

## The Extent and Nature of Child Poverty in Developing Countries

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## SDGs and Child Poverty

The current proposal for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) includes a target to reduce child poverty:

**“1.2 By 2030, 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.”**

This idea has been made feasible by UNICEF’s pioneering Global Study of Child Poverty and Disparities (2007 to 2011)

[http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index\\_45357.html](http://www.unicef.org/socialpolicy/index_45357.html)



## The Rhetoric of Child Poverty

## **Child Poverty in the UK**

The UK Government is legally committed to tackling the problem of child poverty. In March 1999, the then Prime Minister Tony Blair set out a commitment to end child poverty forever:

*“And I will set out our historic aim that ours is the first generation to end child poverty forever, and it will take a generation. It is a 20-year mission but I believe it can be done.*

In 2010, the Child Poverty Act enshrined this policy commitment in law and **mandated target indicators to measure progress**. However, in July 2015, the UK Government decided to repeal the Child Poverty Act and **abolish the child poverty target indicators**.

## **No More Hungry Children?**

*...within a decade no child will go to bed hungry, [...] no family will fear for its next days bread and [...] no human being's future and well being will be stunted by malnutrition.*

Henry Kissinger, First World Food Conference, Rome 1974

## **Children are important**

Children represent about a third of the global population, but they represent 100% of its future

## **Measuring Child Poverty**

### **Absolute and Overall Poverty**

After the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, 117 countries adopted a declaration and programme of action which included commitments to eradicate “absolute” and reduce “overall” poverty.

**Absolute poverty** was defined as;

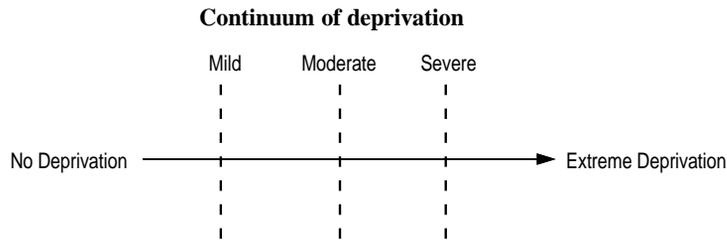
*"a condition characterised by severe deprivation of basic human needs, including food, safe drinking water, sanitation facilities, health, shelter, education and information. It depends not only on income but also on access to services."*

### **Human Rights**

#### **The Minimum Core Obligations**

The UN Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights *"is of the view that a minimum core obligation to ensure the satisfaction of, at least, minimum essential levels of each of the rights is incumbent upon every member state party. Thus, for example, a state party in which any significant number of individuals is deprived of essential foodstuffs, of essential primary health care, of basic shelter and housing, or of the most basic form of education is, prima facie, failing to discharge its obligations under the convention"*

Deprivation can be conceptualised as a continuum which ranges from no deprivation through mild, moderate and severe deprivation to extreme deprivation.



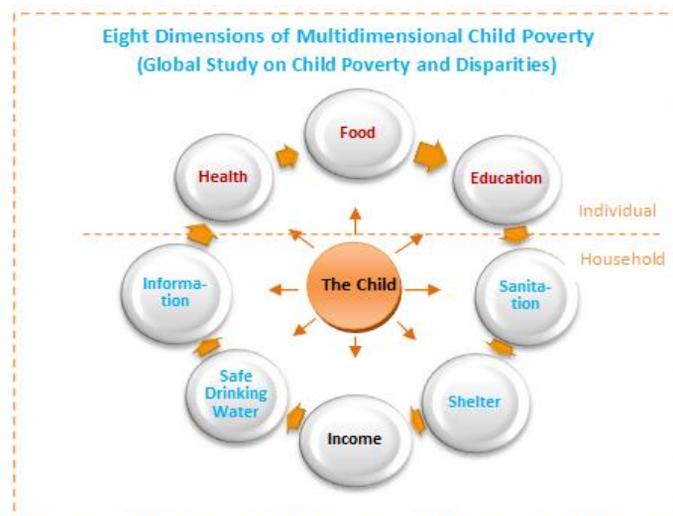
In order to measure absolute poverty amongst children, it is necessary to define the threshold measures of severe deprivation of basic human need for:

1. food
2. safe drinking water
3. sanitation facilities
4. health
5. shelter
6. education
7. information
8. access to service

### **Severe Deprivation of Basic Human Need Criteria**

‘severe deprivation of basic human need’ are those circumstances that are highly likely to have serious adverse consequences for the health, well-being and development of children. Severe deprivations are causally related to ‘poor’ developmental outcomes both long and short term.

## Dimensions of Child Poverty



## The Start of the Data Revolution?

	Round 1	Round 2	Round 3	Round 4	Round 5
Years	1990-1995	1996-2000	2001-2005	2006-2010	2011-2015
DHS & MICS datasets	DHS 2 (1988-1993)	DHS 3 (1992-1997)	DHS 4 (1997-2003)	DHS 5 (2003-2008)	DHS 6 (2008-2013)
	DHS 3 (1992-1997)	DHS 4 (1997-2003)	DHS 5 (2003-2008)	DHS 6 (2008-2013)	MICS 4 (2009-11)
		MICS 2 (2000/01)	MICS 3 (2005/06)	MICS 4 (2009-11)	MICS 5 (2011-15)
TOTAL AVAIL.	<b>37</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>43</b>

### Harmonised 2006-2010 data used for the Child Poverty Analysis

Sample size	Sample Total	Children	Fraction	Child Population 000's
LAC	687,934	279,905	605	169,477
E&S Africa	616,403	325,268	541	176,075
W&C Africa	869,374	456,331	491	224,007
MENA	411,517	186,246	750	139,771
CIS	233,875	70,446	1,358	95,697
South Asia	1,362,034	600,102	1,028	617,005
East Asia & Pacific	430,710	175,415	2,873	503,973
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,611,847</b>	<b>2,093,713</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>1,920,948</b>

### Child Poverty in the World

In 2000, over one billion children – **half** the children in the world- suffered from severe deprivation of basic human need and **30%** (650 million) suffered from absolute poverty (two or more severe deprivations).

In 2010, over one billion children – **almost half (48%)** of the children in the world- suffer from severe deprivation of basic human need and **28%** (615 million) suffer from absolute poverty (two or more severe deprivations).

### Severe Deprivation of Basic Human Need for Children in 2010

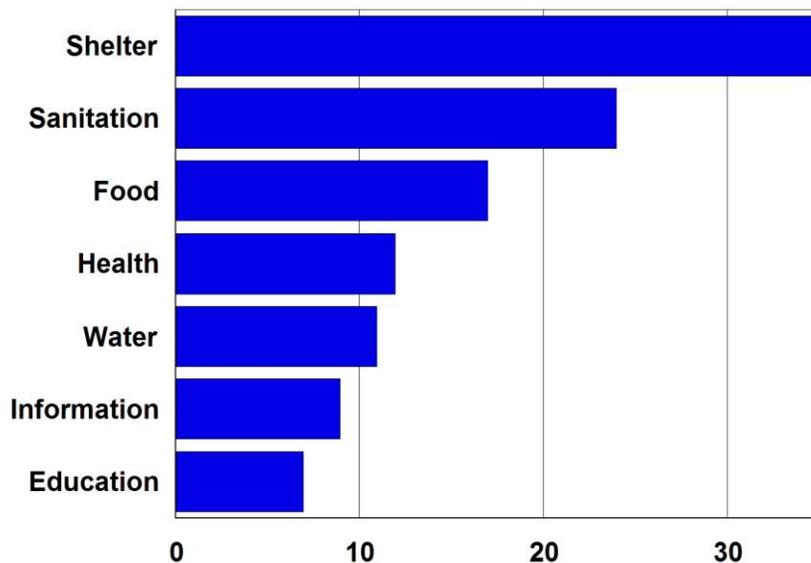
(Items in **Bold** have improved since 2000)

- Almost a third of the world's children live in dwellings with more than five people per room or which have a mud floor.
- Over half a billion children (25%) have no toilet facilities whatsoever.
- Over 230 million children (11%) are using unsafe (open) water sources or have more than a 30-minute round trip to walk to collect water.**
- About one child in ten, aged 3 to 18, lacks access to radio, television, telephone or newspapers at home.**
- Seventeen percent of children under five years in the world are severely malnourished, almost half of whom are in South Asia.
- 80 million children (9%) have not been immunised against any diseases or have had a recent illness causing diarrhoea and have not received any medical advice or treatment.**
- One child in fifteen aged between 7 and 18 (over 87 million) are severely educationally deprived - they have never been to school.**

Shelter	]	
Sanitation	]	<b>Physical Capital Items</b>
Water	]	
Information		
Food	]	
Health	]	<b>Human Capital Items</b>
Education	]	

Global anti-poverty policies have been targeted at improvements in Human Capital and they have met with some success. However, the severe deprivations of basic human need which affect the greatest number of children are 'physical capital' problems - **deprivation of shelter, water and sanitation**. Whilst fewer children suffer from deprivations of 'human capital' – health, education and nutrition.

### Percent of the world's children severely deprived of basic human needs in 2010



### Conclusions

Absolute child poverty and severe deprivation of basic human need fell only slightly between 2000 and 2010.

However, the number (and proportion) of children suffering from some severe deprivations fell significantly. In 2010, children were less likely to suffer from

- Health deprivation
- Education deprivation
- Water deprivation
- Information deprivation

However, there was little (or no) reduction in;

- Shelter Deprivation
- Sanitation deprivation
- Food (malnutrition) deprivation

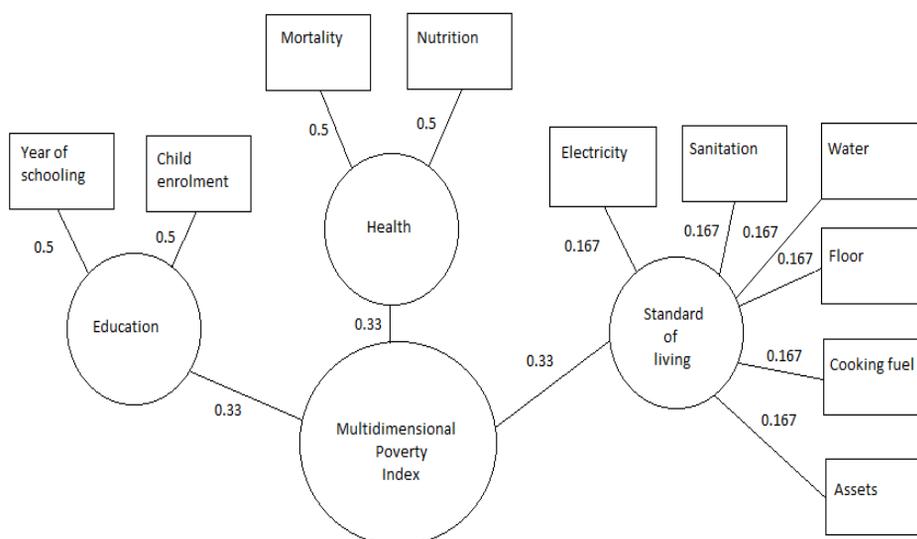
## The problems with using the MPI to measure Child Poverty

1. The MPI is not based on any definition or theory of child poverty so it is impossible to assess its validity.

There are also a range of technical issues concerning;

1. the choice of indicators
2. equal weighting of the indicators
3. the household as the unit of analysis
4. the way they deal with missing values
5. the lack of comparability across countries

## OPHI Multidimensional Poverty Index



Both the dimensions and the weights are based on judgement and lack empirical support

### Testing the OPHI MPI using Confirmatory Factor Analysis

		CFI	TLI	RMSEA
<b>Ghana</b>				
	Model 1	0.682	0.651	0.094
	Model 2	0.934	0.908	0.048
	Model3	0.9	0.871	0.057
<b>India</b>				
	Model 1	0.815	0.797	0.111
	Model 2			
	Model3	0.965	0.955	0.052

CFI & TLI -> 0.9=adequate fit; 0.95 = good fit; RMSEA cut off is <0.06  
 Model 1 – OPHI MPI - fixed weights and dimensions  
 Model 2 – OPHI MPI – weights can change freely  
 Model 3 – OPHi MPI – weights can change freely, no dimensions

### OPHI MPI Indicators but with free weights and no dimensions for India

