households or individuals, has been done (see the example of Jordan which first used broad geographic targeting, and then a special follow up household survey). As argued by one of the interviewees in the qualitative assessment, the choice of targeting methodology always requires balancing the strengths and limitations of different approaches:

> *I think targeting methods are all flawed in their own way, they all have their inclusion and exclusion errors. […] I guess in short the answer would be, it would be one of the potential options for targeting, but whether it is the most appropriate method for targeting depends on the objective of the policy and also the feasibility of doing that kind of targeting in that specific context. (Interviewee 10)*

B. Multisectoral prioritization and coordination to respond to the multidimensional nature of poverty

Findings from the systematic review revealed that multisectoral investment is the second most recommended policy tool emerging from multidimensional poverty reports. A total of 80 per cent of the reviewed reports conclude with this recommendation, in particular reports based on the MODA approach, which consistently conclude advocating for the use of the overlapping analysis of deprivations by dimensions to allocate investments across sectors.

> *"The consequences for quality of life of having multiple disadvantages far exceed the sum of their individual effects. Developing measures of these cumulative effects requires information on the 'joint distribution' of the most salient features of quality of life across everyone in a country through dedicated surveys…. When designing policies in specific fields, impacts on indicators pertaining to different quality-of-life dimensions should be considered jointly, to address the interactions between dimensions and the needs of people who are disadvantaged in several domains."*
>
> **Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi (2009), Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress.**

Compared to sector profiles, which can also identify demographic and socioeconomic factors behind single deprivations, multidimensional poverty profiling provides rich information on who the most vulnerable are, and how they are poor. By combining all the critical sectors into one single index, multidimensional poverty may bring focused attention to the fact that cross-sectoral responses are needed to address multiple deprivations. [11]

Half of those interviewed for the qualitative assessment mentioned the ability of multidimensional poverty measures to enable cross-sectoral collaborations as a key strength.

11 UNICEF (2017): https://www.unicef.org/media/65186/file/Child-Poverty-SDGGuide-Milestone-2-March2017.pdf

Multidimensional poverty analysis has frequently highlighted that multisectoral interventions are often more appropriate for addressing child poverty instead of narrowly targeted (in terms of geography or sector) interventions, as many poor children experience overlapping, multiple deprivations. Multidimensional child poverty studies provide a clear evidence base to advocate for and support a holistic approach to addressing multidimensional child poverty. These studies show the number of children who suffer from multiple deprivations simultaneously, and often emphasize that single-sector policy approaches may be insufficient in reducing multiple deprivations when compared to multisector policy approaches. This is reflected in the following expert testimonial:

> *Overall, it makes a good case for a holistic approach. Instead of investing in particular social programmes, maybe there should be a complete package of services because we can show the overlapping deprivations. So, instead of saying, " nutrition or health separately," we can really use a holistic approach to say, "These things as a whole are important," to advocate with the Minister of Finance or other macro policymaking bodies for an integrated approach for children. (Interviewee 20)*

Such holistic approaches are crucial for addressing child poverty. A growing number of studies show, for example, that stunting cannot be addressed with a narrow nutritional focus but requires a multisector approach encompassing social protection (for example income support), water, sanitation, behavioural change and so forth.[12] This was summarized by one of the key interviewed experts:

> *That [the multidimensional poverty analysis] made it much more clear because you can now demonstrate that children who are affected by stunting are usually deprived not only in nutrition but also in water and sanitation, sometimes in housing and sometimes in schooling. That's a gain, that's a big gain, because now, we focus the attention. Still practically, we hit the reality of countries – and UNICEF, by the way – being organized in sections and ministries. You will still need ministries to work together, which in many countries, is not easy to do. (Interviewee 4)*

> *"Almost every policy document on child development advocates a holistic approach to child-related policy but few, if any, countries have translated this advocacy into action. Most countries retain a sectoral approach for designing and implementing child policies in health, education, WASH, and other traditional sectors, separately."*
>
> **de Neubourg and Karpati (2019), 'Generational policy programming, holistic approaches to child development and multidimensional child poverty'. Paper presented at the ISCI (International Society for Child Indicators) conference in Tartu, August 2019.**

The two below examples from Angola and Zambia highlight how multisectoral recommendations are commonly framed, and show how multidimensional poverty reports can be used as a catalyst to bring together different sectors to discuss addressing multidimensional poverty:

- A recent multidimensional child poverty study in **Angola** stated: *"By understanding how overlapping deprivations are experienced, one can determine the composition of the multiple deprivations faced by the most vulnerable children, and identify sectors that could benefit from an integrated approach to policy-making. This analysis showed that children deprived in a given dimension were rarely deprived in that dimension alone. In fact, they tended to accumulate two, three, four or more additional deprivations. The necessity of cross-sector collaboration and intervention has been emphasised following the deprivation count analysis. The overlapping analysis provides additional guidance on the possible gains of joint programmatic responses to child deprivations. Detailed information allows for better decisions that in turn lead to better outputs when implementing an integrated approach."*[13]
- Similarly, a recent child poverty study in **Zambia** highlighted: *"The need for a holistic approach to child poverty and deprivation is illustrated by the fact that more than 60 per cent of the children suffer from two or more deprivations, while more*

12 UNICEF, Save the Children and FAO, 2020. Forthcoming.
13 https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/3096/file/UNICEF-Angola-2018-A-Multidimensional-Analysis-of-Child-Poverty.pdf

than 40 per cent of the children in Zambia suffer from deprivations in three or more dimensions at the same time. The results invariably demonstrate that very many children in Zambia are victims of overlapping deprivations in education, health and sanitation, especially in rural areas. Improving the poverty and deprivation levels of all children in Zambia and developing young people to become healthy adults who could contribute to future economic growth is a challenge that can only be addresses by considering policy interventions in several domains simultaneously."[14]

While only a few examples identified for this assessment demonstrated where a multidimensional poverty measure has concretely led to multisectoral prioritization, we found many examples of how multidimensional poverty analysis and reports have brought together different sectoral ministries to discuss how to address multidimensional poverty. The examples from Mexico and Sierra Leone (see below) demonstrate how a multidimensional poverty measure can guide multisectoral investments.

Examples of using a multidimensional poverty measure for multisectoral interventions in practice:

- **Mexico: Using a multidimensional poverty measure to design and coordinate multisectoral policies.** Mexico has developed national strategies to design and coordinate multisectoral policies, using a reduction in the MPI as the main goal. They regularly convene cross-government social cabinets or poverty round tables to break silos and bring together different sectors for discussions on the MPI and poverty reduction. For policy coordination, different poverty dimensions require the involvement of different sectors and actors. Mexico's multidimensional poverty measure has provided these actors with a common framework in which to coordinate, prioritize and plan. This approach has inspired the National Strategy for Social Inclusion, a government development strategy that coordinates efforts for poverty reduction at the federal and local levels.
- **Sierra Leone: Targeting pro-poor initiatives to certain locations based on vulnerability profiles.** In Sierra Leone, vulnerability and equity profiles were developed for all districts, enabling the government and UNICEF to better target multisectoral pro-poor initiatives particularly focused on addressing geographic disparities in poverty distribution.

Using a multidimensional poverty measure to prioritize sector responses

As all multidimensional measures can be disaggregated to see deprivations at dimension and indicator level, it is a straightforward exercise to identify where deprivations are highest and prioritize accordingly. While this has been done in a number of analyses, it is complex in the following ways:

Different methodologies in practice have different approaches to weighting: Some multidimensional poverty approaches weight all dimensions equally following a rights-based approach. This leads to indicators of shelter or sanitation frequently emerging as the areas of highest deprivation. Taken at face value, this would lead to a policy focus to reduce deprivations in sanitation above other areas such as education and nutrition. While several reports have followed this practice, this simple categorization can oversimplify the priorities of children and may not ultimately be useful for policymakers.

The importance of the indicators behind dimensions: As dimensions are represented by indicators targeting particular dimensions to reduce multidimensional poverty, aiming to reduce a multidimensional child poverty measure can risk becoming an exercise in targeting particular indicators. In some areas, indicators may be well-aligned to the dimensions they represent, for example access to water can be relatively well represented by access to an improved water source and distance to an improved water source. However, other indicators used may be broader and less helpful proxies – for example access to books or toys to represent child development. Focusing on these indicators can raise the risk of addressing indicators without impacting significantly on the dimension overall.

The relationship (and cost) between policy change and reducing deprivations: Focusing on particular

14 https://www.unicef.org/esa/sites/unicef.org.esa/files/2018-09/UNICEF-Zambia-2018-Child-Poverty.pdf

dimensions or indicators can ignore the policy complexity and cost of reducing deprivations. For example, it may be more complicated and complex to address access to sanitation than undernutrition, or indeed vice versa. While UNICEF strives to ensure policymaking is not a zero-sum game, governments do face constraints and must consider how costed policy action leads to changes in deprivation. Simply highlighting a particular deprivation for focus will not include these considerations. To do so requires knowledge and analysis outside the multidimensional measure (for more information on the importance of further analysis, please see Section 3)

While multidimensional child poverty studies often recommend focusing on dimensions within a multidimensional child poverty measure, usually the dimension with the highest deprivation rates, these recommendations should be made cautiously.

Using a multidimensional poverty measure to determine the optimal policy package

A policy targeting multidimensional poverty reduction necessitates a thorough understanding of the various dimensions and indicators and their implication in the lives of children. For example, in many lower-income countries, sanitation is by far the highest deprivation children experience, but the right policy mix to address sanitation (which may be challenging to reduce) may also involve strategies to reduce deprivations in other areas, such as nutrition or education.

A range of methodologies can and have been used for simulating impact of policies/programmes on monetary poverty, including child monetary poverty, ranging from microsimulations to general equilibrium modelling. However, this is inherently more challenging with multidimensional poverty given the breadth of the measure, which may, for example, have eight dimensions and as many as 3-4 indicators within each dimension.

When developing sectoral policies and programmes, policymakers consider a range of sources, well beyond what is available in a single household survey. Multidimensional poverty measures, however, rely on indicators which are available in a single survey. The availability of data from existing surveys will narrow the focus to what is currently identifiable and measurable.

To design policies which address multidimensional poverty, a policymaker needs to know:

- The dimensions/group to target first in order to attain the largest improvement in multidimensional child poverty, per dollar spent.
- The underlying drivers that, if addressed, can improve multiple dimensions at the same time.
- The dimensions which will have the biggest knock-on effect on other dimensions. For example, water and sanitation deprivations are strongly associated with health, nutrition and education deprivations.

To do so, the direct effects on the multidimensional poverty index need to be taken into account, coming from the targeted dimension(s)/group: the indirect effects of the joint distribution on the dimension also needs to be considered (dimensions are usually correlated, so a multidimensional indicator should also include a joint distribution component), as well as the spill over effect of the targeted dimension(s) on the non-targeted dimension(s) (Duclos, Tiberti and Araar, 2018).[15]

Further, policymakers must determine not only the range of policies that will have the biggest impact on poverty, but also the most cost-effective policies to pursue given the set of available resources (Duclos, Tiberti and Araar, 2018). This further adds to the analytical complexity of determining an optimal policy package to address multidimensional child poverty.

Some academic efforts towards identifying the policy mix to address multidimensional poverty have been made. For example, in their paper 'How to Reach the Sustainable Goal 1.2? Simulating Different Strategies to Reduce Multidimensional Child Poverty in Two Middle

15 Duclos, J.Y., Tiberti, L. and Araar, A., 2018. Multidimensional Poverty Targeting. *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 66(3), pp.519-554.

Income Countries', Ferrone and Chzhen (2018) show through simulations that in countries where child poverty is driven by two or three highly correlated dimensions, interventions targeting children who are deprived in those areas could work well in reducing the overall multidimensional child poverty rate. In contrast, in contexts where deprivations are spread across various dimensions, with a higher degree of overlap between multidimensional and monetary child poverty, a combination of social service provision and cash transfer measures could help drive down child poverty rates.[16] However, despite this important step forward in highlighting key deprivations, this approach does not identify the underlying policy and programme approaches that most effectively reduce them.[17]

> *"Multidimensional poverty is harder to impact, since the programme should be able to lift several constraints at once, and since many deprivations depend on external factors."*
>
> Carrera and Ferrone (forthcoming)

In short, it is not a simple task to design a multisectoral policy to address multidimensional child poverty as a whole. There are, in practice, plenty of examples of how child-sensitive social protection programmes are considered to be overarching policies to address both monetary and multidimensional child poverty. However, these policies have not been based on simulations/ modelling of how a programme package can address multidimensional child poverty as a whole, but rather how social protection can address monetary child poverty alongside a reduction in various deprivations, such as nutrition and health. Those conclusions can be reached without having a multidimensional poverty measure in place. However, the very important role of the multidimensional poverty measures in this regard is to highlight the importance of integrated programmes.

Using a multidimensional poverty measure to determine an optimal policy package in practice:

When undertaking this review, we were not able to find many examples of countries which have established comprehensive policy and programme packages to address multidimensional child poverty. While the USA, the UK and many other countries have explored identifying policy packages to achieve child poverty specific targets through microsimulations, these are based on monetary poverty measures, not multidimensional poverty measures.

Colombia and Mexico provide practical examples of projecting the impacts of various different policy options on the overall multidimensional poverty rate in general, though without a specific child focus.

- **Colombia: Simulating policy packages to address multidimensional poverty:** Colombia's national multidimensional poverty targets are formulated based on a complex simulation exercise. First, they identified specific public investments impacting each MPI indicator and generated an estimate of how each indicator would be affected. For instance, resources allocated to expand health insurance coverage were identified as an investment impacting multidimensionally poor households. Then, the potential number of households benefiting from the investment were calculated, followed by how that increased coverage might affect MPI indicators and overall poverty incidence. While the example of Colombia offers an interesting example, global practice in using simulations to identify policy packages to reduce multidimensional poverty remain limited.
- **Mexico: Using multisectoral policies to reduce multidimensional poverty index.** Mexico was the first country in the world to have an official multidimensional measurement of poverty directly linked to the policy process. The national multidimensional poverty indicator is linked directly to progress in sectors and triggers shifts in the government's focus to reduce multidimensional poverty.

16 Ferrone and Chzhen (2018): https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12187-017-9485-4
17 UNICEF and Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017): *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty.*

Microsimulations to achieve child poverty targets based on monetary poverty measures

While not directly comparable, it is interesting to note that developing an overall policy response to monetary poverty and child poverty is more straightforward and more common. Some examples include:

- **UK: Identifying policy packages to achieve monetary child poverty targets through microsimulations:** In the UK, once the government had set targets on halving child poverty by 2010, an expert working group was established to assess the impacts of existing programmes and identify policy packages to achieve the child poverty targets effectively, efficiently and sustainably. The group proposed three policy package options based on the results of a microsimulation modelling: Package A raised the child tax credit, child benefit and working tax credit; Package B raised only the child tax credit but used two different elements to extend support to large families; and Package C combined raising child tax credit with increases in the child benefit for large families. All three packages were set to achieve the targets, but Package B was found to be the most cost-effective.
- **USA: Identifying policy packages to achieve monetary child poverty targets through microsimulations:** The National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine assessed existing measures and proposed policy packages to halve child poverty within the next ten years. Two policy package options were identified after rigorous assessment: a means-tested and a universal social assistance programme coupled with employment support measures. The programmes were estimated to cost between $90 and $110 billion per year – a significantly lower amount than the cost of child poverty in America, which could be as high as $1.1 trillion.

C. Using a multidimensional poverty measure to guide and influence national budgets

Based on our review of key reports, using multidimensional poverty profiling to guide and influence national and sub-national budgets is the third most recommended policy use: 63 per cent of reports reviewed provided a policy recommendation of using the multidimensional poverty analysis to inform budgetary decisions. The actual use of multidimensional poverty in the budget process reflects a spectrum, from using information on multidimensional poverty to broadly inform budgetary decisions (quite common) to directly integrating multidimensional poverty into budget allocation formulas.

The responsibility for preparing the budget lies with the Ministry of Finance with inputs from line ministries and spending agencies. Through the Public Finance for Children approach, UNICEF supports national budget processes to improve the adequacy, effectiveness, efficiency, equity and transparency of budgets towards child outcomes, and engages at various stages of the budgetary processes, including budget formulation.

Decisions on budgetary allocations are complex and involve several steps. In most countries, the Ministry of Finance plays a central role in translating broad policy goals into financial targets and preparing a budget proposal based on submissions from line ministries.

In addition, identifying priority sectors for budgetary allocations, which is possible to do using a multidimensional poverty measures, is alone not enough to inform budgetary decisions. To influence budget decisions, further analysis of budget-related bottlenecks, existing budget allocations, and costs of priority programmes are also needed. Multidimensional poverty measures may identify gaps in education, health etc, but do not explain whether these gaps are related to insufficient budget rather than ineffective budget execution, poor quality services, discrimination or social norm-related barriers to access, poor planning etc.

An important consideration in using multidimensional poverty analysis to influence national budgets is that multidimensional poverty analysis is often not under the direction of the Ministry of Finance, but rather statistical offices, or ministries for social development. Hence, if the objective of a multidimensional poverty measure is to influence national budgets, this may imply a different process of relationship building and stakeholders than outlined in Section 1.

The country examples from Cambodia, Mexico, Costa Rica, Vietnam, Afghanistan and Uganda highlight how multidimensional poverty measures have informed/guided national budgets.

Using a multidimensional poverty measure to guide government budgets in practice:

- **Cambodia: Multidimensional child poverty guiding annual budget formulation.** In Cambodia, the launch of a multidimensional child poverty report in 2018 led to the inclusion of multidimensional child poverty in the strategic results framework of the Rectangular Strategy Phase IV – a key document that guides annual budget formulation and the prioritization of programmes and activities that contribute to achieving key results.[18]
- **Mexico: Multidimensional poverty progress informing budgetary recommendations.** By identifying those living in poverty, CONEVAL can define priority attention areas. Congress annually assigns resources to these areas through the Social Infrastructure Fund. Considering other social programme evaluations and multidimensional poverty results, CONEVAL also submits budget recommendations to Congress.
- **Costa Rica: Multidimensional poverty measurement guiding budgeting in key sectors.** In 2016, the Cabinet and President of Costa Rica issued directives to use the national MPI as a budgeting tool and a pilot plan was implemented with key institutions in which the MPI was used for planning their 2017 budgets. The MPI was also used to guide better geographical targeting of allocated resources.
- **Vietnam: Using an MPI to redistribute resources to certain regions.** The MPI in Vietnam has informed budget allocation decisions, helping to redistribute resources into regions with a high proportion of people living in poverty.
- **Afghanistan: Using an MPI to inform budgeting:** In 2020, the Ministry of Finance requested early release of MPI estimates from an Income, Expenditure and Labour Force survey in order to inform budget allocations.
- **Uganda: Using multidimensional child poverty metrics to suggest equitable fiscal policy approaches.** The Commitment to Equity for Children (CEQ4C) analysis by Cuesta et al. (2020) proposed an analytical framework to use multidimensional child poverty metrics to assess how benefits and costs are distributed across poor and non-poor children and to simulate the potential impacts of policies. Using this new framework, the authors estimated that multidimensionally poor children in Uganda benefited more from social spending: child-relevant spending (for example for health and education) constituted 6 per cent of per capita household market income for deprived children, in contrast to less than 2 per cent for non-deprived children. The authors also conducted a number of policy simulations, assessing how a spending shift and targeted measures for multidimensionally poor children might reduce monetary poverty. The CEQ4C approach on fiscal policy and multidimensional poverty analysis is an innovative approach, but is yet to be applied in practice by governments.
- **Puebla, Mexico: Optimizing the impact of public investments through multidimensional poverty measurement-based targeting.** In Mexico, the state of Puebla implemented a multi-pronged innovative approach to address multidimensional poverty, which included in-depth analysis to identify and target the most vulnerable populations, and redirection of investments into selected policy actions based on their cost, feasibility and impact on poverty indicators. The strategy helped achieve notable reductions in poverty levels, with significant improvements in all seven poverty indicators.

Using a multidimensional measure to guide intergovernmental transfers in practice

An important part of the budget process that can be influenced by multidimensional poverty measurement and analysis in decentralized environments is intergovernmental transfers, which refer to the transfer of money from the central government to lower levels of government, or from subnational governments to local government units. There are number of approaches used to determine transfer sizes, and one of the widely used one is the formula-based approach.[19]

There are various allocation criteria for budget formulas. Both the use of sub-national and local monetary poverty rates, as well as considerations of regional prioritization, are common among the variables in these formulas. The sectoral situation in areas such as health and

18 https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Cambodia_2018_COAR.pdf
19 UNICEF (2016): PF4C Technical Guidance Note Series, No. 2. Intergovernmental Fiscal Transfers. Available at: https://fdocuments.net/document/intergovernmental-fiscal-transfers-unicef-dialogue-and-advocacy-best-practice.html

education also play a crucial role, underlining the potential significance of multidimensional poverty measures.

> When broadly guiding/informing government budgets, the choice of the multidimensional poverty approach matters less. However, when using a multidimensional poverty measure to directly inform allocations, then the choice of approach can produce significantly different results.

As already outlined, multidimensional measures can serve as important instruments to guide policy decisions (such as increase investments and programming) and can be used to identify and target the poorest regions. Going beyond this broad use of multidimensional poverty measures in guiding and influencing investments, multidimensional poverty measures can also be used directly as budgeting tools, for example as a key criterion in the allocation of resources to local governments. However, there are not many examples of multidimensional measures being used in such a direct way; the excellent examples of Bhutan and Nepal outlined below are rare examples.

Using a multidimensional measure to guide intergovernmental transfers in practice:

- **Bhutan: Multidimensional poverty as the key criteria for allocation of resources to local governments.** Since 2010, Bhutan has conducted routine multidimensional poverty measurement (first reported in 2010, with updates in 2012 and 2017), with additional focus on multidimensional child poverty using the c-MPI approach. As a budgeting tool, the MPI has been used as one of the five criteria for allocation of national resources to local government since 2013. A resource allocation formula (RAF), which was updated during the 11th five-year plan (2013-2018), considers multidimensional poverty as a crucial factor by putting 45 per cent weight in its calculations.

Table 1: Bhutan Resource Allocation Formula

Criteria	10th Plan Allocation %	11th Plan Allocation %
Population	70%	35%
Poverty	25%	-
Geographical Area	5%	10%
Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI)	-	45%
Transport Cost Index (TCI)	-	10%

Source: Fiscal Decentralization in Bhutan, RGoB, 2017

- **Nepal: Multidimensional poverty criteria for allocation of equalization fund to subnational governments.** Nepal's multidimensional poverty measurement was developed by the National Planning Commission in 2018 using MPI methodology. The MPI has been used as one of the criteria for the allocation of equalization fund to subnational governments. During 2018/2019 period, over Rs. 5 million was allocated to implement poverty reduction programmes in seven provinces with high levels of multidimensional poverty.

D. Social protection as a priority response to address multidimensional poverty

It is well established that social protection programmes, and cash transfers in particular, have impacts across a range of child deprivations including food security, access to health and education, child protection outcomes, and household productivity. Accordingly, it is not surprising that they are a common policy recommendation across multidimensional poverty analysis. Most recommendations focus broadly on social protection as an important policy response to respond to multidimensional poverty.

The below examples from Afghanistan, Burkina Faso, Egypt, and Morocco highlight how multidimensional poverty measures have informed multisectoral policy decisions around social protection programmes.

Social protection as a key tool to address multidimensional poverty in practice:

- **Afghanistan: Influencing the development of national social protection policies.** National multidimensional poverty index (MPI) estimates have been used as part of the evidence in a needs assessment study produced to guide discussions towards a national social protection policy in Afghanistan.
- **Burkina Faso: Piloting an integrated social protection programme based on multidimensional child poverty profiling.** A multidimensional child poverty study conducted in three regions of Burkina Faso revealed that as many as 90 per cent of children were deprived in clean water access, followed by 89 per cent deprived of access to information and household income. To address the multiple overlapping deprivations faced by poor children, UNICEF, the National Social Protection Council of Burkina Faso and partners piloted an integrated child-sensitive social protection intervention in the country. The cash plus programme, with components on WASH and nutrition, will be implemented in the four regions with high incidence of multidimensional child poverty, providing regular cash transfers and behaviour change communication trainings for vulnerable families identified through consensual targeting approach.
- **Morocco: Influencing national social protection policies though child poverty measurement.** Morocco's multidimensional child poverty measurement, conducted first in 2017, had an extensive impact on policymaking. The results from the measurement were discussed widely at parliament level, and many of the report recommendations were adopted by the government, from expansion of cash transfer programmes to reform in the national social protection system.

Using a multidimensional measure for direct individual targeting of social protection programmes

While multidimensional poverty and child poverty analysis have frequently pointed to the need for expanded social protection systems, a logical next step could be to use the measures to target social protection programmes themselves to reach beneficiaries experiencing multidimensional poverty. Targeting itself is a complex issue, with analysis showing the inherent risks of targeting (in terms of potentially excluding those in poverty) as well as challenges to programme strength and sustainability, particularly of narrowly targeted programmes.[20]

There are also technical challenges with using multidimensional poverty measures developed for targeting households/individuals for programmes. While multidimensional poverty measures can highlight priority regions, to identify beneficiary households requires data that cover all households/individuals rather than a household survey sample.

The below examples of Vietnam and Colombia are among the few where a multidimensional poverty measure has been used to directly identify individuals eligible for social protection programmes. Both below examples show a spin-off of a national measure, where a national multidimensional poverty measure has been established and then the multidimensional methodology has been applied to target programmes, but the index used to target programmes is not identical to the national multidimensional poverty measure.

20 ODI and UNICEF (2020): *Universal child benefits: policy issues and options.*

The direct target of social protection programmes based on a multidimensional poverty measure in practice:

- **Colombia: Using a multidimensional poverty measure to target those in poverty.** The Colombian Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) indicators were used as the key criteria for households to graduate from the national social assistance programme UNIDOS, outweighing income-based indicators. Census-based MPI also helped identify municipalities with high levels of multidimensional poverty and low urbanization, where the poorest households were set to receive highest benefit amount in social assistance, including the 'Más Familias en Acción' conditional cash transfer programme for families with children. *See also Box 5 on the use of a vulnerability index in Colombia to target COVID-19 mitigation measures.*
- **Vietnam: Using multidimensional measures to target social assistance programmes.** In Vietnam, multidimensional methodologies were used to identify and select social assistance programme clients at the local level, based on administrative and census data. Households identified as poor using a combination of monetary and non-monetary indicators were able to access various programmes such as preferential credit, health insurance, tuition exemptions and production support programmes. Between 2016-2018, the percentage of multidimensionally poor households receiving benefits from at least one of the poverty reduction and social security programmes in the country has increased from 49.6 per cent to 53.3 per cent.

Impact pathway 3:
Embedding multidimensional poverty in government agendas and strengthening accountability

KEY FINDINGS

- ✓ In several countries' multidimensional poverty measures, including for children, have been included in key national development frameworks and plans. This provides long-term commitment for addressing child poverty and gives clear accountability to governments.
- ✓ Increasingly, and supported by the push of the SDGs, multidimensional child poverty (baseline indicators and targets) has been included as a key indicator in national monitoring and evaluation frameworks, again underlining the clear accountability of governments.
- ~ While these approaches increase long-term commitment and government accountability, their ultimate impact on children depends on national commitment and capacity to execute established plans.

"Measurement should be for the purpose of child poverty reduction and part of an overall poverty reduction strategy."

Evans (2019): 'Child Poverty: How to Measure and For What Policy Purpose?'
https://mppn.org/child-poverty-how-to-measure-and-for-what-policy-purpose/

Including multidimensional poverty in key national development plans or poverty reduction strategies can contribute to the creation of high-level political commitment at the national level, laying the groundwork for increased and more coordinated actions to combat child poverty, as well as funding to ensure implementation.[21]

This is particularly important for multidimensional poverty, given the multisectoral, coordinated response it requires. While most countries have a focus on sector-level interventions addressing deprivations in health, education, housing and other dimensions, often they are fragmented, implemented by different agencies with little or no coordination.

Including child poverty in national development plans and frameworks

National frameworks provide a legal basis for sustained funding and political accountability. National development planning processes are long, political and involve multiple stakeholders. Multidimensional poverty measurement can serve as a tool to prompt multisectoral approaches in key reporting frameworks or strategic planning documents, such as SDG reporting or National Development Plans. The inclusion of multidimensional child poverty in national guiding documents may promote a systems approach to tackling child poverty, by ensuring coherence of interventions and setting institutional arrangements.

Systemic commitments to addressing child poverty are just the first step; they then need to be followed through with action. Therefore, the inclusion of multidimensional child poverty in key national documents may require systematic advocacy, from high-level engagement with decision makers, to strategic campaigning to mobilize public support. Though national development plans are usually developed for the medium- and long-

21 https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Child_Poverty_SDG_Guide-Milestone_4-March_2017.pdf

term, changes in a country's government and/or power structure can result in shifted priorities. Still in many countries, national development plans and strategies remain the key guiding framework for government economic, social and human development policies and programmes. UNICEF colleagues and partners have frequently worked to influence these key documents so that governments can take more sustained and effective action to reduce multidimensional child poverty.

These examples from Columbia, Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Lao PDR and Mali show how measurement and related advocacy can place child poverty as a high priority in national plans.

Using multidimensional poverty measures to guide national plans in practice:

- **Colombia: Using an MPI to evaluate national development.** The Colombian Multidimensional Poverty Index was institutionalized into national frameworks in 2011, under the leadership of Colombia's president at that time, and was the key tool used to evaluate the 2010-2014 National Development Plan (NDP). The Colombian MPI evaluates children's deprivation through the 'child and youth conditions' dimension of the index.
- **Ethiopia: Integrating multidimensional child poverty indicators into national plans.** In Ethiopia, analyses conducted by UNICEF and Central Statistical Agency (CSA) on child multidimensional and monetary poverty in recent years, as well as related advocacy conducted with the Planning and Development Commission, led to the inclusion of multidimensional child poverty indicators in the Ten Years Perspective Development Plan (2020/21-2029/30). This has built the foundation to move towards routine monitoring and institutionalization of child poverty measures.
- **Ghana: Informing national and local development plans with insights from multidimensional child poverty measurement.** Following the findings from a multidimensional child poverty analysis, along with evidence, data and policy recommendations from the 2019 child-inclusive growth fora and the study on the impact of COVID-19 on children and families, the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) of Ghana established a cross-sectoral planning group dedicated to addressing children's issues in a comprehensive manner through the Ghana's Medium Term Development Planning Framework (MTDPF). In addition to informing the MTDPF, findings from the multidimensional child poverty measurement also helped build the capacity of Metropolitan, Municipal and District Assemblies (MMDAs), Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) to incorporate children's issues into their forthcoming medium-term plans, and into the National Urban Policy.
- **Kenya: Addressing multidimensional child poverty at the local level through integrated planning.** The data and evidence generated by Kenya's multidimensional child poverty measurement has been instrumental in the formulation of sub-national development plans (County Integrated Development Plans or CIDP), many of which now prioritize key issues in WASH, child protection, HIV and AIDS as highlighted in the disaggregated multidimensional child poverty measurement. For instance, the Turkana County CIDP 2018-2022 notes the high incidence of multidimensional child poverty in the county – where 85 per cent or close to half a million children are deprived in areas such as clean water and sanitation, adequate housing and quality education – and outlines various programmes and activities planned to address these issues. In addition to feeding into planning, the measurement informed design and resource mobilization of a child-sensitive social protection programme ensures that the needs of the most vulnerable children are addressed through holistic interventions.
- **Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR): Bringing a child focus into the national development plan with multidimensional child poverty analysis.** The 2018 report *SDGs and Children – Measuring Progress on Child Wellbeing in Lao PDR* provided an overview of child multidimensional poverty in the country, serving as the basis for the Generation 2030 initiative which calls for increased investment into human capital to reap the benefits of the country's booming young population. To launch the initiative, UNICEF organized a national forum bringing together government, civil society, development partners, private sector and youth representatives. As a result of this multi-pronged advocacy strategy, which combined hard evidence

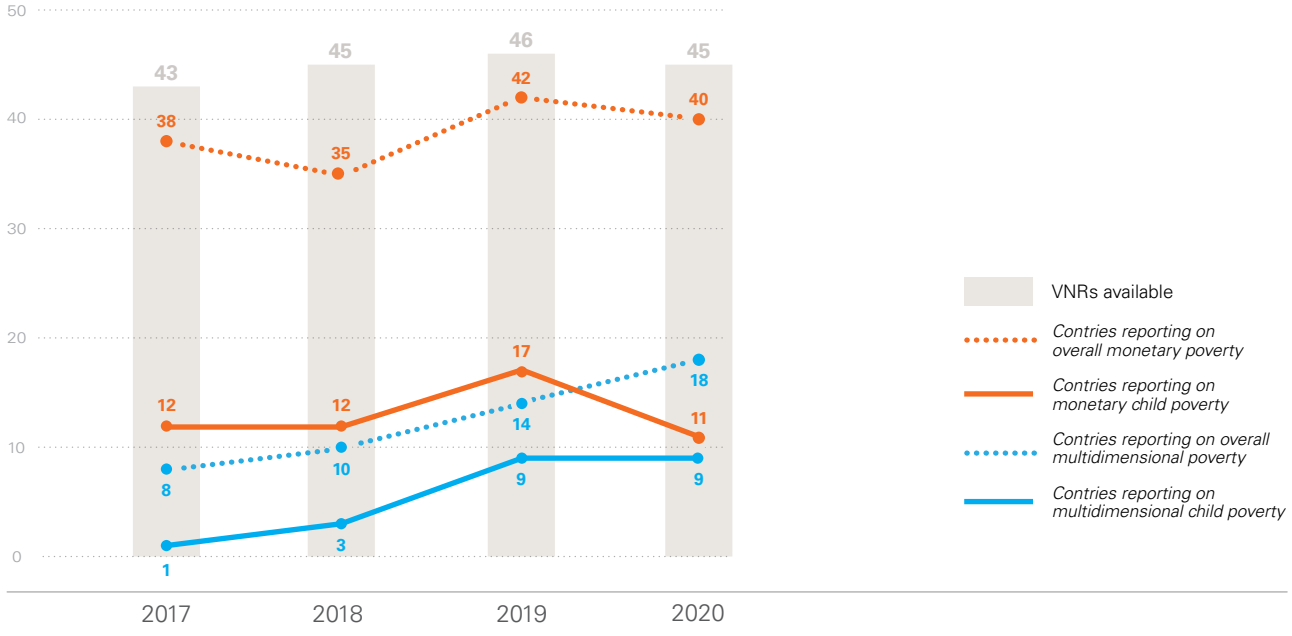
on multidimensional child poverty and high-level meetings involving key stakeholders, national top government officials made commitments to prioritize investments in children and adolescents in the 9th and 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plans. The upcoming National Plan of Action for Mothers and Children (2021-2025) also aims to reduce multidimensional child poverty as one of its key outcomes, and plans are underway to mainstream multidimensional child poverty reduction into subnational development plans as well.

- **Mali: Strengthening ownership and sustainability of the measure through capacity building of national actors.** With stronger capacity in conducting and using multidimensional child poverty analysis, Mali's Ministry of Economy and Finance published a multidimensional child poverty report in 2018, with UNICEF support. The report findings fed into the country's Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development (CREDD), integrating child deprivations (nutrition, education, health and poverty) in both its situation analysis and the results matrix.

Ensuring accountability: Establishing targets and embedding multidimensional poverty in Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) frameworks

Following the inclusion of child poverty in national guiding documents, as outlined above, M&E then needs to take place to ensure whether multidimensional child poverty is decreasing. A key common objective and use of multidimensional poverty measures is to develop official measures that show the level and composition of multidimensional poverty, and which are regularly updated. Multidimensional poverty analysis should preferably go hand in hand with the release of national household surveys which include the key indicators to capture multidimensional poverty, and monitored to evaluate the impact of activities as well as to compare poverty across regions (sub-national, rural/urban) and groups (age, disability, ethnicity etc.) In this regard, the survey instruments play a critical role – i.e. that multidimensional poverty is measured and monitored using national household surveys which are well established and routinely implemented.

Figure 6: Number of countries reporting on monetary and multidimensional poverty, including child specific and/or age disaggregated rates, on their Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs). Source: Global Coalition to End Child Poverty.



For M&E to be effective, clear targets for child poverty need to be set. The approach to doing this has been simplified by the SDGs, which commit countries to "reduce at least by half the proportion of men, women

and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions by 2030." Some countries have established more ambitious targets, for example New Zealand has committed to at least halve child poverty within 10 years.

Multidimensional poverty measures therefore play a key role in monitoring progress towards the SDGs, not only Goal 1 on eradicating poverty, but across the 17 goals. However, in reality, the number of countries that routinely measure and monitor multidimensional child poverty (either disaggregated multidimensional poverty measure or measured at the level of the child) as part of the SDGs remains limited.[22] The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty monitors and tracks how countries are faring in terms of establishing multidimensional child poverty baselines and targets by analysing the Voluntary National Reviews (VNRs) for the SDGs, and while there has been an increase in the number of countries reporting on overall multidimensional poverty rates, up from 8 in 2017 to 18 in 2020, progress has been slower for age-disaggregated or child-focused measures. For instance, out of the 45 countries who presented their VNRs in 2020, only nine specifically referenced multidimensional child poverty (see figure 6).[23]

The monitoring of multidimensional poverty varies across countries. As outlined in the many country examples below, in some countries multidimensional poverty is a key indicator in M&E frameworks.

Embedding multidimensional poverty measures in national planning and monitoring processes in practice:

- **New Zealand: Institutionalizing child poverty measurement and response.** With the aim to halve the number of poor children within the next ten years, New Zealand is taking a comprehensive set of legislative, policy and programmatic interventions, starting with the adoption of the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018, which provides strategic vision and political accountability towards reducing child poverty. The Act sets the foundation for several child poverty reduction measures, such as the Families Package, and requires successive governments to routinely measure and monitor child poverty rates against the country's medium- and long-term goals and targets, and report annually on the progress using indicators that go beyond income, including housing affordability and quality, food insecurity, regular school attendance, and avoidable hospitalisations, among others.
- **Afghanistan: National statistics leading the process.** In 2019 the National Statistics and Information Agency in Afghanistan, with support from OPHI and UNICEF, released the first multidimensional poverty estimates, including child poverty (disaggregation by child age group). This was followed by retroactive trend analysis. Multidimensional poverty measures are now part of national surveys, most recently the 2019/20 Income, Expenditure and Labour Force Survey.
- **Armenia: Building and institutionalizing routine multidimensional child poverty measurement.** UNICEF Armenia worked closely with the National Statistical Services (NSS) and development partners to generate evidence and collect reliable data on the situation of children in Armenia, particularly focusing on child needs, poverty measurement (monetary and multidimensional), child and maternal health and nutrition, as well as development of child-related SDG indicator baselines. One of the most visible successes of this advocacy was the institutionalization of multidimensional child poverty measurement as part of annual reporting by the NSS within its Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia report.
- **Colombia: Institutionalizing multidimensional poverty measurement.** To track progress on the Colombian National Development Plan, two mechanisms were put in place: a roundtable meeting chaired by the President, which convenes key ministries and agencies working on poverty reduction, and a dashboard system which monitored progress in each dimension and its indicators through traffic lights, which then guided policy discussions at the roundtable.
- **Iceland: Implementing a children's quality of life dashboard.** In Iceland, the Ministry of Social Affairs has been implementing a *Children's Quality of Life dashboard* pilot project for the past three years. The dashboard was originally launched in the

22 The SDG monitoring platform: World Bank https://datatopics.worldbank.org/sdgs/index.html and UN SDG site: https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/indicators/database/
23 http://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org/publications-feed/2020/10/17/briefing-paper

municipality of Kopavogur, in collaboration with the UNICEF Iceland National Committee. The dashboard monitors the Child Friendly City Index (CFC Index) and is comprised of five dimensions anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely education; equity; health and well-being; security and protection; and social participation. The dashboard is an integral part of current changes being proposed in Iceland on the integration of services to enhance children's well-being, to measure and monitor progress, as well as to guide prioritization of policies and decentralized budgets.

- **Mexico: Monitoring multidimensional poverty under an autonomous entity.** In Mexico, the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) was created as an autonomous entity responsible for measuring poverty, including multidimensional poverty, at the federal, state and local levels. To meet its objectives, CONEVAL maintains constant interaction with the government at all levels. The National Strategy for Social Inclusion aimed at coordinating efforts to reduce poverty at the federal and local levels emerged in this coordination space. Since 2008, CONEVAL has worked with the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) on biennial data collection work, which serve as a fundamental input for the calculation of poverty, as well as with UNICEF on child poverty measurement and policy development.
- **Thailand: Adopting a child multidimensional poverty index (c-MPI) to monitor progress on SDG 1.** Despite the inclusion of child-related targets in national frameworks such as the medium- and long-term development plans, there was no comprehensive measurement in place in Thailand to assess the overall progress made for children towards SDG 1 – which aims to reduce by half the number of people living in poverty in all its dimensions, including children, by 2030. In 2019, Thailand became one of the first countries to adopt a c-MPI, which enables the country to have a fuller picture of child poverty, set the baseline and monitor the progress against SDG target 1.2, and provide an evidence base for policies and programmes.
- **Uganda: Multidimensional child poverty measures among national routine indicators.** Uganda is among the few countries who achieved successful mainstreaming of multidimensional child poverty measurement, under the strong leadership of the Office of the Prime Minister. The country's National Household Survey now includes a module on multidimensional child poverty, ensuring regular measurement and availability of critical information to guide policies and programmes to address child poverty. Going beyond measurement, multidimensional child poverty indicators are also now included as key markers to monitor and evaluate poverty reduction programmes.
- **Vietnam: Using a multidimensional poverty index to monitor progress.** The Government of Vietnam adopted a multidimensional poverty index in 2015 to measure and monitor multidimensional poverty, and to guide the design, implementation and evaluation of the National Target Programme for Sustainable Poverty Reduction 2016-2020. Since its adoption, the General Statistics Office of Vietnam regularly calculates and disseminates disaggregated data on multidimensional poverty. The measurement framework is currently being reviewed to include multidimensional child poverty indicators and standards as well.
- **Sri Lanka: Adapting the main national poverty survey to provide data for child multidimensional poverty measurement.** In addition to providing capacity building support to the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS) on multidimensional poverty measurement, UNICEF supported the inclusion of a child module into the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), the national survey conducted every three years to collect data that allows for the calculation of poverty. The module, included for the first time in the HIES, contains questions related to different dimensions of child well-being. Further training, advocacy and a national child poverty conference were organized to bring DCS, line ministries, planning departments, academics, and government representatives from four other countries together to help institutionalize multidimensional poverty measurement. The first ever multidimensional poverty measurement, including child poverty, is underway and expected to be released in 2021..

Section 2:
Foundations for effectively using multidimensional poverty for policy and programme change

KEY FINDINGS

While measurement and analysis are necessary steps leading to policy and programme change on child poverty, there are many important considerations in both the process and the country context that emerged from the review as important to achieving impact. These include:

✓ Coalition building and the importance of leadership

- Building relationships with a wide range of partners adds crucial strength and momentum to advocacy work. It enables broader reach of analysis findings, promotes the exchange of knowledge and expertise, builds the capacity of the actors involved, facilitates access to decision makers who can influence policy decisions, and supports resource mobilization.
- Strong leaders or champions to support approaches which address multidimensional poverty have been crucial in many instances. These champions don't have to be high-level political figures, but those who strongly believe in the approach and will support and sustain it over time.

✓ Awareness of the politics in policymaking processes

- The politics surrounding social policy formulation and implementation is complex, often involving a number of stakeholders. Understanding and engaging in these political aspects has an impact on the adoption and effectiveness of multidimensional poverty measures.

KEY FINDINGS

✓ Considerations regarding which multidimensional poverty approach to select

- Depending on the dimensions, indicators, approach to aggregation and level of analysis, different measures can produce different results.
- However, based on our review of how multidimensional poverty and child poverty measures influence policies, different measures rarely produce different policy conclusions. Regardless of the approach, multidimensional poverty measurements can have broad indirect impact through bringing together stakeholders, improving coordination among sectors, and building a foundation for broad policy recommendations.
- Accordingly, advocacy and ownership are important considerations in driving the choice of measure for policy and programme change. For example, comparing adults and children might be useful to highlight that children are more likely to be in poverty than adults. Advocacy focused specifically on children and more connected to rights-based approaches have been done effectively with both the MODA and Bristol methodologies.
- There are some important but limited exceptions where the choice of measure will produce different policy conclusions. For example, in the rare example where a multidimensional poverty measure has been directly used as criteria for budget formula, the choice of measure may have significantly different conclusions.

✓ The importance of further analysis – beyond the multidimensional poverty measure

- Measuring poverty with a multidimensional approach can provide a more nuanced picture of how children experience poverty, identifying who the most vulnerable are and in what ways they are deprived, and providing important insights for designing and implementing anti-poverty policies.
- To determine the specific mix of multisectoral interventions that can reduce child deprivations effectively and sustainably, further analysis of measures, data and evidence need to be conducted and considered.

Understanding the impact pathways of multidimensional poverty measurement in Section 1 highlighted the crucial importance of the *process* by which measurements are developed and disseminated. Now, in Section 2, we consider the most important considerations that emerged during the assessment and qualitative interviews, namely the importance of coalition building, considering the politics of policymaking and whether the approach to multidimensional poverty measurement matters.

Coalition building, national leadership and the policymaking process

Developing a multidimensional poverty measure involves engagement and collaboration between multiple stakeholders. Building relationships with a wide range of partners adds crucial strength and momentum to advocacy work. It enables a broader reach of the analysis findings, promotes the exchange of knowledge and expertise, builds the capacity of the actors involved, facilitates access to decision makers who can influence policy decisions, and supports resource mobilization, among others.[24] As highlighted in the *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty*, it can be useful to build this work into existing national structures, such as sector working groups, SDG technical working groups, etc.

Just over half of those interviewed for the qualitative assessment identified the following issues affecting the translation of multidimensional poverty measures into policy impact:

- The difficulty in communicating the complexity of the multidimensional poverty measure.
- The risk of measures being arbitrary.
- Identifying clear policy implications.

In countries where multidimensional poverty measures have succeeded as a measurement, monitoring and policy tool, key ingredients to secure the sustainability and effectiveness of the measure include political buy-in, technical rigour, a strong communications strategy and credibility.[25] Engagement with leaders and institutions with expertise in statistical analysis, poverty, child rights, policymaking, programme administration and media, is also important to meeting these four requirements.

The relationship-building process begins with identifying some of the key actors in poverty measurement and policies. The following stakeholders are among the most common ones:[26]

- **National Statistical Office:** The primary government institution in charge of collecting, analysing and disseminating statistics related to economy and society.
- **Ministry of Finance and Planning:** Often the main users of poverty-related statistics for policy decisions. Depending on the objective/intended use of the measure, other line ministries or agencies may need to be brought on board, such as Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.
- **Political leaders:** In the case of national MPIs, engagement and endorsement by political leaders at the highest level who are committed to poverty reduction strongly supports the successful establishment and use of multidimensional poverty measures.[27]
- **Independent bodies:** The role of independent bodies, such as CONEVAL in Mexico, is to monitor and evaluate public policies.
- **Think tanks and research institutions:** These organizations can also play an important role in ensuring the credibility and legitimacy of the measurement.
- **UN agencies and multilateral institutions:** Agencies such as UNICEF, UNDP and lately the World Bank, who lead the development and application of multidimensional poverty measurement and analysis, are also important partners that can bring further allies and supporters and enhance political buy-in and policy impact.
- **Civil society:** As actors who work closely with vulnerable children and families, CSOs can add valuable insights to the measurement.
- **Children:** Involving poor children and their families wherever possible also makes difference in strengthening the credibility of a measure. A number of studies show that household income and consumption-based measures alone cannot

24 https://www.unicef.org/cbsc/files/Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf
25 https://mppn.org/handbook-national-mpi/
26 https://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/files/Child_Poverty_SDG_Guide-Milestone_2-March_2017.pdf
27 https://mppn.org/handbook-national-mpi/

fully identify children in poverty, or predict children's subjective well-being,[28, 29] therefore understanding children's perspectives and integrating them into the measures as much as possible can improve assessment accuracy.

- **Media organizations:** In the later stages of measurement, a good working partnership with the press becomes crucial, as the media can help disseminate report findings, raise awareness and support public and political advocacy.

The politics surrounding social policy formulation and implementation is complex and often involves a number of stakeholders, but there are certain actors who commonly participate in the policymaking of all sectors: national government, the legislature, local governments, unions, businesses, and international financial institutions.[30] Because of its broad nature, the multidimensional (child) poverty measurement process has the ability to bring many stakeholders together and build sustainable partnerships, compared to unidimensional measures. Multidimensional poverty analysis can open up avenues for strategic advocacy, as it brings different policy actors together and focuses their attention on the common problem. This was summarised by one of the interviewed experts:

> *I think the biggest value of multidimensional poverty measurement is the fact that it gives us a concrete activity to work on with the national planning authorities. […] Because we did the measures with them, it opened them up for learning about these issues […] Which would not have happened if we did not do the [multidimensional poverty measurement] exercise. So that brought us closer to them – it is only one 'product' but they are the ones who hold the pen when they write the national child strategy. And when they do so, they already know the key issues because we build the [measurement] together. (Interviewee 19)*

Strong leadership and the importance of champions

Meaningful engagement with these actors is crucial throughout the process of building a multidimensional child poverty measurement, from the initial stage of establishing common understanding about child poverty and the need to measure, monitor and respond to it, to the next steps of agreeing on the measurement methodologies, setting up a committee to conduct and oversee the analysis, building capacity of technical staff, and eventually developing mechanisms to coordinate policy and programmatic actions. Building pathways between the multidimensional poverty measurement and policy impact requires the coordination of a variety of stakeholders (and often the navigation of different interests). Therefore, the success of the multidimensional poverty measurement exercises often relies on having strong leadership. This is exemplified in the following expert testimony:

> *Another problem is a lack of leadership. That's why we really try to find champions, and they really don't have to be presidents […] it has to be someone who will keep inspiring the people around them to work. I can give examples of heads of state promoting the change and I can give examples of people lower than the minister level promoting change. But I think the places where it [multidimensional poverty measurement] stagnated… nobody put in the effort […] it takes a personal commitment to use this particular tool to shape policies and to communicate with the public. (Interviewee 1)*

Multidimensional poverty measures, by bringing together various stakeholders working in poverty reduction and building existing and new relationships, can form the basis of integrated response and accountability mechanisms for child poverty. For policies to effectively address child poverty this is particularly important yet can be hard to achieve, as although economic benefits are reaped in the longer term, there are costs in the short term.[31] Often these goals are achieved through a process of smaller steps and various indirect changes, such as developing relationships or changing working practice. For example:

28 Main (2019): https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0190740917304565
29 Main and Bradshaw (2012): https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12187-012-9145-7
30 Bonvecchi and Scartascini (2020): https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/34414
31 Ibid.

Often ministers compete with each other […] And when you have [multidimensional poverty measurement] and the ministers sit at the table then you can't move the [measurement] down single-handedly, you need a team. And so you need a kick from the Minister of Health, kick or from the Minister of Education, etc. and together, as a team effort, they can move the ball on poverty. And they learn that. So actually, you might send the education indicator to the education minister responsible for that, but then she will say I cannot make my education goal without the other ones. So actually, they learn about how we need to integrate the policies but they learn it from each other. And we've seen it in the number of governments where ministers actually reach a common understanding. Well maybe they compete in other spheres but when it comes to poverty the moral imperative is so great that then they say: 'We [are] going to cooperate'. (Interviewee 1).

Connecting measurement to the policy process

For strategic advocacy, evidence is rarely the only tool to achieve policy goals and objectives, but rather one of the many approaches used. Deep understanding of the national context – including the policymaking processes, institutions, culture, and stakeholders – is important throughout the advocacy stages, from policy influencing and formulating to effective implementation. Relationship and alliance building, effective knowledge management and strategic communications are some of the additional and important tactics used to navigate the complex policymaking environment and achieve advocacy goals. One of the strengths of multidimensional child poverty measurement is its ability to support all these tactics. For instance, the process to build the measurement often involves many different stakeholders, which helps to create common understanding and identify goals among those involved. This in turn could give rise to formal and informal working groups, mechanisms and systems to both measure and respond to poverty in a coordinated manner. As summarised by one of the interviewed experts:

The process for me was probably even more important than the final number showing multidimensional poverty. (Interviewee 6)

Involving stakeholders in the process of designing, producing and disseminating the findings of a multidimensional poverty measurement is one of the most important facilitators of policy impacts. By targeting key actors and involving them in the process from the beginning, it is possible to develop relevant policy recommendations and mitigate the political risks through the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders. These points are illustrated by the following expert:

I think that's why the [the initiative] worked because it was kind of a cross-party [initiative], with academics on side, done in a robust way and then presented. It's hard then if everybody's saying to the minister, 'This makes sense', then it's hard for them to say, 'Well, I don't believe it', because you've got people from all walks of life saying this is a good thing. (Interviewee 12)

It needs to be noted that all poverty measures, whether monetary or multidimensional, reflect a political environment. Public policymaking takes place in a political environment, where various strategic and purposive actors seek to advance their own goals. This also applies to the development of multidimensional poverty measures, regardless of which multidimensional approach is applied, as summarised by one of the key experts:

You need to have a receptive audience. […] There are major ideological barriers to multidimensional poverty measurement, and if you have a government that is anchored in this type of ideology or a large portion of the electorate that thinks along those lines, then you have a serious barrier. […] Policymaking process is way more complicated than just having the evidence and then the best, most rational decision is made. Policies are made partly on evidence and partly on the combination of ideology and interest and partly on the rhetoric and capacity to mobilize. (Interviewee 3)

Disentangling the role of multidimensional poverty measurement in influencing policies is complex. There are various standards regarding policymaking and tools to be applied, including basing a policy on available evidence, as well as reflecting priorities for a budget and the allocations of spending etc. Factors that can determine the outcomes include political consensus, costs and benefits of establishing and using the measurement, as well as human and institutional capacity. For instance, in countries such as Mexico where multidimensional poverty measurement is established and cemented by legislation and institutions, there is a strong incentive to use the data, including child-specific data, in policymaking and budgeting decisions. For countries still exploring various measurement approaches, despite the technical capacity, the measurement and use may not get the desired traction.[32]

In short, there are multiple decisions and incentives that drive policymaking, and available evidence is only one part of that complex decision-making process. Although not explicitly outlined in the sections below, the reader of this review should bear in mind these complexities of evidence-based policymaking.

Some national poverty measures, both monetary and multidimensional, have been subjected to political scrutiny and sometimes have been adapted to reflect a certain desirable outcome. This is never recommended practice, as outlined in the United Nations Quality Assurance Frameworks Manual for Official Statistics: *"Standards refer to a comprehensive set of statistical concepts, definitions, classifications and models, methods and procedures used to achieve uniform treatment of statistical issues within or across processes and across time and space. The use of standards promotes the consistency and efficiency of statistical systems at all levels".*[33]

The approaches and institutional arrangements of the stakeholders engaged in multidimensional child poverty measurement processes can vary depending on the country context, methodology used and the purpose of the measurement, among other factors. These similarities and differences are outlined below, in examples from El Salvador, Chile, Mexico, Thailand, Morocco and the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network.

Connecting a multidimensional poverty measure to the policy process in practice:

- **Chile: Highest level political commitment to multidimensional poverty measurement.** In Chile, the process was led by political leaders at the highest level. In 2012, the incumbent president Sebastian Piñera established the Presidential Advisory Commission of Experts to review and revise the poverty measurement methodology. Following recommendations from the committee – which consisted of representatives from academia, NGOs, multilateral organizations and the government – the country adopted a multidimensional poverty index. The measurement and dissemination of the Chile MPI was jointly done by Ministry of Social Development and National Institute of Statistics.
- **El Salvador: Technical and Planning Secretariat leading the process.** In El Salvador, the process to establish a multidimensional poverty measurement was headed by the Technical and Planning Secretariat, as well as UNDP, who provided technical support. To identify the dimensions that constitute poverty, the committee also worked with civil society groups, children and families affected by poverty, to better understand and incorporate their experience into the definition and measurement of poverty.
- **Mexico: Using an independent multidimensional poverty measure.** In Mexico, the congress/ parliament have played a central role in establishing an independent multidimensional poverty measure, as without their continued support, a national multidimensional poverty index may not last beyond the limits of a certain administration. Parliaments can be a strategic ally for the assurance of a permanent multidimensional poverty measure. If relationships are fostered carefully and grounded in a shared concern for poverty that spans political platforms, this may bring important support for multidimensional poverty measurement. In the case of Mexico, for instance, the congress not only supported the national multidimensional measure, but its representatives, in response to a legal mandate, were the ones who decided to develop it and assure its independence.

32 Cuesta (2020): https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13600818.2020.1739261
33 United Nations National Quality Assurance Frameworks (UN NQAF) Manual for Official Statistics (2020): https://unstats.un.org/unsd/dnss/docs-nqaf/UN_NQAF_Manual-Unedited_manuscript_of_3_May_2019.pdf

- **Morocco: Institutionalizing multidimensional child poverty measurement through cross-country partnership.** Morocco's first ever multidimensional child poverty measurement, disaggregated by geographic location, gender and socio-economic conditions, was released in 2017 by the National Observatory of Human Development (ONDH) and Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development, with support from UNICEF. To enhance national capacity to conduct the analysis and promote institutionalization of the measurement, ONDH collaborated with Mexico's CONEVAL, learning from their experience in building and using multidimensional child poverty measures.
- **Thailand: Bringing stakeholders together to establish a c-MPI.** In Thailand, the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC), the country's primary government agency in charge of development planning and policies, conducted the child multidimensional poverty index (c-MPI) analysis with technical support from the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and UNICEF. The process to construct the measure involved multiple actors representing government and academia and helped strengthen relationship among stakeholders engaged in poverty measurement and policies, including the National Statistical Office, line ministries and UN agencies.
- **The Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN): Supporting countries to design and use multidimensional poverty measures.** The MPPN was launched in 2013 and provides international support to policymakers engaged in exploring the construction of multidimensional poverty measures. Support includes input into the design of the measures and the political processes and institutional arrangements that will sustain them. The network also endorses the use of MPI (whether national or global) in meeting the SDGs and in guiding development policies, rather than relying on monetary poverty statistics alone or GDP per capita.

Choosing the most suitable multidimensional approach for policy and programme change

In essence, the key objective of multidimensional poverty measures is to measure the diverse and overlapping disadvantages faced by people living in poverty. However, the ideal way to measure multidimensional poverty is still debated, including whether a 'dashboard' overview of social sector indicators is sufficient to highlight the multiple deprivations people in poverty face, or whether these should be aggregated into a single number, an index. Such a dashboard approach, however, misses out on those simultaneously deprived in two or more dimensions; in other words, it does not highlight the intersectionality of deprivations.

A multidimensional poverty approach applied for targeting direct interventions can potentially produce significantly different results depending on, for example, whether two or three indicators are used to measure deprivation in the nutrition dimension; whether additional weight is given to certain dimensions; whether equal weights are given to all dimensions; or whether the unit of analysis is the child or the household etc. These decisions can have significant implications when using a multidimensional poverty measure to directly target interventions and need to be carefully considered by governments and partners. In the next section, we specifically explore whether a child focus versus general population focus may lead to different policy recommendations.

Different results in child-focused measures versus disaggregating a general population focus

Using a general population multidimensional poverty measure (for example the MPI) or a child-specific measure (for example the Bristol approach, MODA or a C-MPI) can produce different results.

Table 2: Multidimensional poverty among children 0-17 years according to MODA and MPI and overlaps osf the two measures

	Cambodia (N=12,302) %	Ghana (N=26,908) %	Mali (N=70,517) %	Mongolia (N=11,752) %
Poverty estimates				
MPI poor[a]	49.0	35.3	74.4	12.4
MODA poor[b]	66.7	62.7	67.0	30.9
p-value (MPI=MODA)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Overlaps				
MODA poor, not MPI poor	24.1	32.5	7.5	23.4
MPI poor, not MODA poor	6.4	5.2	14.9	4.9
MPI poor and MODA poor	42.6	30.2	59.5	7.5

[a]An MPI-poor child is defined as a child living in a household with an MPI above 0.333
[b]A MODA-poor child is defined as a child with two or more deprivations

In their paper, *Comparing Approaches to the Measurement of Multidimensional Child Poverty,*[34] Hjelm et al. (2016) show that although MODA and MPI share many similarities, they do not lead to the same results, with considerable variation between countries. For instance, in Mongolia, 23-33 per cent of children are classified as poor according to MODA, but live in a non-poor household according to the MPI (see Table 2).[35] However, it needs to be noted that a child-specific MPI (c-MPI) would probably not show significant differences.

Similar results are highlighted in Carraro and Chzhen's 2019 paper *Multidimensional child poverty measurement in Sierra Leone and Lao PDR: Contrasting individual- and household-based approaches*, which observes lower multidimensional child poverty headcounts for MPI than MODA for children under the age of 5 in both Lao PDR and Sierra Leone.[36]

Evans and Abdurazakov (2018) compare two indices in detail, the Alkire Foster (AF) method (Alkire and Foster, 2011) and the categorical counting (CC) method as exemplified by UNICEF poverty indices based on methodologies by Gordon et al. (2003) and De Neubourg et al. (2013). Their finding shows appreciable differences in the ability of indices to capture levels of and changes to multidimensional child poverty. Furthermore, they observe: "*The important thing is thus to make such differences transparent to statisticians and policymakers in the countries that are considering them or that have put them in place. There is no such thing as a perfect poverty measure, but, given that the adoption of poverty goals and approaches is one for national actors, the differences in methods and their consequences for poverty measurement and setting poverty reduction targets must be made clear. There is a choice, and countries are free to make that choice, but when doing so they should be clear about the consequences of choosing a CC index*[37] *over an AF index or vice versa.*"[38]

Lastly, in 'MPI and MODA: Disentangling the Differences Between a Policy Tool and Advocacy Instrument', Vaz, Oldiges and Alkire (2019) argue that MODA may be a more efficient advocacy tool and that MPI may provide better policy guidance as it is more sensitive to changes at indicator level.[39]

34 Hjelm et al. (2016): http://www.ecineq.org/ecineq_nyc17/FILESx2017/CR2/p257.pdf
35 Vaz, Oldiges and Alkire (2019): https://mppn.org/mpi-and-moda-differences/
36 https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/WP2019-05.pdf
37 An AF index uses the same weights as those in the global MPI, while a CC index uses weights and approaches as used in the global MODA and Bristol approaches.
38 https://www.ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/OPHIWP115.pdf
39 https://mppn.org/mpi-and-moda-differences/

The pathways from measurement to impact and which measure makes sense

While different measures can produce different results, the ability of multidimensional poverty measures to influence policies and programmes, as outlined in the preceding sections, are not necessarily dependent on the choice of the multidimensional measure approach itself.

In the area of advocacy, multidimensional poverty and child poverty measures have consistently played a critical role in changing the understanding of poverty beyond income to encompass the multiple dimensions of poverty, including the specific deprivations faced by children. They have also highlighted the importance of child multidimensional poverty, including demonstrating that it has a higher prevalence than adult poverty almost universally.

The most common methodologies of multidimensional poverty measurement reviewed have all been effectively used for these purposes, though depending on the advocacy areas of focus and audiences some measures may be said to be more effective. For example, comparing adults and children might be useful to highlight that children are more likely to be in poverty than adults and connect to overall poverty debates, which has been done with disaggregated measures such as the MPI. Meanwhile, advocacy focused specifically on children and more connected to a rights-based approaches have been conducted effectively using the MODA and Bristol methodologies.

Crucially, the pathway to achieving policy change can be seen clearly when advocacy has been combined with clear policy actions and asks. The review looked carefully across examples identifying a range of policy areas, including geographic targeting, recommending multisectoral response and cooperation, recommendations around budgets and social protection.

Across these areas, with limited notable exceptions as outlined above, measures produced broad recommendations of direction that would not change significantly were a different measure used. In other words, the choice of measure would generally not lead to different policy conclusions. Accordingly, advocacy and ownership considerations might best drive choice of measure. Further, those working on multidimensional poverty should be prepared for extra research and analysis beyond the multidimensional poverty measure to derive more detailed policy recommendations.

The review highlighted some limited examples where the choice of measure was used directly for policy change. In Bhutan and Nepal, the MPI was directly used in budget allocation formulas. The review of examples outlines the challenges of using multidimensional poverty and child poverty measures to guide policies directly; however, in these cases, a change in measure would certainly produce different policy impacts.

The importance of further analysis

While multidimensional poverty profiling can reveal details about characteristics and drivers of child poverty, additional analysis is needed to fully understand the underlying factors affecting child poverty, using various quantitative and qualitative techniques. For example:

> *The weaknesses of all measurements but also the weakness of monetary poverty measurement is that […] it never leads to direct policy advice. The only thing you can say is whether it [...] occurs more often in certain regions, among certain groups in society, these are all descriptives. Actually, you need to understand why this happens, and that's not a question that can be answered by any multidimensional poverty methodology or framework. So, you need extra information to do that. (Interviewee 7)*

Therefore, additional forms of research and analysis might be required to explore the causal relationships underpinning deprivations in different dimensions. This type of additional research might bridge the gap between analysis and policy advice necessary to achieve the impact of multidimensional poverty measurement on policies and programmes. Multidimensional poverty measurement may be most effective when it is a part of a robust mix of evidence communicated to decision makers.

Creating links across sectors is important for the successful development and communication of multidimensional poverty measurements. This issue was well summarised by one interviewee:

> *Since it's very difficult and not easy to find multidimensional policies […] it was very important when we present the results to present first of all the results by dimension, by indicators in a transparent way. And I was [putting] less emphasis on the final index, the one which is then reported in the global reports. (Interviewee 11)*

In addition, when using a multidimensional measure to guide sectoral responses, it is imperative to avoid simplistic policy recommendations. A multidimensional poverty measure is developed using the indicators available in a single survey, but this does not necessarily mean that these are the indicators which best reflect the complexity of the sectors/dimensions which make up an index. In guiding education programmes, for example, the considerations are multiple and complex, for example teacher/pupil ratio, quality of teacher training, education budget, school fees, infrastructure, drop-out and retention etc., whereas a multidimensional poverty measure may only include information on the number of years' schooling household members have completed, or the availability of textbooks. For these reasons, a multidimensional poverty measure can be used as part of a range of available evidence in guiding sectoral policies and programmes, for example highlighting the overlap/joint distribution of deprivations.

In short, multidimensional poverty profiles can offer very useful insights on children and families living in multidimensional poverty, guiding the overall direction of poverty reduction policies. However, to design impactful and effective programmes, further analyses are a must.

Section 3:
Future directions

KEY FINDINGS

Areas to investigate further to enhance the impactful use of multidimensional poverty measures include:

1. **Understanding the policy mix to address multidimensional child poverty**

2. **Improving household surveys for better multidimensional poverty measures for children**

3. **Adapting multidimensional poverty measures to inform fragile and humanitarian settings, including for use during a crisis**

In the preceding sections we have outlined the known policy and programme uses of multidimensional poverty measures. Given the focus of this review is on how multidimensional poverty measures have been used in practice, the preceding sections have not provided speculation on how multidimensional measures could be used in the future.

Section 3 builds on the country examples and documents reviewed, the qualitative interviews with experts, as well as the extensive feedback from reviewers, to suggest some potential future directions of research and practice that may further the ability of multidimensional poverty measures to tangibly impact on the lives of children in poverty.

1. Understanding the policy mix to address multidimensional child poverty

As has been highlighted, it is extremely challenging to identify a policy package which will address multidimensional poverty. However, some examples have pointed to possibilities that could be explored further. Indeed, this is an area already garnering the interest of researchers. For example, in the UNICEF Innocenti paper exploring the impact of the Lesotho child grant programme on multiple deprivation,[43] Carraro and Ferrone (2020) provide one of the first assessments of the impact of cash transfer programmes on children's multidimensional deprivations, with a focus on whether transfers can shield children in marginalized households from the impact of shocks. They use a linear model where the dependent variable is an index counting the number of deprivations children face in several domains, and they explore the average treatment effect of a cash transfer on multidimensional deprivations. Similarly, in another 2020 paper, Kilburn et al. (2020) explore the effect of a conditional cash transfer on multidimensional deprivation of girls and young women and find positive effects on a number of dimensions and the resulting index.

Further analysis could explore the kind of diagnostics needed to establish the right mix of policies and programmes by sectors, and inter-sectoral policies/programmes, to address multidimensional poverty. This could include the different compositions of policy and programme packages which have strong potential for reducing multidimensional child poverty. This could also include analysis of the potential for these policy responses to both respond to the incidence and depth of multidimensional child poverty.

2. Improving household surveys for better multidimensional poverty measures for children

Key players in the field of multidimensional poverty measurement often state that multidimensional poverty measures are only as good as the data which goes into their construction, which in turn may impact on their policy and programme use. These measures depend on single surveys to include all the relevant information, usually relying on internationally comparable surveys such as the DHS and MICS. But DHS and MICS programmes are designed to capture information that feeds into specific sectors, rather than to create multidimensional indices.[44] However, surveys designed with the intention of informing multidimensional measure could: *"lead to the creation of suites of indicators that could create dimensions across all ages of children – for instance, considering cognitive development and other measures of non-cognitive performance for pre-school aged children that could allow 'learning' or some other higher-level dimension to replace the crudely determined 'education' dimensions that already exist".*[45]

Future considerations on better data for the measurement of multidimensional poverty may explore the key indicators/dimensions which are currently missing for better measurement of multidimensional poverty, and multidimensional child poverty, as identified by experts in the field of multidimensional poverty measurement (including children and their families living in poverty). These could include for example, richer data/indicators on children over 5 years, as well as more individual level indicators versus household level indicators (water, sanitation, housing and information are all household level indicators).

This may include key players in the field such as the World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF and the MPPN influencing global and national statistical practices for better data for the construction of multidimensional poverty measures, for example adding additional/adjusted questions to household survey questionnaires. These influencers can explore how current surveys could be adapted without

43 Carraro and Ferrone (2020): https://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/How_Effective_are_Cash_Transfers_in_Mitigating_Shocks_for_Vulnerable_Children.pdf
44 Evans and Abdurazakov (2018): https://www.ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/OPHIWP115.pdf
45 Ibid.

losing statistical reliability, or new surveys introduced, as well as focus on how national household surveys or analysis can be adapted to provide more reliable information on the deprivation of individuals versus household deprivations.[46] Finally, there is room to explore the scenarios in which child poverty is measured at the household level and poverty reduction programmes and services are provided at the individual level, as well as the opposite case, and how this affects, or does not affect, the design of policies and programmes against poverty.

3. Using multidimensional poverty measures to inform relief responses during crises

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought into urgent attention the need to explore how multidimensional poverty measures can inform programmes and policies in emergency and fast-evolving settings. There are clear survey challenges for using multidimensional poverty measures for informing crisis settings. Multidimensional poverty analysis is generally static analysis based on household surveys which countries produce approximately every 3-5 years. An interesting area for further analysis is therefore whether official multidimensional measures can be developed using alternative sources of data, for example data collected through high frequency phone surveys. This analysis could also explore whether there is any added benefit to utilizing high frequency datasets, considering that indicators which comprise the various multidimensional poverty dimensions (for example stunting) do not change rapidly. The above COVID-19 focused section, highlighted, for example that a 2020 analysis conducted by Save the Children and UNICEF on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on multidimensional child poverty focused only on two indicators which can change rapidly, namely education and health. It is worth exploring further some of the other key indicators and dimensions used in well-known multidimensional poverty measures which can change rapidly in crisis situations.

Furthermore, an area of further exploration .on the use of multidimensional poverty measures in crisis settings is how multidimensional poverty measures can inform vulnerability assessments. Poverty and vulnerability assessments tend to focus on monetary poverty, in particular household vulnerability to monetary poverty, whereas exploring vulnerability to multidimensional poverty is a valuable field of analysis to further explore.

Finally, and critically, it is crucial to look at whether multidimensional poverty measures can inform and influence the defining agenda of this decade: the climate change agenda. This includes exploring the components of multidimensional poverty measures to reflect climate considerations. The 2020 UNDP Human Development Report is an example of a step in that direction, in that it presents an adjustment to the Human Development Index (HDI) that uses indicators of greenhouse gas emissions and material footprint.[47]

46 Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2019): http://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org/publications-feed/2019/7/8/child-poverty-measurement-and-monitoring-the-missing-children
47 UNDP (2020): http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/hdr2020.pdf

The COVID-19 crisis and use of multidimensional poverty measures

At the onset of the COVID-19 crisis in early 2020, governments and the international community were quick to respond and put in place various rapid data collection methods and simulations to project the impact of the crisis on poverty levels, including multidimensional poverty. For example, to guide policy responses to large-scale shocks such as COVID-19, the UN Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) developed a web-based tool that can cast the effects of developmental, environmental and policy shocks on various dimensions of poverty – namely education, health, housing conditions and access to services and assets. The tool projects the impact of shocks on a multidimensional poverty index under various scenarios and policy responses, based on country updates, and food security and health system capacity indices.

Children and their families living in multidimensional poverty or at risk of multidimensional poverty are a high-risk group for COVID-19 and a high-risk group for suffering from the economic downturn following the pandemic. Since the impacts of COVID-19 affect the various deprivations experienced by children simultaneously, government responses require inter- and intra-sectoral policy packages. As such, multidimensional poverty measures have the potential to inform these responses. Multidimensional poverty metrics can provide a profile of children who experience overlapping or joint deprivations and disaggregate them by characteristics such as area of residence, household composition and wealth.

In countries with recently established national multidimensional poverty measures, general and/or child specific, these can be considered as pre-COVID-19 baselines. These measures can provide an overview of those who are at higher risk of being impacted by COVID-19, i.e. those groups who were in multidimensional poverty prior to COVID-19, and importantly those who were vulnerable to multidimensional poverty prior to COVID-19. This information can inform government mitigation measures.

Various partners are working on analysing the impact of COVID-19 on multidimensional poverty. The Social Policy Research Institute (SPRI Global), for example, highlight that National MODAs can be adapted to guide governments to assess the direct and indirect risks that children are exposed to as a result of COVID-19.[40] Such analysis can highlight the need for governments to focus on health systems, nutrition, education, water, sanitation and hygiene, housing and child protection to mitigate the direct and indirect risks of COVID-19.

Impact of the crisis on multidimensional child poverty

UNICEF and Save the Children projected the impact of the crisis on multidimensional child poverty by analysing the two multidimensional child poverty dimensions that are affected most rapidly by the pandemic and related measures: education (due to the immediate effect of school closures) and health (due to the disruption to health services). To calculate the additional number of children becoming deprived in education, information on school closures, and data on whether children have access to learning tools (radio, mobile phones etc.) were considered, while for health deprivation, probabilities of children not getting immunization, or not receiving treatment when ill, were calculated based on their background characteristics (age, whether living in area where service is disrupted, etc.). The results showed that as many as 150 million additional children could fall into multidimensional poverty in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.[41]

Similarly, UNICEF's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) regional office conducted regional and country level projections on the impact of COVID-19 on multidimensional child poverty- assessing how COVID-19 containment measures might potentially impact multiple dimensions of child poverty, including education, health, protection, access to services, socialization and development. This includes COVID-19 simulations (with optimistic and pessimistic scenarios),

40 https://spriglobal.org/2020/04/17/pandemicvictims/
41 Save the Children and UNICEF (2020): https://data.unicef.org/resources/impact-of-covid-19-on-multidimensional-child-poverty/

where policies existing prior to the COVID-19 crisis are taken into account, whereas the second set of simulations integrate policies already put in place to respond to the COVID-19 crisis. The policies simulated are specific to each country, with a focus on those with a significant effect on employment, income and/or prices.

Impact of the crisis on the global MPI

For the 2020 global MPI analysis, two different scenarios of COVID-19 impact on multidimensional poverty were calculated. The first/conservative scenario for school attendance anticipates continued moderate improvements throughout 2020 and assumed that 50 per cent of primary school-age children in the countries analysed would experience continued interruption to school attendance. The moderate scenario for nutrition anticipated that about 25 per cent of multidimensionally poor or vulnerable people who were not undernourished before the pandemic would become undernourished. The analysis estimated that 490 additional people would fall into multidimensional poverty. The second scenario considered the change in the nutrition indicator only (as schools might reopen and therefore the attendance indicator might change less). Nevertheless, this would still lead to 237 million people falling into multidimensional poverty in 2020 due to the crisis.[42]

Box 5:
Colombia's vulnerability index for the targeting of cash during COVID-19

On 6 March 2020, Colombia registered its first COVID-19 case, and 11 days later a state of emergency was declared followed by quarantine measures. As part of the economic measures taken to mitigate the COVID-19 health and socioeconomic crisis, the Government of Colombia, through the Colombian National Administrative Statistics Department (DANE) and the Department of National Planning, established a targeting programme to provide cash assistance to vulnerable populations in the informal labour market.

To assess vulnerability, the government adapted its National Multidimensional Poverty Index, computed on the basis of 15 indicators, to a vulnerability index. This vulnerability index represented the population at risk of COVID-19, based on characteristics such as age, socioeconomic status and co-morbidity factors. The index was constructed on the basis of three risk dimensions: morbidity factors of household members, intergenerational households and household overcrowding, and was further disaggregated at manzana (neighbourhood) level. The morbidity dimension index included indicators of health of household members, such as hypertension, ischemic heart disease, lung conditions, diabetes and cancer. The intergenerational component of the index identified households with adult members aged 60 years or older who live by themselves, or who live with young people aged 20 to 29 years.

To construct the vulnerability index, DANE and partner institutions used three types of data sources: the latest Census data of 2018, available administrative records and household surveys, and merged them into a single master data base. A vulnerability index was developed based on these varied sources of data, in addition to labour market indicators and monetary poverty indicators. The information was also disaggregated by location and sociodemographic information, profiling the lowest possible level inference level, i.e. neighbourhood. As both indices – vulnerability and multidimensional poverty – were constructed using the same master database, a map of COVID-19 risk incidence together with a map of multidimensional poverty was developed. This provided a critical measurement tool for targeting, as authorities were able to identify and profile households living in multidimensional poverty and at risk of COVID-19. Using this information, the government of Colombia designed a multi-pronged targeting scheme which included:

i) A VAT refund for vulnerable households living in multidimensional poverty;
ii) A cash transfer of 160.000 Colombian pesos to households that were not beneficiaries of any social protection programme, but that were identified as vulnerable and in informal employment;
iii) Food baskets; and
iv) Additional cash transfers to households and youth population groups who participated in the 'Familias en Accion y Juventud en Accion' (Families in Action and Youth in Action) Programme.

42 Alkire et al. (2020): https://ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/B53_Covid-19_vs3-2_2020_online.pdf; https://mppn.org/multidimensional-poverty-and-the-risk-from-covid-19/; and Santos (2020): https://www.latinamerica.undp.org/content/rblac/en/home/blog/2020/pobreza-multidimensional-en-tiempos-del-covid-19.html

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Annex 1:
Full country examples

This Annex provides a comprehensive overview of the country case studies investigated for this review. The country cases are listed in alphabetical order.

Afghanistan: Using multidimensional poverty for advocacy. Multidimensional poverty estimates (including disaggregated MPI) produced since 2019 have helped to focus the attention of government and development partners on the challenges faced in Afghanistan. The President's speech at the 2020 Afghanistan Pledging Conference used multidimensional poverty trend analysis to highlight the challenge of poverty and the need for continued donor support. A needs assessment study that drew on the MPI guided discussions towards a national social protection policy. In 2020, the Ministry of Finance requested early release of MPI estimates from an Income, Expenditure and Labour Force survey in order to inform budget allocations as well. Led by the National Statistics and Information Agency, with support from OPHI and UNICEF, Multidimensional poverty measures are now part of the national surveys in the country.

Sources: UNICEF Afghanistan and OPHI

Argentina: Multidimensional poverty analysis for child poverty advocacy. A UNICEF-commissioned multidimensional child poverty study generated outstanding media coverage, and supported advocacy to increase investment for children and adopt national routine child poverty measurement to assess progress on SDG 1. Although there isn't an agreed official measurement of multidimensional poverty in Argentina, key stakeholders – including the public, local governments, CSO and others – have acknowledged the indicators proposed, and the analysis has been used.

Sources: UNICEF Argentina (2018): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Argentina_2018_COAR.pdf

Armenia: Building and institutionalizing routine multidimensional child poverty measurement. UNICEF Armenia worked closely with the National Statistical Service (NSS) and development partners to generate evidence and collect reliable data on the situation of children in Armenia, particularly focusing on child needs, poverty measurement (monetary and multidimensional), child and maternal health and nutrition, as well as development of child-related SDG indicator baselines. One of the most visible successes of UNICEF Armenia's advocacy was the institutionalization of multidimensional child poverty measurement as part of annual reporting by the NSS within its Social Snapshot and Poverty in Armenia report. The Social Snapshot and Poverty assessment now provides child poverty data disaggregated by different demographic, geographical and socio-economic classifications, as well as measurement of multidimensional child poverty (N-MODA, SDG 1.2). Building on this, UNICEF Armenia also successfully advocated for the inclusion of early

childhood development indicators into national household surveys, which went into effect in 2018.

Sources: UNICEF Armenia (2017): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Armenia_2017_COAR.pdf

Further resources: Ferrone and Chzhen (2016): **Child Poverty in Armenia:** *National Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis*

Bhutan: Multidimensional poverty as the key criteria for allocation of resources to local governments. Bhutan conducts routine multidimensional poverty measurement (first reported in 2010, with updates in 2012 and 2017), with additional focus on multidimensional child poverty using the c-MPI approach. As a budgeting tool, the MPI has been used as one of the five criteria for allocation of national resources to local government since 2013. A resource allocation formula (RFA), which was updated during the 11th five-year plan (2013-2018), considers multidimensional poverty as a crucial factor by putting 45 per cent weight in its calculations.

Sources: OPHI (2017): *https://mppn.org/bhutan-cuts-poverty-by-roughly-half-in-five-years/*
UNDP and OPHI (2019): *https://mppn.org/handbook-national-mpi/*
Royal Government of Bhutan and United Nations High Level Political Forum (2018): *https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/19369Bhutan_NSDGR_Bhutan_2018.pdf*

Brazil: Using multidimensional child poverty analysis for public and political advocacy. During the 2018 election campaigns in Brazil, UNICEF launched the advocacy campaign 'More than Promises' (Mais Que Promessas), built around six key problems faced by children and adolescents. Based on UNICEF-supported multidimensional child poverty analysis, it proposed actions to be taken by candidates for national and state governments. Using digital communication channels and voices of UNICEF national ambassadors, the campaign was able to engage 130,000 people and solicit 1,600 child rights-related questions addressed to the candidates.

The launch also yielded massive media coverage of child poverty issues. Based on this visibility, UNICEF reached out to all candidates for the presidency and for governor posts in priority states, and as a result, 22 candidates – including five running for the presidency – signed a commitment to prioritize children and adolescents and spoke to the media and other audiences about it.

UNICEF also advocated with the Ministry of Planning, which resulted in the Ministry's intention to include the multidimensional child poverty methodology in the upcoming 2019–2023 Brazilian Development Plan and align it with the SDGs.

Sources: UNICEF Brazil (2018): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Brazil_2018_COAR.pdf
Further resources: UNICEF Brazil (2018): Pobreza na Infância e na Adolescência (in Portuguese)

Burkina Faso: Piloting an integrated social protection programme based on multidimensional child poverty profiling. The recent multidimensional child poverty study in Burkina Faso revealed a high concentration of child poverty in the studied areas, where poor children suffered multiple deprivations – as high as 90 per cent in clean water access, followed by 89 per cent in access to information and household income – indicating the need for a holistic response to address child poverty.

Building on the evidence, UNICEF and partners designed and mobilized funds to implement an integrated child-sensitive social protection intervention, in consultation with the National Social Protection Council. The pilot cash plus programme, with components on WASH and nutrition, will be implemented in the four regions with high incidence of multidimensional child poverty, providing regular cash transfers and behaviour change communication trainings for vulnerable families identified through a consensual (combination of self and community-based) targeting approach, in addition to implementing the community-led total sanitation approach, and construction of water points to improve indicators on WASH. The project not only aims to address monetary and multidimensional child poverty in a holistic manner, but also contributes to the strengthening of Burkina Faso's national social protection system through enhancing programme delivery and building national single registry of poor and vulnerable populations.

Sources: UNICEF Burkina Faso (2018): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Burkina_Faso_2018_COAR.pdf
Further resources: Fonta (2017): Child Poverty Profile and Vulnerability in Boucle du Mouhoun Region of Burkina Faso

Cambodia: Multidimensional child poverty guiding annual budget formulation. In Cambodia, the launch of a multidimensional child poverty report in 2018 led

to the inclusion of multidimensional child poverty in the strategic results framework of the Rectangular Strategy Phase IV – a key document that guides annual budget formulation and prioritization of programmes and activities that contribute to achieving the key results.

Sources: UNICEF Cambodia (2018): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Cambodia_2018_COAR.pdf
Further resources: Ministry of Planning, SPRI and UNICEF (2018): Child poverty report in Cambodia

Chile: Highest level political commitment to multidimensional poverty measurement. In Chile, the process was led by political leaders at the highest level. In 2012, the incumbent president Sebastian Piñera established the Presidential Advisory Commission of Experts to review and revise the poverty measurement methodology. Following the recommendations of the committee which consisted of representatives from academia, NGOs, multilateral organizations and the government, the country adopted a multidimensional poverty index. The measurement and dissemination of the Chile MPI was jointly carried out by Ministry of Social Development and National Institute of Statistics.

Sources: UNDP and OPHI (2019): https://www.mppn.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/How_to_Build_Handbook_2019_PDF.pdf

Colombia: Using a multidimensional poverty measure to target those in poverty Colombia has routinely measured multidimensional poverty since 2011 and is one of the pioneers in the production and use of multidimensional poverty analysis for monitoring, policy and budgeting purposes. Under the leadership of Colombia's then president, the Colombian Multidimensional Poverty Index was institutionalized into national frameworks and was the key tool to evaluate National Development Plan (NDP) 2010-2014. An innovative use of MPI enabled the identification of deprivations faced by middle class families, which then informed policies to prevent those families from falling into poverty.

In addition, these good practices emerge from the Colombian experience:

- **Institutionalization:** Colombia has a coordinated process to design, measure, disseminate and use the MPI, with each function led by different state institutions. The overall design of the measure, including the selection of indicators and dimensions, is led by the National Department of Planning and reflects the priorities put forward on the National Development Plan. The National Statistical Agency oversees calculation and dissemination, while the Department of Social Prosperity (DPS) manages the formulation, coordination and implementation of policies and programmes to achieve targets set in multidimensional poverty reduction.
- **Monitoring, evaluating and coordinating poverty reduction policies:** To track progress on multidimensional poverty reduction, two mechanisms were put in place: a roundtable meeting chaired by the President, which convenes key ministries and agencies working on poverty reduction, and a dashboard system which monitored progress in each dimension and its indicators through traffic lights, which then guided policy discussions at the roundtable.
- **Targeting the poor:** At the household level, MPI indicators were used as the key graduation criteria from the national social assistance programme UNIDOS, outweighing income-based indicators. Census-based MPI also helped to identify municipalities with high levels of multidimensional poverty and low urbanization, where poorest households were set to receive highest benefit amount in social assistance, including the Más Familias en Acción conditional cash transfer programme for families with children. This design tweak was adopted into the third phase of the programme, which began in 2012. Please see Table 3 below – category 4 indicates amount received by poor families living in high MPI municipalities).

Sources: OPHI (2020): https://mppn.org/colombia-launches-a-municipal-multidimensional-poverty-measure/
Further resources: MPPN (no date): https://mppn.org/paises_participantes/colombia/

Table 3: Education incentive of the Programme "Más Familias en Acción"

Grade/Category	Pre-scholl	1-5	6-8	9-10	11
1	Col$ 0	Col$ 0	Col$ 26.475	Col$ 31.775	Col$ 47.650
2	Col$ 21.175	Col$ 10.600	Col$ 26.475	Col$ 31.775	Col$ 47.650
3	Col$ 21.175	Col$ 15.900	Col$ 31.775	Col$ 37.050	Col$ 52.950
4	Col$ 21.175	Col$ 15.900	Col$ 37.050	Col$ 42.350	Col$ 52.950

Sources: Social Prosperity

Colombia: Simulating policy packages to address multidimensional poverty

Simulating policy responses to monetary child poverty, as in the examples above, are quite practical and feasible as the policy response is designed to respond to only one poverty dimension, monetary poverty. Doing the same analysis for multidimensional poverty reduction is inevitably more complex, but it is possible.

Though complex, there are ways to project the impacts of various actions on different poverty dimensions and the overall multidimensional poverty rate. Colombia's national multidimensional poverty targets were based on such an analysis. To do this, they identified specific public investments impacting each C-MPI indicator and generated an estimate of how each indicator would be affected. For instance, resources allocated to expand health insurance coverage were identified as an investment impacting multidimensionally poor households.

Then the potential number of households benefiting from the investment were calculated, followed by how that increased coverage might affect C-MPI indicators and overall poverty incidence, using Quality of Life Survey microdata. To determine these critical investments, Colombia did extensive consultations among key agencies involved in poverty reduction policies and implementation.

As the MPI and monetary measures revealed high levels of poverty among young children, Colombia also launched an integrated early childhood development programme, strengthening and unifying existing interventions under one umbrella. The overarching strategy – called De Cero a Siempre (FZTF) – includes education, immunization, nutrition and health insurance components, and is aimed to guarantee comprehensive early childhood development care and education for all children in the country, with a focus on the poorest and most vulnerable. Colombia's MPI has five dimensions, and under the child and youth dimension a key indicator is the percentage of children between the ages of 0 to 5 who simultaneously have access to health, nutrition and education (corresponding to the components of the FZTF strategy). Colombia's national development plan 2010-2014, the overarching framework for multidimensional poverty reduction in the country, also outlined clear actions and division of responsibilities to implement the FZTF strategy, ensuring cross-sectoral collaboration and high-level political support for the initiative.

While the example of Colombia offers an interesting example, global practice in using simulations to identify policy packages to reduce multidimensional poverty remain limited.

Sources and further resources:

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OPHI (2017): http://www.ophi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Brief_45_Roundtable.pdf
OPHI (no date): https://ophi.org.uk/policy/national-policy/colombia-mpi/
Prosperidad Social (2016): http://www.rimisp.org/wp-content/files_mf/1467323591191_Social_Prosperity.pdf
UNDP and OPHI (2019): https://mppn.org/handbook-national-mpi/
World Bank (2013): http://wbgfiles.worldbank.org/documents/hdn/ed/saber/supporting_doc/CountryReports/ECD/SABER_ECD_Colombia_CR_Final_2013.pdf

Costa Rica: Multidimensional poverty guiding budgeting in key sectors

In 2016, the Costa Rica cabinet and president issued

directives to use MPI as a budgeting tool, based on the inter-ministerial commission recommendations which found notable discrepancies in spending trends and progress made in each dimension of poverty. After the publication of this directive, a pilot plan was implemented with seven key institutions which used the MPI to plan their 2017 budgets. Firstly, key social development programmes were identified that had the potential to reduce multidimensional poverty rates. Secondly, the number of beneficiaries was estimated, in order to achieve the goal set for each poverty dimension and indicator. For instance, for the National Scholarship Fund to improve the school attendance indicator on the education dimensions, 10,429 new beneficiaries needed to be added to the programme. The original budget allocation for the programme was for 95,000 beneficiaries. In a similar fashion, total and new beneficiaries for other flagship programmes were estimated, followed by cost estimations which would then be reflected in budgets. Finally, MPI was used to guide better geographical targeting of these allocated resources. Assuming that these programmes had direct impact on multidimensional poverty dimensions and indicators, if resources are distributed as proposed, poverty could fall by 1.8 or 2.1 percentage points in one year from the current levels (20.5 per cent as of 2016).

Sources: MPPN (2017): https://mppn.org/mpi-budgets-costa-rica/
Further resources: Índice de Bienestar de la Niñez y la Adolescencia

Ethiopia: Integrating multidimensional child poverty indicators into national plans

Multidimensional poverty measurements provide detailed analysis on who is poor, where they are situated geographically, and how they experience poverty. While multidimensional poverty measurement can identify the dimensions or territories with the highest number of deprived children and guide policy targeting, to reduce child poverty, cross-sectoral, coordinated approaches are often preferred over targeted interventions that focus on a single sector, due to the overlapping and interlinked nature of poverty dimensions.

Emerging evidence shows how this might not only yield better results, but also be more cost-effective in practice. For instance, analysis from Ethiopia shows that the impact of health investments to reduce wasting could be multiplied when coupled with education and agriculture investments (high co-financers), while silo approaches demonstrated diminishing marginal returns. This shows the importance of not only identifying but also strengthening synergies among sectors to bring high returns for children, if countries are to achieve complex development objectives such as a reduction in multidimensional child poverty. Achieving this in reality is challenging, but not impossible. Joint planning across sectors using a 'whole-of-government' approach – based on the overarching national development strategy or framework – is an important first step, followed by appropriate budgeting structures, which allow both horizontal and vertical synergies (coherence at ministerial as well as various administrative levels). Multidimensional poverty measurements can serve as the basis for initial identification of some of these sectors, but to design the right set of interventions that can achieve maximum impact with limited resources available, further research and analysis is a must.

Sources: UNICEF Ethiopia, EPRI and Zerihun Associates (2019): https://www.unicef.org/ethiopia/reports/financing-child-centred-sustainable-development-goals-sdgs-ethiopia
Further resources: CSA and UNICEF Ethiopia (2018): Multidimensional Child Deprivation in Ethiopia

Ghana: Informing national and local development plans with insights from multidimensional child poverty measurement

In 2019, the National Development Planning Commission (NDPC) of Ghana conducted multidimensional child poverty measurement, with support from UNICEF. The report was launched in early 2020 by the First Lady of the Republic of Ghana, Her Excellency Rebecca Akuffo-Addo, with panel discussions involving civil society, academia, the Ghana Statistical Service (GSS) and the Department of Children to identify the ways forward to address children's issues.

Following the findings from the multidimensional child poverty analysis, along with evidence, data and policy recommendations from the 2019 child inclusive growth fora, and a study on the Impact of COVID-19 on children and families, the NDPC established a cross-sectoral planning group dedicated to addressing children's issues in a comprehensive manner, shaping Ghana's Medium Term Development Planning Framework (MTDPF). In addition to informing the MTDPF, findings from the multidimensional child poverty measurement also helped build the capacity of Metropolitan, Municipal and District

Assemblies (MMDAs), Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) and the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development (MLGRD) to incorporate children's issues into their forthcoming medium-term plans, and into the National Urban Policy.

Ghana is also exploring multidimensional poverty measurement as a budgeting tool. UNICEF, in collaboration with the University of Ghana's Centre for Social Policy Research, reviewed the Districts Assembly Common Fund (DACF) to consider the transfer of funds from central to local governments (districts in particular). DACF is a key policy instrument to ensure equitable distribution of resources across the country. The report posed a modified formula that considered district poverty levels and reductions in the effect of the population factor in distributing resources through elimination of the population density factor and lowering the weight of relative population sizes. Further discussions with key stakeholders will be held to advocate for a more equitable approach.

Sources: UNICEF Ghana: 2019 Country Office Annual Report
Further resources: NDPC, GSS and UNICEF Ghana (2020): Multi-Dimensional Child Poverty in Ghana

Iceland: Implementing a children's quality of life dashboard

In Iceland, the Ministry of Social Affairs has been implementing a Children's Quality of Life dashboard pilot project for the past three years. The dashboard was originally launched in the municipality of Kopavogur, in collaboration with UNICEF Iceland National Committee. The dashboard monitors the Child Friendly City Index (CFC Index) and is comprised of five dimensions anchored in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, namely: 1) Education; 2) Equity; 3) Health and Well-being; 4) Security and Protection; and 5) Social Participation. The dashboard is an integral part of current changes being proposed in Iceland on the integration of services to enhance children's well-being, to measure and monitor progress as well as to guide prioritization of policies and decentralized budgets.

Sources: UNICEF Iceland

Jordan: Targeting programme clients through two-step multidimensional vulnerability assessment

Jordan is home to over 650,000 registered Syrian refugees, 78 per cent of whom live below the poverty line. The actual numbers might be twice as high as this, according to census analysis. In addition, the country hosts 65,000 Iraqi and 2.1 million long-staying registered Palestinian refugees. To address the needs of vulnerable refugee children and ensure their access to educational opportunities, UNICEF and partners launched an integrated cash transfer programme in 2017, targeting all children in need regardless of their nationality of refugee status.

The Hajati programme used a two-fold approach to identify and target households: the first step was geographical targeting, where districts with high multidimensional vulnerability, high pressure on public services (measured by the presence of double shift schools) and availability of complementary services (such as the presence of UNICEF-supported Makani child protection centres) were identified. The vulnerability index used at this stage has similar indicators to a multidimensional poverty measurement – for instance, indicators on immunization and health-seeking behaviours (e.g. whether children sick with diarrhoea received proper medical care) are used to assess health deprivation, and for education, school enrolment is a key indicator. The final vulnerability mapping not only guided Hajati programme targeting, but also UNICEF's integrated programmatic interventions as well.

The geographic targeting was then followed by household targeting, based on a survey conducted among 29,000 households. Using indicators on demographics, food security, health, education, living conditions and WASH, an aggregate vulnerability score was constructed for each household, and families with a low score were selected to take part in the programme. The methodology for this stage is aligned with the approach used by UNHCR and the National Aid Fund, which is the main social protection scheme in Jordan targeted towards poor and vulnerable people.

Sources:
UNICEF Jordan (no date) : https://www.unicef.org/jordan/social-protection
UNICEF Jordan (2017): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Jordan_2017_COAR.pdf
UNICEF Jordan (2018): http://www.cashlearning.org/downloads/user-submitted-resources/2018/04/1523288198.UNICEF_Hajati%20Baseline%20Report_Final_3.2018.pdf
Further resources:
UNHCR, UNICEF and WFP (2020): Multi-Sectoral Rapid Needs Assessment: Covid-19- Jordan

Kenya: Addressing multidimensional child poverty at the local level through integrated planning

Kenya's multidimensional child poverty measurement, conducted in 2017 by the National Bureau of Statistics with support from UNICEF, revealed widespread poverty among children: close to 10 million children (half the children in the country) were deprived in multiple areas crucial to their survival, development and well-being. The data and evidence generated by the measurement has been instrumental in the formulation of sub-national development plans (County Integrated Development Plans or CIDP), many of which now prioritize key issues in WASH, child protection, HIV and AIDS – as highlighted in the disaggregated multidimensional child poverty measurement. For instance, the Turkana County CIDP 2018-2022 notes high incidence of multidimensional child poverty in the county – where 85 per cent or close to half a million children are deprived in areas such as clean water and sanitation, adequate housing and quality education – and outlines various programmes and activities planned to address these issues. In addition to feeding into planning, the measurement has also informed the design and resource mobilization of a child-sensitive social protection programme, ensuring that needs of the most vulnerable children are addressed through holistic interventions.

Building on the measurement, Kenya's National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS), UNICEF and UN Women collaborated on a follow up study in 2019, examining the relationship and gap between multidimensional and monetary poverty across gender and age groups. The data from this study served as the baseline for SDG targets 1.2.1 and 1.2.2.

Sources:

UNICEF Kenya (2017): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Kenya__2017_COAR.pdf

Turkana County Government (no date): https://www.turkana.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/Turkana_CIDP_Book_POPULAR_V3.pdf

Further resources:

KNBS and UNICEF (2017): Child Poverty in Kenya: A Multidimensional Approach

Lao PDR: Bringing a child-focus into the national development plan with multidimensional child poverty analysis

The Lao PDR Ministry of Planning and Investment released the study *SDGs and Children – Measuring Progress on Child Wellbeing in Lao PDR* in 2018, providing an overview of child multidimensional poverty in the country. From the onset, the study aimed to provide baseline information for child poverty to track progress in SDG target 1.2, guide development of policies and programmes for the well-being of children, highlight areas where progress had been made, and bring attention to areas lagging behind. In addition to the national report, 18 provincial profiles were produced, providing detailed analysis of child deprivation in each province to guide policies, programmes and budgeting at the local level.

Going beyond measurement and monitoring, the report served as the basis for recently launched Generation 2030 initiative, which calls for increased investment into human capital to reap the benefits of Lao PDR's booming young population. To launch the initiative, UNICEF organized a national forum bringing together government, civil society, development partners, private sector and youth representatives. UNICEF's new regional goodwill ambassador Siwon Choi was also in attendance, bringing further attention and visibility to the challenges faced by children living in multidimensional poverty.

As a result of this multi-pronged advocacy strategy, which combined hard evidence on multidimensional child poverty and high-level meetings involving key stakeholders, national top government officials made commitments to prioritize investments in children and adolescents in the next 9th and 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plans. Moreover, the Generation 2030 forum will be held annually to monitor and evaluate progress on the commitments to reduce multidimensional child poverty.

Sources:

UNICEF Lao PDR (2018a) https ://www.unicef.org/laos/press-releases/children-lao-pdr-continue-experience-significant-levels-deprivation

UNICEF Lao PDR (2018b): https ://www.unicef.org/laos/press-releases/government-unicef-and-stakeholders-CRC30

UNICEF Lao PDR (2019) https ://www.unicef.org/laos/stories/lao-generation-2030-pledge-future-generations

Further resources: Ministry of Planning and Investment and UNICEF Lao PDR (2018): SDGs and Children: Measuring Progress on Child Wellbeing in Lao PDR

Malaysia: Multidimensional poverty analysis prompting government commitment to address child deprivations

Malaysia is a high-income country with low levels of

poverty of less than 1 per cent. The country hasbeen urbanizing rapidly in the past decade, increasing the risk of urban poverty. Worldwide, urban child poverty is often hidden by statistics, which routinely show higher poverty rates in rural areas, and Malaysia is no exception. Finding effective ways to identify and support children living in poverty in cities is a critical first step in responding to the phenomenon of urbanization and to supporting child well-being. In 2018, UNICEF Malaysia commissioned a first-of-its-kind urban study called Children Without: A study of urban child poverty and deprivation in low-cost flats to further understand and highlight child poverty in urban settings. The results showed that despite the very low national poverty rate in Malaysia, child poverty is high in urban communities and child malnutrition is twice as high as the average in Kuala Lumpur. The study received intense national media attention and were presented to the government and the legislature/parliament, where it drew attention from Members of Parliament from both sides of the house. Capitalizing on the new national political landscape, particularly a new government manifesto and 100-days pledge, and drawing on the positive momentum of public opinion, UNICEF Malaysia used the analysis to strategically target key ministers in the new government and in the Council of Eminent Persons in charge of socioeconomic reforms. The study was bolstered by consultations and the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders in its launch, including the private sector, top academics and economists, Members of Parliament and civil society. This amplified the call for the government to address urban child poverty and malnutrition.

Mali: Strengthening ownership and sustainability of the measure through capacity building of national actors

National leadership and ownership of multidimensional child poverty measurement play a significant role in the sustainability and impact of the analysis, both as a measurement and policy tool. Key factors for national ownership include strong back up and support from top political leaders, and technical and policy team capacity.

In Mali, to ensure national agencies have the full conceptual understanding, analytical tools and skills to conduct and use multidimensional child poverty analysis, UNICEF supported training to the NSO technical team and the Ministry of Social Development, Solidarity, and the Elderly to conduct statistical analysis using MODA methodology, and supported the Director of the Malian Observatory for Human and Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction to participate in the 'Regional Conference on Child Poverty in the Middle East and North Africa: from measurement to policy action', enabling South-South knowledge exchange on the use of poverty evidence in policymaking.

With stronger capacity to conduct and use multidimensional child poverty analysis, Mali's Ministry of Economy and Finance published a multidimensional child poverty report in 2018, with UNICEF support. The report's findings fed into the country's Strategic Framework for Economic Recovery and Sustainable Development (CREDD), integrating child deprivations (nutrition, education, health and poverty) in both its situation analysis and the results matrix.

Sources:

UNICEF Mali (2017): https ://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Mali_2017_COAR.pdf

UNICEF Mali (2018): https ://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Mali_2018_COAR.pdf

Further resources:

de Milliano, M. and Handa, S. (2014): Child Poverty and Deprivation in Mali: The first national estimates

Mexico: Monitoring multidimensional poverty under an autonomous entity

Many of the policies aimed at reducing poverty in Mexico have been implemented thanks to the construction of relationships between different state entities at all levels. In fact, the coordination work has been assigned to a single entity: in 2004, the National Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) was created as an autonomous entity responsible for measuring poverty, including multidimensional poverty, at the federal, state and local levels. To meet its objectives, CONEVAL maintains constant interaction with the government at all levels. Social cabinets are often formed in different government entities in order to jointly design and coordinate multisectoral policies using multidimensional poverty as an outcome indicator. As an example, the National Strategy for Social Inclusion, aimed at coordinating efforts to reduce poverty at the federal and local levels, emerged in this coordination space.

In practice, CONEVAL has become a guide in social policy for the national government and local governments. The need to interact with decision makers at subnational

levels is justified in the heterogeneity of contexts (economic, social and demographic) between regions within the country. Likewise, since 2008, CONEVAL maintains an agreement with the National Institute of Statistics and Geography (INEGI) for the collection of data every two years, which serve as a fundamental input for the calculation of poverty. These relationships are not limited to an internal or country level; in fact, since 2009, CONEVAL has worked together with UNICEF to study child poverty and develop strategies for its eradication. As stated in the MPI Handbook:

> *"What is happening is that CONEVAL (in Mexico) combines two things that must always be connected from the academic or technical standpoint: a measurement instrument with political incentive for politicians. No governor wants poverty to increase because it looks bad in political terms, and the media can criticize her or him severely. State-level governments are aware that they cannot reduce poverty by modifying the measure, as used to happen with public data before, and the only way to reduce it is through effective public policy. Therefore, social policy has focused on this measurement." (UNDP and OPHI, 2019)*

Sources:

UNDP and OPHI (2019): MPI handbook

UNICEF and Global Coalition to End Child Poverty: SDG Guide to End Child Poverty.

Further resources:

Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (no date): Mexican multidimensional poverty measure

UNICEF México and CONEVAL (2019): Pobreza infantil y adolescente en México 2008-2016 (in Spanish)

Mexico: The direct impact of a multidimensional poverty measure on policies and programmes

Mexico was the first country in the world to have an official multidimensional measurement of poverty, which is directly linked to the policy process. The national multidimensional poverty indicator is linked directly to progress in sectors and triggers shifts in government focus to reduce multidimensional poverty. By law, it is mandatory to measure poverty routinely every two years at the national and state level and every five years at the municipal level. CONEVAL is the agency responsible for the reporting of multidimensional poverty. It employs a methodology that makes use of an approach based on economic well-being and social rights. The poor population is recognized as one who suffers from insufficient economic resources and, at the same time, is deprived in any of the following dimensions: food, health, education, social security and adequate housing. Specifically, the multidimensional poor are those who have at least one social deprivation and whose income is lower than the Economic Welfare Line (LBE).

Mexico has developed national strategies to design and coordinate multisectoral policies, using a reduction in the MPI as the main goal. They regularly convene cross-government social cabinets or poverty round tables to break silos and bring together different sectors for discussions on the MPI and poverty reduction.

Mexico's multidimensional poverty measure serves a wide range of purposes, among them:

a. **Monitoring poverty reduction:** The multidimensional poverty measure, updated every two years, shows changes in the levels of poverty and can be disaggregated by different groups, including states and municipalities.
b. **Accountability:** As the multidimensional poverty measure is disaggregated by states, it makes visible the success of governors whose poverty reduction policies worked on the ground.
c. **Policy coordination:** Different poverty dimensions require the involvement of different sectors and actors. Mexico's multidimensional poverty measure has provided these actors a common framework in which to coordinate, prioritize and plan. For example, it inspired the National Strategy for Social Inclusion, a government development strategy that coordinates efforts for poverty reduction at the federal and local levels.
d. **Targeting the poor:** Multidimensional poverty indicators identify those living in the extreme conditions with particular deprivations so that social programmes can be designed and targeted accordingly.
e. **Budget allocation:** By identifying those living in poverty, CONEVAL can define priority attention areas. Congress annually assigns resources to these areas through the Social Infrastructure Fund. Considering other social programme evaluations and multidimensional poverty results, CONEVAL also submits budget recommendations to Congress.

These recommendations are aimed at improving budget allocation efficiency.

f. **Policy evaluation:** The multidimensional poverty measure provides valuable insight into whether Mexico's social development strategy is on the right track and whether change is happening fast enough.

Mexico's multidimensional poverty measurement has played a critical role in developing social protection strategies to address dimensions that were lagging behind. The national conditional cash transfer programme Prospera (previously Oportunidades) lowered the age requirement to include children under nine years of age in their social transfer scheme. During 2010–2012, increases in the share of the population lacking access to food led to the launch of the National Crusade Against Hunger. Likewise, the increased deprivation in access to social security motivated federal government to provide a social safety net through pensions for the elderly not covered by existing, employment-related schemes.

Sources:
UNDP and OPHI (2019): MPI handbook
UNICEF and Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (2017): SDG Guide to End Child Poverty
Further resources:
MPPN (no date): Mexican multidimensional poverty measure
UNICEF México and CONEVAL (2019): Pobreza infantil y adolescente en México 2008-2016 (in Spanish)

Morocco: Institutionalizing multidimensional child poverty measurement through cross-country partnership

Morocco's first ever multidimensional child poverty measurement, disaggregated by geographic location, gender and socio-economic conditions, was released in 2017 by National Observatory of Human Development (ONDH) and the Ministry of Family, Solidarity, Equality and Social Development, with support from UNICEF. To enhance the national capacity to conduct the analysis and promote institutionalization of the measurement, ONDH collaborated with Mexico's CONEVAL, learning from their experience in building and using multidimensional child poverty measures. To further national and regional knowledge exchange, Morocco also organized an international conference 'Child Poverty in MENA: from measurement to policy action', further strengthening their partnership with both CONEVAL and countries in the region. The measurement had an extensive impact on policymaking: the results were discussed widely at the parliament level, and many of the report recommendations were adopted by the government, from expansion of cash transfer programmes to reform in the national social protection system.

Sources: UNICEF Morocco (2017): https ://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Morocco_2017_COAR.pdf
Further resources: Child poverty in Morocco report

Nepal: Multidimensional poverty criteria for allocation of equalization fund to subnational governments. Nepal´s multidimensional poverty measurement was developed by the National Planning Commission in 2018 using MPI methodology. The MPI has been used as one of the criteria for the allocation of an equalization fund to subnational governments. During 2018/2019, over Rs. 5 million was allocated to implement poverty reduction programmes in seven provinces with high levels of multidimensional poverty.

Sources:
MPPN (no date): https://mppn.org/paises_participantes/nepal/
MPPN (2020): https://mppn.org/mpi_vnr/

New Zealand: Institutionalizing child poverty measurement and response

Despite having an advanced economy and high standard of living, 15 per cent of New Zealand's population lives in relative poverty, after housing costs are taken into account. Child poverty is a particular concern and priority for the country, with 13 per cent of children in New Zealand experiencing material hardship.

With the aim to halve the number of poor children within the next ten years, New Zealand is undertaking a comprehensive set of legislative, policy, and programmatic interventions, starting with the adoption of the Child Poverty Reduction Act 2018, which provides strategic vision and political accountability towards reducing child poverty. The Act serves as a foundation for a number of child poverty reduction measures, such as the Families Package, which includes tax credit and other programmes to support child development; and the Child and Youth well-being strategy, which aims to protect children from violence and abuse. In addition, the legislation requires successive governments to routinely measure and monitor child poverty rates against medium- and long-term goals

and targets, and report annually on the progress using indicators that go beyond income, including housing quality and affordability, food insecurity, regular school attendance, and avoidable hospitalisations, among others. To ensure the robustness of the measure, Stats NZ has expanded the sample size for the child poverty calculation from around 3,000–5,500 to 20,000 households. Finally, the measurement will have important implications for social investments, as governments are expected to outline how proposed budgets will impact child poverty rates.

The adoption of the Child Poverty Act, and strong leadership from the country's Prime Minister, have been instrumental in both cementing child poverty measurement and monitoring into the remit of future governments, and turning commitments into actions backed by financing. Like New Zealand, several other countries have ensured sustainability and policy use of their multidimensional poverty measures through similar approaches such as acts, presidential decrees and cabinet decisions.

Sources:

New Zealand Government (2019a): https://www.stats.govt.nz/news/child-poverty-statistics-released

New Zealand Government (2019b): https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/23333New_Zealand_Voluntary_National_Review_2019_Final.pdf

Further resources:

Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (2020): https://dpmc.govt.nz/our-programmes/reducing-child-poverty

Oaxaca (Mexico): Using a multidimensional poverty measure to target municipalities

In Oaxaca state in Mexico, the governor established a Technical Committee to fight poverty, with the participation of cabinet members, to target the six social deprivations identified through multidimensional poverty measurement. This is turn led to involvement at the highest levels of government in decisions, which ranged from how to apply public policies to how to monitor established goals in order to evaluate their progress.

Multidimensional poverty measurements have provided useful information on the degree of poverty in the 570 municipalities of Oaxaca and on the most pressing deprivations. Using multidimensional poverty analysis, a strategy to fight poverty in 40 top-priority municipalities was developed, with a focus on the areas with the greatest concentration of poor people, in terms of absolute numbers and percentages. Using CONEVAL's data, they were able to identify the number of homes lacking basic services such as drinking water, electricity, drainage, a solid roof or floor, and the number of people without access to healthcare services, social security and education.

In addition to the multidimensional poverty analysis, a qualitative assessment was conducted to further understand the drivers and impact of poverty. The qualitative assessment shed light on the impact of circular migration, which was not factored into the quantitative assessment. Planning for interventions and spending targeting focused on both assessments.

Interactive maps were created to illustrate the degree and intensity of deprivations in each municipality, even indicating by street the areas with the highest concentration of the population suffering the given deprivation, and indicating areas that required extra interventions. With this comprehensive strategy to fight poverty, much progress has been made in Oaxaca.

Sources: López, MPPN (2019): https://mppn.org/multidimensional-poverty-measure-oaxaca/

Further resources:

MPPN – Mexico (no date): **Mexican multidimensional poverty measure**

UNICEF México and CONEVAL (2019): *Pobreza infantil y adolescente en México 2008-2016* (in Spanish)

Panama: Using national and child-specific MPIs to inform national poverty reduction plan

In Panama, multidimensional poverty measurement has been at the centre of the National Strategic Plan Panama 2030- the country's roadmap for implementing the SDGs at the national level. In addition to guiding coordination among government agencies and ministries horizontally and vertically, the national MPI and child-specific MPI were used to select 63 priority districts and 300 townships for the national poverty reduction plan (Plan Colmena), complementing income-based measures and other assessments.

The latest data show that one in three children in Panama live in multidimensional poverty, and around 25 per cent of these children live in the indigenous territory of Ngöbe-Buglé. The Plan Colmena geographical targeting

based on an MPI has identified 10 priority districts within the Ngöbe-Buglé region. The plan, championed by the president, aims to reduce multidimensional poverty by providing integrated services to vulnerable families living in the selected areas.

Sources: Michelle Muschett, from UNDP/MPPN training video on MPI

República de Panamá (no date) 'Plan Colmena': http://www.gabinetesocial.gob.pa/planes-y-proyectos/plan-colmena/

Muschett (2017): https://mppn.org/mpi-panama-muschett/

Further resources:

Republica de Panamá and UNICEF Panamá (2019): Índice de Pobreza Multidimensional de Niños, Niñas y Adolescentes: Panamá 2018 (in Spanish)

Puebla, Mexico: Optimizing the impact of public investments through precision targeting based on multidimensional poverty measurement

In Mexico, the state of Puebla implemented a multi-pronged innovative approach to address multidimensional poverty, achieving highest reduction in all its indicators at the national level. The "Strategy to reduce social deprivation in the Puebla State" consisted of four aspects: 1. In-depth analysis of multidimensional poverty to identify and target the most vulnerable populations 2. Identifying set of indicators that can most effectively contribute to reduction in overall poverty index, and design optimal solutions to improve the indicators 3. Planning and implementation of the identified solutions through coordinating national, sub-national and local government responses, with the active participation of beneficiaries. 4. Redirection of social spending to maximize its poverty reduction impacts.

First, the strategy identified key deprivations and geographic locations of the poorest population, based on the data from 2010 Population and Housing Census, the 2010-2016 National Survey of Household Income and Expenditures (ENIGH), and the Geographic Information of the Secretariat of Social Development (SISGEO). This revealed that the 30 percent of people with social needs in Puebla were concentrated in five of the 217 municipalities, 50 percent were concentrated in 20 municipalities. This was followed an assessment to identify variables that would have the highest impact on the multidimensional poverty index reduction. Next, policy actions were determined by constructing a "viability index", based on their cost, feasibility and impact on the selected variables.

The State Governor put in place coordination mechanism – the inter-institutional commission – as well as operational structures equipped with financial and human resources to implement the policy measures and monitor results and progress. The inter-institutional commission coordinated with the Ministry of Social Development and with sub-national agencies for the administration of federal and state resources.

This re-organization of public investments, targeting the populations most in need through effective policy solutions, ensured reduction in deprivation indicators and overall multidimensional poverty index. In addition, strategic communication to the beneficiaries helped increase awareness of the type of social assistance that the population of Puebla, Mexico, are entitled to, which increased uptake of these programmes.

The multi-pronged strategy helped achieve notable reductions in poverty levels: All seven indicators measured by CONEVAL saw significant improvements. From 2012 to 2016, 497 thousand people were lifted out extreme poverty and 149 thousand people were lifted out of multidimensional poverty. Almost all deciles of the populations increased in their incomes. The above referenced strategy placed Puebla as the number one state in the combat against extreme poverty, in Mexico.

Sources: MPPN

Sierra Leone: Targeting pro-poor initiatives to certain locations based on vulnerability profiles

Using data from Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey 2017, the Government of Sierra Leone, with technical support from UNICEF, conducted a multidimensional child poverty analysis in 2019 – an update to its 2017 analysis. The results showed a significant reduction in the proportion of children living in multidimensional poverty: from 77 per cent in 2010 to 66 per cent in 2017. Moreover, remarkable progress was made in the average number of deprivations experienced by children, which fell from 2.2 deprivations per child in 2010 to 1.2 deprivations per child in 2017.

Several common patterns emerged from the socioeconomic profiling of multidimensionally poor children, for example that maternal education level was

found to be an important determinant of multidimensional child poverty, consistent with other findings on child poverty.

The profiling also identified regions and dimensions with highest number of deprived children. Children were most deprived in the housing dimension, with half the children in Sierra Leone living in overcrowded or poorly built houses, followed by health, where one third experienced deprivation. District and regional level analysis revealed huge geographical disparities, as districts in the south and north were relatively more deprived than the districts in the west and east, creating a vertical 'poverty belt'.

The report was launched recently in November 2019 and is expected to inform government policies, programmes and investments to address child poverty.

Sources: Statistics Sierra Leone (SSL) and UNICEF Sierra Leone (2018): https://www.statistics.sl/images/StatisticsSL/Documents/Multidimensional-Child-Poverty-Report_2019.pdf

Further resources:

Government of Sierra Leone and UNICEF Sierra Leone (2016): Sierra Leone Child Poverty Report

Sri Lanka: Adapting the main national poverty survey to provide data for child multidimensional poverty measurement.

After providing capacity building on the Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) to key statisticians from the Department of Census and Statistics (DCS)—the government institution responsible for collecting data on and calculating poverty rates in the country – UNICEF supported roundtable discussions with key stakeholders in government, think tanks, UN, WB, CSOs and OPHI on what would an adequate measure of multidimensional poverty in Sri Lanka would look like. Main dimensions and indicators were proposed, and UNICEF supported the inclusion of a child module into the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES), the national survey conducted every three years to collect data that allows for the calculation of poverty. The module, included for the first time in the HIES, contains questions related to different dimensions of child wellbeing. Further training, advocacy and a national child poverty conference were organized to bring DCS, line ministries, planning departments, academics and government representatives from four other countries together to help institutionalize multidimensional poverty measurement. The HIES data collection was undertaken in 2019 and the report, expected in 2021, will contain, for the first time, measurement of multidimensional poverty, including child poverty, alongside monetary poverty.

Source: UNICEF Sri Lanka Country Office

Thailand: Establishing a c-MPI to monitor progress on SDG 1

Thailand is an upper middle-income country with impressive achievements in monetary poverty reduction in the past decade. From 2006 to 2015, extreme poverty – the percentage of people living under PPP $1.90 per day – has declined from 0.7 per cent to 0 per cent, while national poverty rate has declined from 21.9 per cent to 7.2 per cent. Despite these gains, child poverty remains a challenge for the country: according to the 2015 Millennium Development Goals progress report, younger children faced the highest rate of poverty, and the youth poverty rate stood at 14.43 per cent.

Thailand has predominantly used monetary measures to assess poverty, including for children, but in its MDG progress report, the National Economic and Social Development Council (NESDC) – the Royal Thai Government's primary planning agency – acknowledged multiple dimensions of poverty and the importance of a holistic approach to reduce it, which laid the foundations of multidimensional child poverty measurement in the country. The country adopts and implements medium term economic development plans, based on H.E. King Bhumibol Adulyadej's Sufficiency Economy Philosophy, and both the current 12th plan and long-term master strategy plan place children at the heart of the national development agenda, with the rising need to build human capital as Thailand faces an ageing population. Despite the inclusion of child-related targets in high-level frameworks, there was no comprehensive measurement in place to measure the overall progress made towards SDG 1 – which aims to reduce by half the number of people living in poverty in all its dimensions, including children.

To have a fuller picture of child poverty, set the baseline and monitor the progress against SDG target 1.2, and provide evidence base for policies and programmes, the NESDC with technical support from Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and UNICEF, undertook a study to measure multidimensional child poverty using a child multidimensional poverty index (c-MPI) methodology.

The process to develop the measure started with the establishment of a Steering Committee, which consisted of technical and policy experts from the government and academia. The Committee was in charge of clarifying the main purpose, identifying data sources, selecting indicators and cutoffs, and deciding on the final structure of the measurement. To strengthen the capacity of the technical team and promote institutionalization of the measurement, UNICEF and OPHI conducted two workshops on child poverty measurement and policy response, with strong participation and guidance from NESDC, the National Statistical Office and other relevant government agencies. After agreeing on the key objective, which was to monitor multidimensional poverty with a focus on children, the Committee decided to use the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) as the data source, as it provides detailed information on child-specific deprivations.

The next steps included rounds of discussion between the technical team and the Committee on the indicators and cutoffs for the measurement, initial calculation, identification of limitations and ways to address them, and finalization of the structure and computation. Four dimensions and ten indicators were selected as a result of this process, and the poverty cutoff was set at deprivation in one full dimension or 25 per cent of the weighted sum of indicators. MICS data from 2016 was used to measure the scale, depth, geography and drivers of multidimensional child poverty, as well as data from 2012 and 2006 to assess trend over time.

The results revealed 21.5 per cent of Thai children to be multidimensionally poor, with higher incidences in rural areas, and identified the education dimension as contributing the most to child poverty. At the same time, the report showed significant progress had been made in child poverty reduction between 2005 and 2016, and highlighted the potential to further cut it rapidly with right interventions, as majority of the poor children are just below the poverty threshold. The final report was launched in September 2019 and was adopted as the official measurement to assess progress towards SDG target 1.2.

The c-MPI report has been instrumental in strengthening advocacy efforts for children, by providing rich information about poor children: the extent, geography and experience of multidimensional child poverty. The launch of the report generated strong media coverage, with 25 mentions in top tier media outlets, and extensive views on social media, bringing greater visibility among the public about multidimensional nature of child poverty, and the need for coherent and coordinated response to reduce it. In addition to public advocacy, the presentation of the results to the NESDC helped strengthen political advocacy, highlighting the need to invest in children to achieve the human development targets in the country's long-term development strategy among influential policymakers, private sector and academia representatives.

Another notable impact was the adoption of c-MPI as the official measurement to assess progress towards SDG 1, securing routine, quality and nationally-owned measurement of multidimensional child poverty – a foundation for reducing child poverty in all its dimensions effectively and more sustainably. Strong leadership by the NESDC since the beginning and throughout the construction, calculation and dissemination process has been instrumental in this achievement. The report also sparked policy dialogues among decision makers on child poverty and its dimensions, to identify and map out policy and programmatic actions needed to halve the number of poor children in the next ten years.

Furthermore, with Thailand among the first countries to introduce the c-MPI methodology, its experience of establishing, routinizing and institutionalizing the measurement was shared at a child poverty conference Sri Lanka, contributing to further dissemination of the report findings, and South-South knowledge exchange.

The NESDC will routinely conduct the measurement to monitor changes in multidimensional child poverty, with the next update planned in 2021. To maximize the impact of measurement beyond monitoring of multidimensional child poverty, UNICEF plans to hold further dialogue with key stakeholders, such as the NESDC and line ministries, to inform and guide policies, programming, and budgeting processes, paying special attention to the areas and sectors where child deprivation is the highest.

Sources: UNICEF and OPHI

Further resources: OPHI (2019): https://www.unicef.org/thailand/reports/child-multidimensional-poverty-thailand

UNICEF Thailand press release (2019): https://www.unicef.org/thailand/press-releases/thailand-among-first-countries-develop-child-multidimensional-poverty-index-launched

Uganda: Using multidimensional child poverty metrics to suggest equitable fiscal policy approaches
Incidence analysis is a widely used tool to understand the distributional impacts of policies on various income groups. Though complex, it's also feasible to use multidimensional child poverty metrics to assess how benefits and costs are distributed across poor and non-poor children and simulate potential impacts of policies. The Commitment to Equity for Children (CEQ4C) analysis by Cuesta et al. (2020) proposes an analytical framework to conduct such analysis, and demonstrates its practical application using Uganda as a case study.

First, overall child-relevant social expenditures (social protection, health, education etc.) are identified and calculated using administrative data from the government, as well as public revenues generated from taxation. These two are then used to compute the value of using the public services, and payment incurred by the taxpayers.

Next, multidimensional child poverty is measured using the Uganda National Household Survey, and children are ranked into groups according to the number of deprivations they suffer. Lastly, based on their consumption of services and tax commitments, net benefit and burdens are calculated.

The results show that multidimensionally poor children benefited more from social spending: child-relevant spending (cash, education, health) constituted 6 per cent of per capita household market income for deprived children, in contrast to less than 2 per cent for non-deprived children. Among the benefits, primary education was clearly progressive, increasing with the number of deprivations.

The authors also conducted number of policy simulations, assessing how spending shift and targeted measures for multidimensionally poor children might reduce monetary poverty. For instance, if public spending on subsidies is removed and transferred to deprived children in the form of a child grant (UGSh 32,107 cash benefit to 4.02 million children), monetary poverty could reduce by 1.71 percentage points.

In short, the CEQ4C can offer a framework to analyse and simulate potential impact of policies and spending on monetary and multidimensional child poverty in various contexts, though a number of caveats and challenges still remain, including assumptions in the modelling, and availability of quality and appropriate data. Also, some measures that impact MDCP such as improvements in the quality of water service delivery are not yet monetized, and therefore is not possible to include these in the CEQ4C framework.

Further resources:
UNICEF Uganda (2019): Multidimensional Child Poverty and Deprivation in Uganda (Vol 1) (Vol 2)
EPRC and UNICEF Uganda (2018): Child Poverty and Deprivation in Refugee-Hosting Areas
World Bank (2018): Poverty Maps of Uganda

Uganda: Multidimensional child poverty measures among national routine indicators. Uganda is among the few African countries to have achieved successful mainstreaming of a child poverty measurement into its national income and expenditure survey, under the strong leadership of the Office of the Prime Minister. The country's National Household Survey now includes a module on multidimensional child poverty, ensuring regular measurement and availability of critical information to guide policies and programmes. The measurement follows the consensual approach (CA), which defines poverty based on public consultations and consensus, giving people a voice, including children in poverty. Children are considered poor if they live in households below the identified poverty line, and experience six or more deprivations such as not being able to visit a health facility when ill, or not being able have three meals a day. Analysis of the 2017 National Household Survey showed that over half (56 per cent) of Uganda's children experience multidimensional poverty. Because Uganda's official national poverty line is set at a lower expenditure level, the multidimensional child poverty measurement revealed a higher percentage of children to be living in poverty. This made it possible to bring visibility to the actual scale of the issue, which is of critical importance in order to prioritize children when formulating policies, programmes and budgets.

Going beyond measurement, multidimensional child poverty indicators are also now included as key markers to evaluate and monitor major initiatives to address poverty, namely the third Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF III) and the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP), Uganda's two largest national poverty reduction programmes.

Sources:

Lawson, Angemi and Kasirye (2020): https://www.unicef.org/esa/media/7431/file/What-Works-for-Africas-Poorest-Children-2020.pdf

UNICEF Uganda (2019): https://www.unicef.org/about/annualreport/files/Uganda-2019-COAR(1).pdf

Further resources:

UNICEF Uganda (2019): Multidimensional Child Poverty and Deprivation in Uganda (Vol 1) (Vol 2)

EPRC and UNICEF Uganda (2018): Child Poverty and Deprivation in Refugee-Hosting Areas

World Bank (2018): Poverty Maps of Uganda

UK and USA: Identifying policy packages to achieve monetary child poverty targets through microsimulations

In the UK, once the government had set targets on halving child poverty by 2010, an expert working group was established to assess the impacts of existing programmes and identify policy packages to achieve the child poverty targets effectively, efficiently and sustainably.

The group proposed three policy package options based on the results of a microsimulation modelling: Package A raised the child tax credit, child benefit and working tax credit; Package B raised only the Child Tax Credit but used two different elements to extend support to large families; and Package C combined raises in the Child Tax Credit with increases in the Child Benefit for large families. All three packages were set to achieve the targets, but Package B was most cost-effective.

A similar exercise was conducted in the USA in 2019, where the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine assessed existing measures and proposed policy packages to halve child poverty within the next ten years. To guide their selection process, the committee developed a set of criteria which included using high-quality evidence and measuring the potential to achieve high and equitable reduction in poverty, as well as cost and wider societal and long-term impacts. After evaluating several options, the committee recommended two policy package options: a means-tested or a universal social assistance programme, coupled with employment support measures. The programmes were estimated to cost between $90 and $110 billion per year, yet these amounts are significantly lower than the economic cost of child poverty in America, which ranges from 800 billion to $1.1 trillion.

Sources:

UNICEF and GCECP (2017): https://www.unicef.org/media/65201/file/Child-Poverty-SDG-Guide-Milestone-5-March2017.pdf

National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine (2019): https://www.nap.edu/read/25246/chapter/2#10

Vietnam: Using multidimensional measures to target social assistance programmes, redistribute resources and monitor progress

The Government of Vietnam adopted a multidimensional poverty index in 2015 to measure and monitor multidimensional poverty, and guide the design, implementation and evaluation of the National Target Programme for Sustainable Poverty Reduction 2016-2020. Since its adoption, the General Statistics Office (GSO) of Vietnam have regularly calculated and disseminated disaggregated data on multidimensional poverty.

In addition to being used at the national level for reporting, multidimensional methodologies were also used to identify and select social assistance programme clients at the local level, based on administrative and census data. Households which were identified as poor using a combination of monetary and non-monetary indicators were able to access various programmes such as preferential credit, health insurance, tuition exemptions and production support programmes. Between 2016-2018, the percentage of multidimensionally poor households receiving benefits from at least one of the poverty reduction and social security programmes increased from 49.6 per cent to 53.3 per cent.

The MPI in Vietnam has informed budget allocation decisions, helping redistribute resources into regions with the highest proportion of poor people. Latest figures released by the statistical office show significant progress, as national multidimensional poverty rate dropped from 8.8 per cent in 2016 (2.2 million households) to 6.1 per cent in 2018 (1.6 million households). The progress is even more remarkable when compared to the 2012 poverty levels, which stood at 18.1 per cent. Monetary poverty also declined similarly, from 12.6 per cent in 2012 to 7 per cent 2016. Despite these gains, gaps and challenges remain, as ethnic minority groups and people with disabilities are disproportionately affected by multiple deprivations, which needs to be addressed if the country is to achieve SDG 1 by 2030.

Sources:

Ministry of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA), Viet Nam Academy of Social Sciences (VASS), Viet Nam GSO, Mekong Development Research Institute (MDRI) and UNDP Viet Nam: https://www.vn.undp.org/content/dam/vietnam/docs/Publications/MDP-full-E.pdf

UNDP and OPHI (2019): https://mppn.org/handbook-national-mpi/

Duc (2019): https://mppn.org/multidimensional-poverty-viet-nam/

Further resources:

Nguyen (2008): Childhood Poverty in Vietnam: A Review

Annex 2: Methodology

This review is based on extensive and diverse forms of information gathering, as outlined in the below chapter, including a qualitative assessment with 24 key stakeholders in both the measurement and use of multidimensional poverty measures, a rapid review of the key policy conclusions of 20 multidimensional child poverty reports, a systematic review of 56 reports on the topic, internal UNICEF consultations and documentation of case studies/short country examples.

1. **Qualitative assessment**

Internal UNICEF consultations were conducted on the use of multidimensional poverty measures including, among others, a UNICEF Yammer discussion in September 2018, and discussions/deliberations during UNICEF's Social Policy Network meetings in October 2017 and May 2019.

Qualitative Interviews were conducted with 24 key actors in the area of multidimensional poverty, categorized into three broad groups: academics, policymakers and experts working for international organizations. The interviews were semi-structured and covered these five broad themes:

1. Experience with multidimensional poverty measurement;
2. Strengths and weaknesses of multidimensional poverty measurement;
3. Barriers and enablers of policy impact;
4. Types of policy impacts; and
5. Links between the analysis and programme and policy change.

The interview schedule was peer-reviewed by two experts at the University of Edinburgh and tested in a pilot exercise (entailing three interviews). The pilot was followed by an adaptation of the wording and order of questions.

The initial list of interviewees was created based on the document analysis and the insights of UNICEF experts and then expanded using a snowball technique (in which the interviewees were asked for suggestions for further experts). The interviewees were selected from the recommendations in order to assure a high level of a variety of interviewees (including their area of work, country, level of seniority and gender). The data collection was finalized once the point of data saturation was achieved (i.e. no new themes were emerging in the interviews in relation to the key research questions). The interviews were conducted over Skype

It is important to note that the rapid and systematic review results are based on the recommendations/conclusions of various publications – they do not provide evidence on whether these recommendations were then addressed and implemented by governments.

and lasted between 30 and 75 minutes. The interviews were anonymized, including interviewees' names and positions, specifics of the projects, or any other identifiable information (for example previous experience).

The data analysis employed thematic analysis using NVivo 12. Once all the data was coded, the codes were reviewed and the redundant codes were merged. Following the review, the codes were organized into themes which were labelled and described. The reviewed coding structure is reflected in the structure of the report.

6. **Documenting case studies/short country examples**

The case studies/short country examples included in the review were gathered by reviewing UNICEF's *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty* and UNDP and OPHI's *Handbook: How to Build a National Multidimensional Poverty Index*, UNICEF country office annual reports, as well as recommendations from key players in the field of multidimensional poverty measurement and use. In addition, other major global studies on child poverty, such as the Young Lives Impact Case Study, and their impact and use were examined through scanning the project website content and publicly available documents. In total, the paper provides documentation of 30 country experiences from six regions, featuring diverse political and economic contexts.

7. **Review of key documents**

A two-step strategy was used to review the key documents. Firstly, an in-depth look at the dedicated chapters on the use and impact of multidimensional poverty measurement and country examples was carried out, followed by key word search using terms such as "advocacy", "policy", "national development plans", "targeting", and "budgets", among others, to identify and extract additional information. Secondly, the findings were synthesized and summarized into the analytical part of respective chapters and formed the basis of the case studies.

The key documents reviewed included:

- SDG Guide to End Child Poverty
- Handbook: How to Build a National Multidimensional Poverty Index
- Step by Step Guidelines to the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis
- Monitoring Global Poverty
- National multidimensional poverty reports
- Analysing Child Poverty and Deprivation in sub-Saharan Africa
- Handbook on poverty and inequality
- UNICEF Advocacy Toolkit: A guide to influencing decisions that improve children's lives.

Rapid review: In 2018, in a UNICEF content review of 20 recent multidimensional child poverty reports from three regions, the following emerged as the most common recommendations for using multidimensional child poverty measures:

1. **To guide multisectoral policies** (9 reports), and in this regard social protection was commonly referred to, i.e. recommendation to expand the coverage of social protection as a tool to not only reduce monetary poverty but also multidimensional deprivations.
2. **To target** (7 reports), for example geographical targeting i.e. focusing on regions with the highest multidimensional child poverty headcount.
3. **To shape national budgets** (2 reports), but the recommendations were general in both reports and not explicitly linked to the multidimensional poverty analysis i.e. a general recommendation that budgets need to be child sensitive.

It should be noted that the policy recommendations emerging from these reports went beyond these three areas, for example some reports emphasized the importance of building infrastructure to address deprivations in health, water and sanitation, etc. But these three areas were the most common policy recommendations.

Systematic review: Based on the results of the rapid review and in order to get a more detailed picture of how common it is for multidimensional poverty measures to provide recommendations for multisectoral policies, targeting and shaping national budgets, we conducted a systematic review of available literature (see below for full overview of the review).

A comprehensive list of search terms was developed, applying key words such as multidimensional child

poverty (or poverty), policy, and their use for sectoral investments, or targeting, or influencing national budgets (see below for a more detailed overview). Studies retrieved for inclusion in this review were written in English, French or Spanish.

Three major data source websites on multidimensional poverty were used, namely:

1. The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (GCECP) website, endchildhoodpoverty.org;
2. The Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) website, mppn.org, run by OPHI; and
3. The Social Policy Research Institute (SPRI) website, https://spriglobal.org/.

For each website, we extracted reports, documents, articles or other documentation available, and assessed all full texts that matched the search terms. The results of this assessment provided 56 reports from the GCECP website, 20 reports from the SPRI website, and 16 reports from the MPPN website.

The review of reports and policy publications that measure and analyse multidimensional child poverty sought to answer the following three research questions:

1. Have multidimensional poverty measures been used to identify intra- and inter-**sectoral investments**?
2. Have multidimensional poverty measures been used for **targeting** the poorest for policy and programme implementation?
3. Have multidimensional poverty measures been used to guide and influence national **budgets**?

The findings of the systematic review are presented in detail below, as well as incorporated into Sections 1, 2 and 3 of the review.

Systematic review to explore evidence supporting the use of multidimensional child poverty measures for sectoral investment, targeting and budget design

The first step of the systematic review was to analyse how multidimensional poverty measures have been promoted and used to impact national policies and programmes, in particular as tools to guide sectors to target the poorest groups, and influence national budgets.

To address these policy questions we conducted a systematic review of reports and policy publications that measure and analyse multidimensional child poverty. To extract evidence to answer the three research questions above, the review was conducted in the following stages.

1. **Search and retrieval: data sources and inclusion criteria**

Firstly, we developed a list of search terms using as key words multidimensional child poverty (or poverty), policy, and their use for sectoral investments, or targeting, or influencing national budgets. These terms were combined to produce a final query in English, French or Spanish as described in Table 4. Secondly, using these queries, we searched and retrieved studies for inclusion in the review. This process identified three major data sources: the websites for the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty (GCECP) (www.endchildhoodpoverty.org), the Social Policy Research Institute (SPRI) (spriglobal.org), and the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) (https://mppn.org). In each website, we screened the tabs and applied a filter using the search terms leading to the inclusion of the *child-poverty-reports* tab for the GCECP website; *projects, and publications* tabs for the SPRI website, and *countries* tab for the MPPN website. In each of these tabs we extracted the reports, documents, articles or other documentation available and assessed all full texts that matched the search terms. The results of this assessment provided 56 reports in the GCECP website, 20 reports in the SPRI site, and 16 reports in the MPPN site. Figure 7 presents the flowchart for the review extraction.

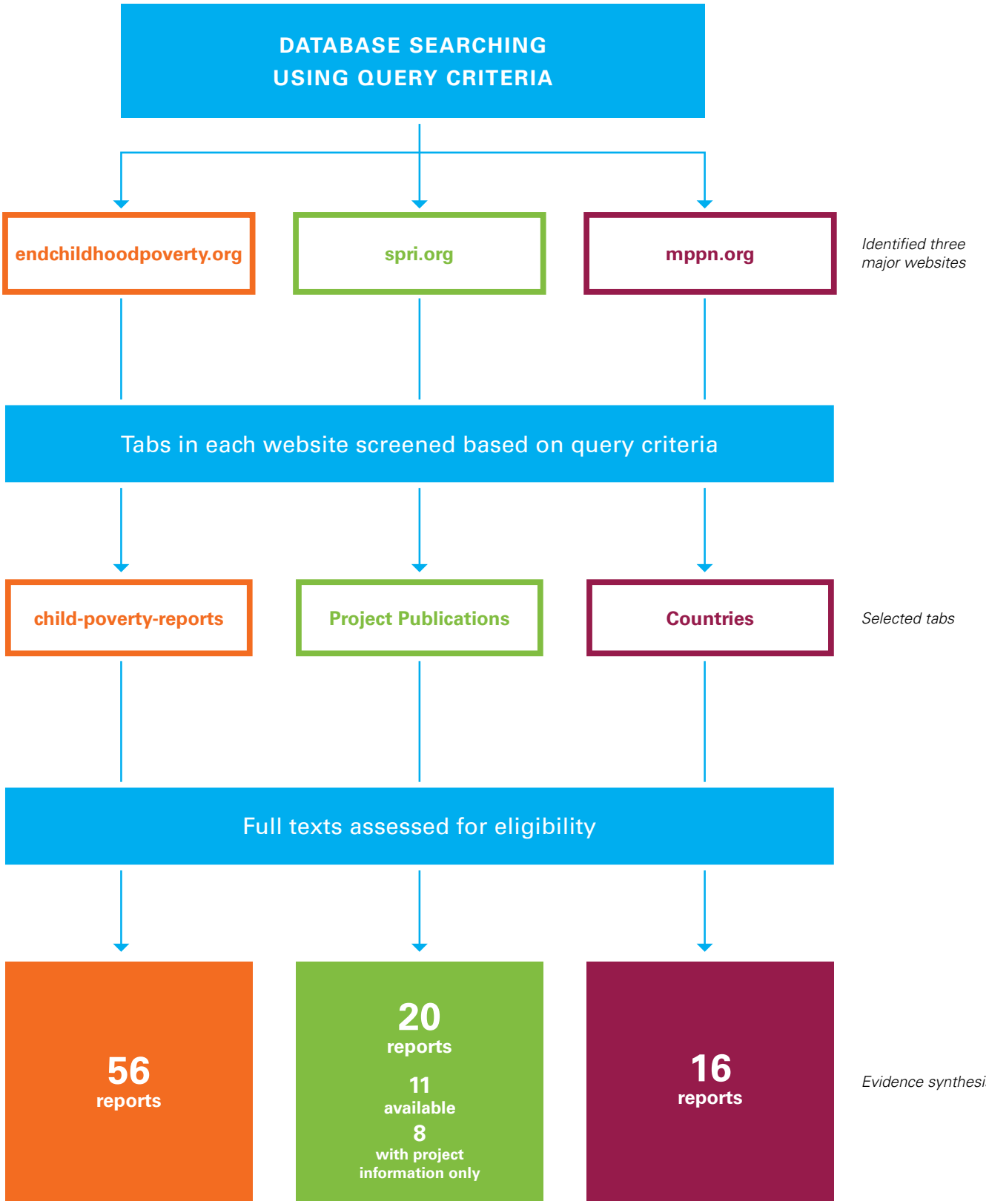
2. **Evidence extraction and synthesis**

We reviewed the included reports to extract quantitative and qualitative evidence concerning the use of multidimensional poverty measures for any of the three policy uses of interest: sectoral investment, targeting and budget design. We performed the synthesis in two parts: globally for the reports gathered through the GCECP website, and more country-specific for the reports from the SPRIG and MPPN websites.

Table 4: Search Terms

Search Domain	Query
Multidimensional Child Poverty Measures to Inform Policies	"multidimensional child poverty policy" OR "multidimensional poverty policy" OR "pobreza multidimensional niños política pública" OR "pobreza multidimensional política pública" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle enfants politique" OR "pauvrete multidimensionelle politique"
Multisectoral investment with Multidimensional Poverty Measures	"multidimensional child poverty policy investment" OR "multidimensional poverty policy investment" OR "multidimensional child poverty sector investment" OR "multidimensional poverty sector investment" OR "pobreza multidimensional niños inversión política pública" OR "pobreza multidimensional inversión política pública" OR "pobreza multidimensional niños inversión sector" OR "pobreza multidimensional inversión sector" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle enfants investisement politique" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle investisement politique" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle enfants investisement sector" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle investisement sector"
Targeting with Multidimensional Poverty Measures	"multidimensional child poverty policy targeting" OR "multidimensional poverty poliy targeting" OR "multidimensional child poverty targeting" OR "multidimensional poverty targeting "OR "pobreza multidimensional niños política pública focalización" OR "pobreza multidimensional política pública focalización "OR"pobreza multidimensional niños focalización" OR "pobreza multidimensional focalización" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle enfants politique ciblage" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle politique ciblage" OR "pauvre te multidimensionelle enfants ciblage" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle ciblaze"
Multidimensional Poverty Measures to guide National Budgets	"multidimensional child poverty policy budget" OR "multidimensional poverty policy budget" OR "multidimensional child poverty budget" OR "multidimensional poverty budget "OR"pobreza multidimensional niños política pública presupuesto" OR "pobreza multidimensional política pública presupuesto" OR "pobreza multidimensional niños presupuesto" OR "pobreza multidimensional presupuesto" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle enfants politique budget" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle politique budget" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle enfants budget" OR "pauvreté multidimensionelle budget"

Figure 7: **Flowchart for Review Extraction**



Association Analysis – endchildhoodpoverty.org

Given the high number of the available reports in the GCECP website, we used text mining to screen the relevant information and find patterns. To do so we used Voyant Tools, an open-source, web-based application for performing text analysis.[48] We focused the retrieval on query terms referring to **policy, sectoral investment, targeting or budget** in the language in which the report was written. The text application helped us find the most frequent terms present across the reports. Once we identified the most frequently used terms, we looked at the sections of each report where each term appeared. We conducted text mining using a combination of text software cross-validated by a full read of the sections where the terms appeared.

Figure 8 depicts the term frequency list of the most prominent terms across all 56 reports, where the size of the term denotes its frequency. As shown in Figure 8, the terms "child" and "poverty" were the two most prominent terms appearing across the 56 reports, as expected. The second most frequent terms were: "multidimensional", "deprived (deprivations)", "household", "health" and "poor", while the third most frequent class of terms comprised the words "social", "urban", "rural", "protection", "sanitation" and "pauvreté". Interestingly, the terms "targeting" and "budget" appear, but much less frequently. Figure 7 shows us that the poverty analyses conducted in the countries present in the GCECP site essentially study multidimensional poverty in children through deprivations, using MODA or a household overlapping measure, and provide profiles of the situation of children suffering multiple deprivations by area of residence in various dimensions (health, nutrition and sanitation). We also learn that targeting and budget are recommended as policy tools in several documents. To unveil the patterns behind this overall text analysis, we analysed the reports by region.

Figures 9 to 14b present the association analysis of most frequent terms in East Asia and Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa (English and French), Latin America, Middle East and North Africa (English and French), South Asia, and West and Central Africa (English and French) respectively. The association is represented by a line connector between the words where the strength of the association is signified by the width of the line, with a thicker the line denoting greater association.

Figure 8: Term Frequencies – endchildhoodpoverty.org

48 Voyant Tools was developed by Stéfan Sinclair from McGill University, and Geoffrey Rockwell from University of Alberta and released in 2003.

An association analysis of most frequent terms in East Asia and Pacific, Eastern and Southern Africa (English and French), Latin America, Middle East and North Africa (English and French), South Asia, and West and Central Africa (English and French) of national child poverty reports available on endchildhoodpoverty.org, showed that by **region**:

- In East Asia and Pacific publications, budget, intersectoral investment and targeting were equally recommended as policy tools, based on the most prominent deprivations in the multidimensional child poverty analysis. In particular in these reports, **intersectoral investment was recommended for education and employment**.
- In publications from Eastern and Southern Africa, we also found targeting, budget design and intersectoral investment as policy recommendations in child poverty analysis, with **influencing national budget as a more frequent recommendation**. In all cases, these recommendations were developed on the basis of the extent of multidimensional poverty experienced by children, in particular highlighting that intersectoral investment should be allocated to WASH, infrastructure and social sectors of health and education.
- Contrastingly, in the French reports of countries located in Eastern and Southern Africa, Burundi and DRC, we found that only **targeting** ("ciblage") was recommended as a use of multidimensional poverty measure for child poverty policy and programme design. This targeting was advised to be directed to the poorest, and those children whose profiles showed the greatest extent of overlapping deprivations. Budget and investment were terms found in these reports but not directly linked with analysis of multidimensional child poverty.
- Similarly in publications pertaining to Latin America, Middle East and North Africa and South Asia, there was little mention of using multidimensional poverty measure to influence budgeting, but it was common to see the recommendation of using multidimensional child poverty measures to **target** the population with highest dimensional deprivations (Latin America), and for **designing cash transfers** to redress the acute deprivations faced by children living in the poorest households (Middle East and North Africa).
- Lastly, in West and Central Africa publications, there was less evidence supporting the use of multidimensional child poverty measures for either sectoral investment, targeting or budget design. These reports provided a rich description of the profiles of overlapping deprivations and multidimensional poverty, in particular by area of residence.

In East Asia and the Pacific, we found that budget, investment and targeting were equally recommended as policy tools (same size of the term), and that these recommendations were based on the most prominent deprivations, in particular intersectoral investment was recommended for education and employment (Figure 9). In Eastern and Southern Africa (English) we also found that targeting, budget design and intersectoral investment were recommended uses in child poverty policies and programmes, with influencing national budget as a frequent recommendation. In all cases, these were developed on the basis of the extent of multidimensional poverty experienced by children, and intersectoral investment was recommended to be allocated to WASH, health and education (Figure 10a).

Contrastingly, as seen in Figure 10b, in the French reports of countries located in Eastern and Southern Africa, only targeting ("ciblage") was recommended for child poverty policy and programme design. This targeting was advised to be directed to the poorest children whose profiles show the greatest extent of overlapping deprivations. The terms "budget" and "investment" were found in these reports but not connected within the discussion of multidimensional child poverty (Figure 10b). Similarly in Latin America (Figure 11), the Middle East and North Africa (English) (Figure 12) and South Asia (Figure 13), while we also observed a disconnection of investment and budget, Figures 11, 12, and 13 respectively evidence recommendations for using multidimensional child poverty measures to target the population with the highest dimensional deprivations (Latin America), and for designing cash transfers to redress the acute deprivations faced by children living in the poorest households (Middle East and North Africa, English). Lastly, in West and Central Africa, we did not find evidence supporting the use of multidimensional child poverty measures for either of the three policy purposes of sectoral investment, targeting or budget design (Figures 14a and 14b). The reports for this region provided a rich description of the profiles of overlapping deprivations and multidimensional poverty, in particular by area of residence.

Figure 9: **Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org**

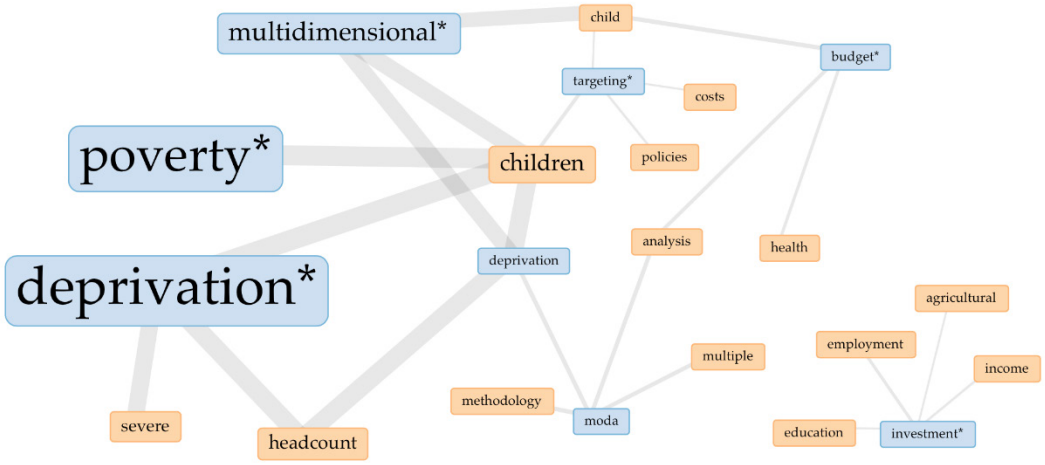


Figure 10a: **Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org Eastern and Southern Africa (English)**

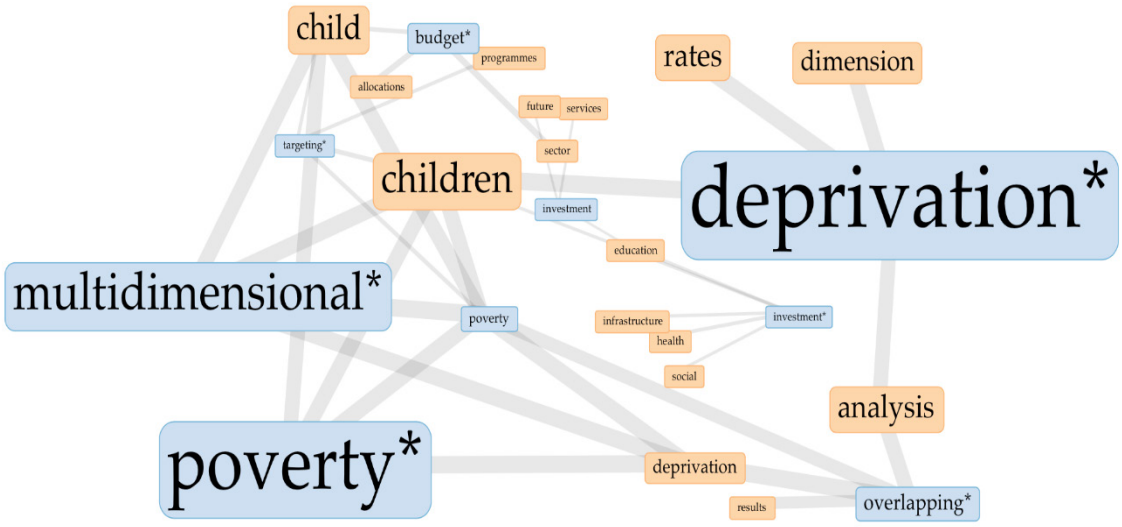


Figure 10b: Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org
Eastern and Southern Africa (French)

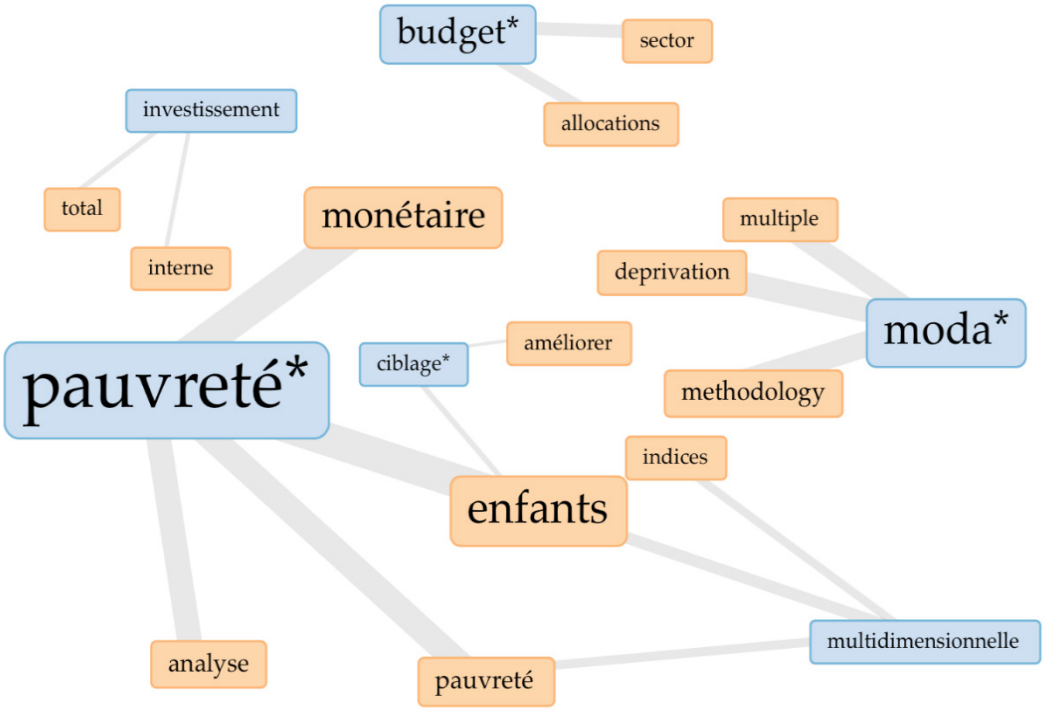


Figure 11: Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org
Latin America

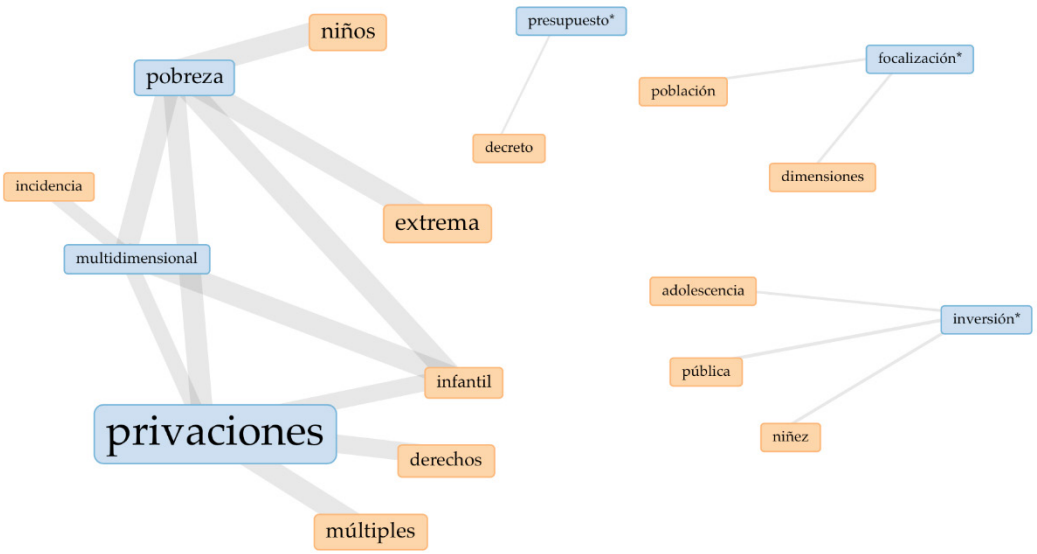


Figure 12: Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org Middle East and North Africa (English)

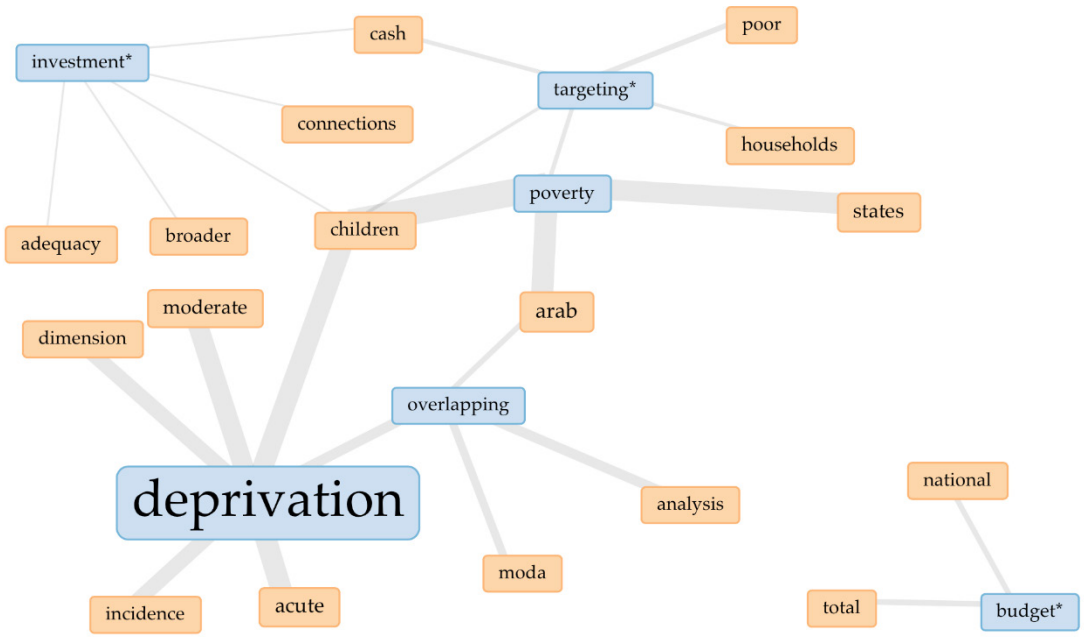


Figure 13: Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org South Asia

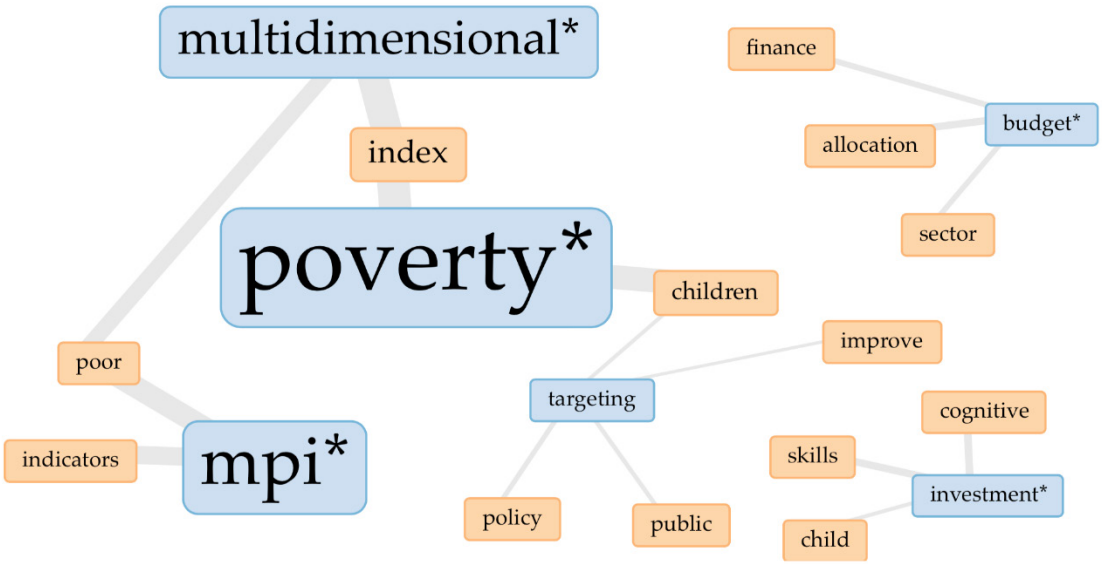


Figure 14a: Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org West and Central Africa (English)

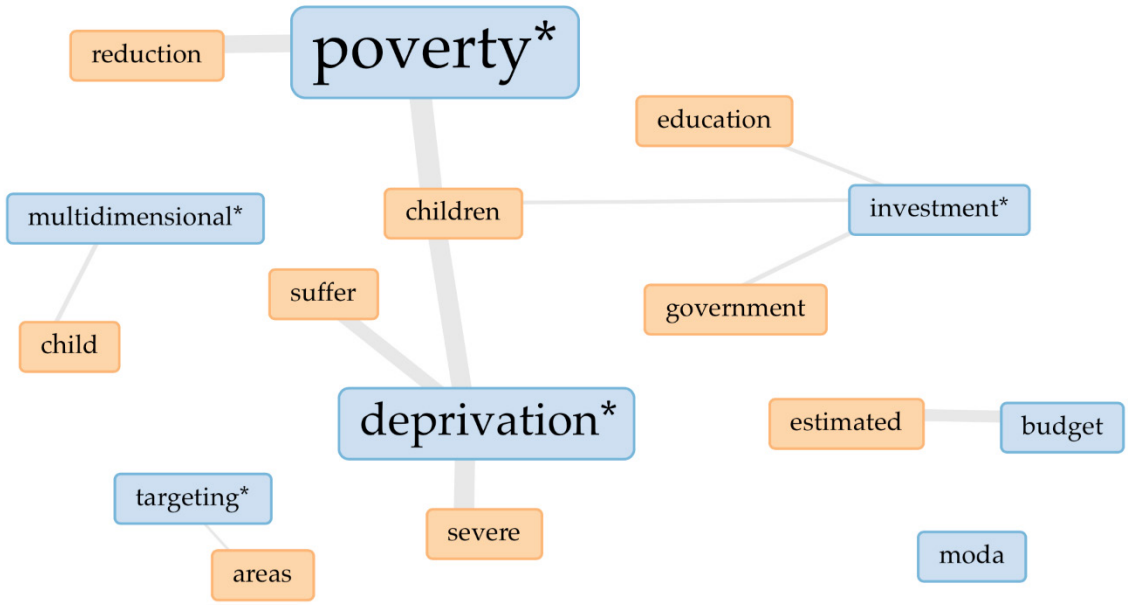
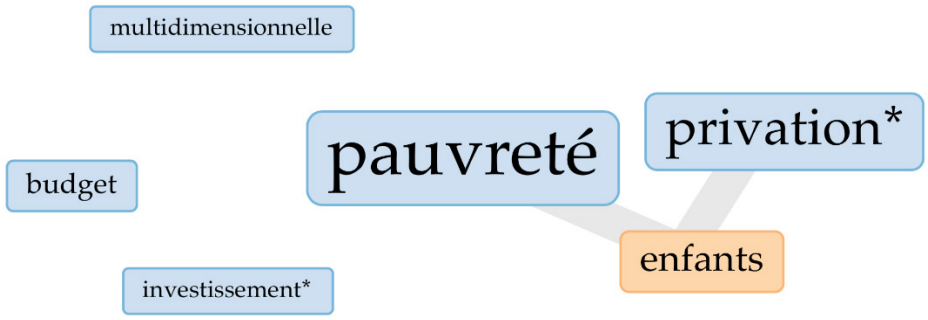


Figure 14b: Association analysis of most frequent terms – endchildhoodpoverty.org West and Central Africa (French)



Analysis of Evidence – spriglobal.org & mppn.org

Following this association analysis, we analysed the reports retrieved from the SPRI and MPPN websites. From the 25 full available reports, 44 per cent (22 reports) constructed either a MODA (11 reports) or an MPI (11 reports), while 12 per cent (3 reports) constructed a child MPI denoted by c-MPI (Figure 9). Table 5 presents a summary of the recommendations found in each report for sectoral investment, targeting or influencing national budgets. As shown in Table 5, targeting was the most recommended policy use for addressing multidimensional child poverty, with 22 reports having a recommendation on this direction based on profiles by age, residency or indicators/dimensions denoting greater multidimensional poverty. Multisectoral investment was the second most recommended policy tool, in particular reports produced on the basis of a MODA measure consistently advised to use an overlapping analysis of deprivations by dimension to allocate investments across sectors. These inter-sectoral investments were recommended to be allocated to those sectors where the greatest overlap of deprivations is found. Measures computed through a MPI or a C-MPI also recommend multisectoral investment across and within sectors of the study. In particular, recommendations pointed towards those indicators where the highest rate of poor and deprived population/children is found. These indicators could belong to the same sector (intra-sector) or to different sectors (inter-sector). Lastly, 14 reports recommended to use the profiling of multidimensional child poverty analysed in the reports to guide and influence national budgets. These recommendations were once again based on the dimensions or indicators where greater poverty is present.

Figure 15: Distribution of reports by type of measure – spriglobal.org & mppn.org

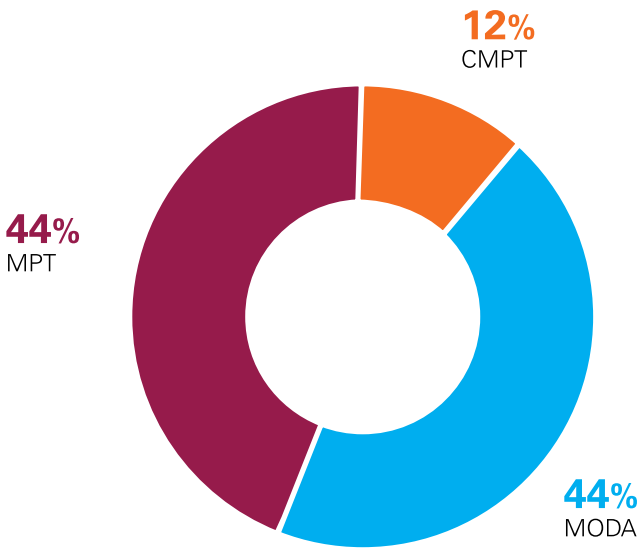


Table 5: Evidence for policy use – spriglobal.org & mppn.org

			Evidence for		
Country	**Measure: MODA/MPI**	**Year**	**Budgeting**	**Targeting**	**Multisectoral investment**
Afghanistan	MPI	2019	X	X	
Angola	MODA	2018		X	X
Bhutan	C-MPI	2016		X	
Burundi	MODA	tbc			X
Cambodia	MODA	2018		X	
Chile	MPI	2019	X	X	X
Colombia	MPI		X	X	X
Dominican Republic	MPI	tbc	X	X	X
El Salvador	MPI	2015	X	X	X
Eswantani	MODA	2017	X	X	X
Ethiopia	MODA	2018	X	X	X
Guatemala	MPI	2019	X		X
Honduras	MPI	2016	X	X	X
Kenya	MODA	2017	X	X	X
Kosovo	MODA	2015		X	X
Lesotho	MODA	2018		X	X
Mexico	MPI	2019	X	X	X
Morroco	MODA	tbc			X
Nepal	MPI	2018	X	X	X
Pakistan	MPI	tbc	X	X	X
Panama	C-MPI	2018		X	
Rwanda	MODA	2017		X	X
South Africa	MPI	tbc		X	
Thailand	C-MPI	2019	X	X	X
Zambia	MODA	2018		X	X
Total			14	22	20

Annex 3:
Brief overview of UNICEF's multidimensional child poverty assessments

For more than 15 years, UNICEF has actively engaged in the measurement of multidimensional child poverty, exploring how children are deprived in key dimensions such as health, nutrition, education, water, sanitation and housing, among others. To date, over 100 national multidimensional child poverty studies have been launched. Indeed, 2020 marked twenty years from the launch of UNICEF's report *Poverty Reduction Begins with Children* (2000), which highlighted that children experience poverty through being deprived of multiple basic necessities.

In 2003, in collaboration with the University of Bristol and the London School of Economics, UNICEF launched the report *Child Poverty in the Developing World*, assessing child poverty from a multidimensional lens, rooted in the principles on the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). UNICEF's 2005 flagship publication The State of the World's Children: *Childhood under Threat* further outlined how children experience multiple deprivations in their lives.

In 2007, *The Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities,* based on the Bristol approach, was launched in 53 countries in seven regions, proposing a comprehensive multidimensional approach to poverty reduction. Furthermore, in 2010 and 2012, the Bristol approach was applied to the study of regional child poverty in Latin America and East Asia and Pacific. In Latin America, in collaboration with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), UNICEF adapted the Bristol approach for countries in Latin America for a direct multidimensional measurement of child poverty with a human rights approach. These results were complemented with the measurement of absolute poverty according to household income. In East Asia and the Pacific, for the period covering 2007 to 2010, multidimensional child poverty was assessed in Cambodia, Lao PDR, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vanuatu and Vietnam.

In 2012, UNICEF´s Office of Research (Innocenti) and UNICEF´s Division of Policy and Strategy in HQ launched the *Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis* (MODA)

approach which is firmly grounded on the principles of the Convention of the Rights of the Child (CRC) and builds upon the Bristol approach and the Alkire and Foster approach to multidimensional poverty measurement. It adopts a holistic definition of child well-being that recognizes that a child´s experience of deprivations are interrelated. As such, the approach emphasizes that policies aimed at reducing child poverty should consider the simultaneous nature of the deprivations that a child experiences, and hence any sectoral interventions should happen jointly, rather than in isolation. The methodology commonly applies a life-cycle approach and mimics the human rights conceptualization proposed by the Bristol approach. The MODA empirical application offers a cross-country comparison of multidimensional child poverty that uses comparable measurement criteria (dimensions, indicators, weights) but also a country specific one, where the measurement setting can be adjusted according to the necessities and priorities of the country under study.

In more recent years, multidimensional poverty measures have received increased prominence with the rapid expansion of the global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) featured annually in UNDP's Human Development Reports in collaboration with OPHI.

The SDGs provided an added force for measuring multidimensional poverty, in particular multidimensional child poverty. In 2017, the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty and UNICEF launched the *SDG Guide to End Child Poverty,* which outlines five milestones for countries on the path to ending child poverty. More recently, some countries have chosen to adopt to measure multidimensional child poverty at the level of individual children, whereas other countries have adopted the MPI approach to measure multidimensional child poverty either by disaggregating the national MPI for the child population, or applying a specific child multidimensional poverty methodology.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