

A world  
free  
from child  
poverty

A guide to  
the tasks to  
achieve the  
vision



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# Indicative milestones on a pathway to address child poverty

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## **Milestone 1: Building a national pathway to end child poverty**

A number of countries are not currently prioritizing child poverty and not producing national child poverty measures. Convening stakeholders to share information about child poverty and its responses can be an important step in understanding how, and indeed if, to move forward, and what a national pathway to achieving the SDGs on child poverty may look like.

## **Milestone 2: Measuring child poverty**

Routine national measurement of child poverty is central. Without knowing how many and which children are living in multidimensional and monetary poverty, we cannot know how we are progressing to the goal, or the impacts of particular policies and programmes on child poverty. Technically measuring child poverty is not difficult, yet there can be a number of options that can confuse, and it does require some particular statistical expertise.

## **Milestone 3: Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy**

Child poverty has been shown in many contexts to resonate with both the public and decision makers as a priority issue. Broad child poverty advocacy and communication of the results of child poverty measurement can raise the issue up national political agendas, as well as raise awareness in specific and influential audience groups. Crucially, it can begin the conversation on policy and programmatic solutions.

## **Milestone 4: Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change**

To reduce child poverty requires appropriate policies and programmes to be initiated or expanded. There are a clear set of approaches – ranging from cash transfer programmes to improving access and quality of education for the poorest children – that can make a difference. To make these changes requires clarity on which approaches are needed for the particular national context, and a combination of advocacy and technical analysis to support policy makers in forging change.

## **Milestone 5: Achieving the SDGs: ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions.**

For some countries, the final step may be integrating child poverty into a poverty reduction plan that fully considers children, or a child-specific national action plan. This can bring together the situation of child poverty with integrated policy and programmatic solutions. Crucially, the implementation of these plans should be monitored and evaluated.

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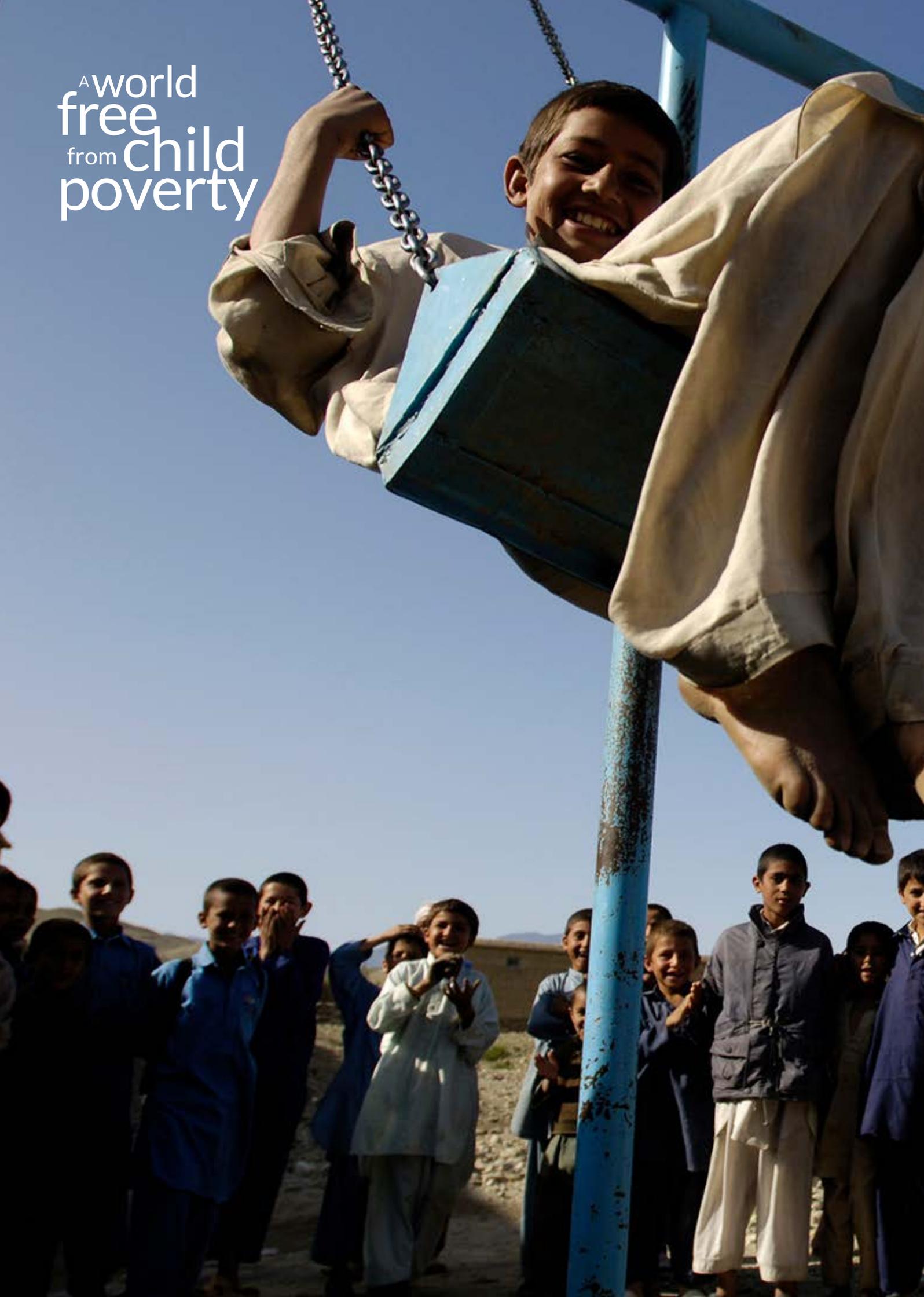
*A vision without a task is but a dream.*

*A task without a vision is drudgery.*

*A vision and a task are the hope of the world.*

Inscription on a church wall in Sussex, England, c. 1730

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# Foreword

It is not often that one can describe a handbook as “bubbling with excitement on every page”. Yet this one does – not only with bubbles of excitement but also with ideas, practical suggestions and results of experience, all towards the goal of reducing child poverty in every part of the world. It is thus an important and most useful contribution to practical action for activists, planners, workers and volunteers engaged in the mission of ending child poverty. Indeed, it is difficult to think of any other contemporary publication on children with so much useful information to share and so much stimulus to offer.

Among the virtues of the publication are that it deals with reductions according to two distinct measures of child poverty: monetary poverty and multidimensional poverty, with a strong focus on the national measures which individual countries have often adopted. This is important as no single measure is enough, since, in many countries, a third or more of children deprived by some forms of multi-dimensional poverty would still be in that state even if all forms of monetary poverty were abolished. Those using only World Bank dollar-a-day measures need to take note!

Another virtue of the publication is its wide variety of research and findings, academic and operational, from national and international sources including the World Bank, Save the Children, UNICEF and many others. Each section has copious footnotes to this treasure trove of references and documentation for follow up.

A third virtue is that it covers a wide range of country examples and experience, from every region of the world, developed and developing, rich and poor, large and small, fragile and more stable, those with little child poverty and those still with a great deal. Countries like Denmark with less than 5 per cent of children in poverty should serve as an inspiration for those who have still some way to go, including other developed countries like my own, the United Kingdom, which after reducing child poverty by nearly a million children in the first years of the twenty-first century, has allowed reductions to level off since 2010. Ending child poverty needs sustained attention. Brazil, South Africa, Ecuador and Mexico are all examples of countries which are building integrated programmatic approaches to addressing child poverty.

A fourth virtue is that the analysis and chapter structure sets out a practical agenda for mobilizing action nationally, regionally and globally, in what the report calls “building a national pathway to end child poverty”. This includes key milestones: measuring child poverty, putting child poverty on the map through advocacy, building policy and programmes focused on reducing child poverty, and creating an integrated national approach to end child poverty and achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

A final virtue is that the whole publication sets the goal of ending child poverty within the frame of the SDGs. This is important, conceptually and politically, since the SDGs have the blessing and commitment of all 193 members of the United Nations and of the Bretton Woods Institutions. Ending child poverty is part of the broader vision of the SDGs – and this handbook, by showing the way for children, contributes to the whole. The fact that the publication is backed by the 20 institutions in the Coalition for Ending Child Poverty will, I hope, serve as a stimulus to other groups working towards the SDGs, showing what other international coalitions of support might aim for.



**Sir Richard Jolly**

Former Assistant Secretary General of the United Nations

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# Preface

A world in which no child grows up in poverty and every child can fulfil their potential would be a different world indeed. This is why we see ending child poverty as a defining challenge of human progress.

While there have been many positive changes in recent decades, the challenges for children remain great: children are significantly more likely to live in poverty than adults, and the impact of poverty on children can be devastating and lifelong, with implications for future generations and society as a whole. Furthermore, children face these challenges globally, in richer and poorer countries alike.

Crucially, although perhaps less recognized, there are specific solutions to address child poverty. These range from direct transfers and benefits that reach families with children living in poverty, to ensuring real access to quality services for all, to addressing the stigma and discrimination that can block children's hope and potential, not least – and perhaps most cruelly – in their own minds.

Despite this, in many countries, child poverty is not explicitly targeted as a national priority, and it is often not routinely measured or reported on. Two years ago, a diverse group of organizations came together to form a Global Coalition to End Child Poverty to work collectively for change. This guide is an attempt to harness our knowledge and experience to support national processes to achieve Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 1 on Ending Poverty, which includes children explicitly for the first time in global poverty goals and, in doing so, support all the SDGs which are so crucial to the realization of children's rights.

As much as this guide hopes to contribute, it is important to stress that there is perhaps even more it does not achieve. When you hear from children about the positive differences that have been made in their lives, or indeed adults that experienced poverty as children, it may not be government policies and programmes that come to mind, but rather a story of individuals and grassroots organizations that have listened, responded and made a pivotal difference.

In this preface, we want to pay testament to all of those around the world – including children and young people – who are making this difference. We hope this guide leads to the fight to end child poverty being prioritized, and supports policy and programme changes that will better recognize, respect and support your work.



**Richard Morgan**

Co-chair, Global Coalition to End Child Poverty  
Director, Child Poverty Global Theme  
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# List of acronyms

ADB	The Asian Development Bank
ASPIRE	The Atlas of Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity
BIA	Benefit Incidence Analysis
CaLP	The Cash Learning Partnership
CAPMAS	Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics
CDHS	Cambodia Demographic Health Surveys
CGE	Computable General Equilibrium
C-MPI	Child-specific Multidimensional Poverty Index
CODI	Core Diagnostic Instrument
CONEVAL	Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy
CP	Child poverty
CPAG	Child Poverty Action Group
C-PEM	Child-focused Public Expenditure Measurement
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CSES	Cambodia Socio-Economic Surveys
CSO	Civil society organizations
CWBM	Child Well-being Module
DFID	Department for International Development
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
EAPN	European Anti-Poverty Network
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
EU-SILC	EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FIA	Financing Incidence Analysis
GAMS	General Algebraic Modeling System
GEMPACK	General Equilibrium Modelling Package
GTAP	Global Trade Analysis Project
HCP	High Commission for Planning
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
ILO	International Labour Organization
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International non-governmental organization
IPA	Innovation for Poverty Action
IPC	International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth
ISDF	Informal Settlements Development Facility
J-PAL	Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab
LGOP	Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development
LIS	Luxembourg Income Study Database
LSMS	Living Standards Measurement Surveys
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MEF	Ministry of Economy and Finance

MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys
MNCH	Maternal, newborn and child health
MODA	Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MOOC	Massive open online course
MoRES	Monitoring Results for Equity Systems
MPI	Multidimensional poverty index
MPIA	Modelling and Policy Impact Analysis
MPPN	Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network
MTBF	Medium Term Budgeting Framework
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIS	National Institute of Statistics
NPC	National Planning Committee
NSDP	National Strategic Development Plan
NSO	National Statistical Office
ODI	Overseas Development Institute
OECD	The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONDE	The Moroccan National Observatory for Children's Rights
OPHI	Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
PEP	Partnership for Economic Policies
PETS	Public Expenditure Tracking Survey
PF4C	Public Finance for Children
PFM	Public Finance Management
PIDS	Philippine Institute for Development Studies
PIERI	Policy Impact Evaluation Research Initiative
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PSE	Poverty and Social Exclusion
PSIA	Poverty and Social Impact Analysis
RAP	Rapid Assessment Protocol
RCT	Randomized control trials
RDD	Regression Discontinuity Design
REPOA	Research on Poverty Alleviation
SADC	South African Development Committee
SAM	Social Accounting Matrix
SCT	Social Cash Transfer
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFAI	School Fee Abolition Initiative
SNEC	Supreme National Economic Council
SPF	Social Protection Floor
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
VAF	Vulnerability Assessment Framework
WB	The World Bank
WFP	World Food Programme
WHO	World Health Organization



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# Overview: a world free from child poverty

While there is great diversity in the almost 200 countries in which children live, there is much about children and their childhoods that are universal: in almost every country in the world – richer countries and poorer – children are more likely to be living in poverty than adults, and everywhere their particular life stage makes them more vulnerable to its devastating effects.

Most immediately, poverty in childhood can have lifelong consequences for children's physical, cognitive and social development. While children themselves suffer the impacts of their poverty most severely and immediately, the harmful consequences for societies, economies and future generations can be felt nationally, regionally and even globally.

## KEY MESSAGES:

- **Child poverty is a universal problem with devastating impacts on children and societies.**
- **For the first time, there is global goal (Sustainable Development Goal 1) to end extreme poverty, including for children, and halve the poverty of children by national definitions.**
- **There are proven approaches and solutions to address child poverty.**
- **This guide seeks to share experiences from across the world to support countries building national pathways to end child poverty.**



However, despite the urgency and the availability of proven approaches to both measure and respond to child poverty, children have received relatively little attention in the global struggle against poverty. The Sustainable Development Goals offer a tremendous opportunity to change this. Goal 1 on eradicating extreme poverty is crucial for children, and for the first time there is an explicit commitment that all countries measure child poverty and strengthen policies and programmes to meet the child poverty reduction goal by 2030 (see Box 1).

Given the diversity of contexts in which children live, there is no simple universal approach to implement the SDGs on child poverty. Rather this guide aims to lay out approaches that have worked and build on global best practices to provide support and ideas in establishing child poverty as a national priority.

## BOX 1

## The Sustainable Development Goals and child poverty: an obligation and an opportunity

With the global agreement on the SDGs including children in the targets and indicators, there is now a global mandate for reporting on child poverty and ending extreme child poverty and halving poverty of children by national definitions by 2030. This requires member states to report on progress on reducing poverty of children, and creates an opportunity for stakeholders engaged in the fight against child poverty to engage in national processes to achieve this goal.

### Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere

**Target 1.1:** By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day.

**Indicator:** Proportion of population below the international poverty line disaggregated by sex, age group, employment status and geographic location.

**Target 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.

**Indicator 1:** Proportion of population living below the national poverty line, disaggregated by sex and age group.

**Indicator 2:** Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions.

**Target 1.3:** Implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030, achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

**Indicator 1:** Percentage of the population covered by social protection floors/systems, disaggregated by sex, and distinguishing children, the unemployed, the elderly, people with disabilities, pregnant women/newborns, work injury victims, the poor and the vulnerable.

## What is child poverty?

Intuitively people have a strong understanding of what child poverty is, and yet details and definitions can vary in different contexts. Listening to children is crucial in building an understanding and foundation of what child poverty really means. Children's perspectives of course vary (see, for example, Box 3.2 in Milestone 3), but in engaging with children about poverty some common threads emerge:

- **For children, poverty is about more than money.** Children experience poverty as being deprived in the immediate aspects of their lives, areas including nutrition, health, water, education, protection and shelter.
- **While these multiple dimensions of poverty and deprivation are of vital importance to children, income or monetary poverty also matters.** A family's standard of living is one of the crucial determinants of the deprivations children experience.
- **Finally, living in relative poverty can also matter to children - and this may be particularly relevant in richer countries.** Even when not clearly deprived in absolute terms, having a lower standard of living or poorer opportunities in education, health or nutrition compared to their peers limits their future life chances.

Through the SDGs, Member States of the United Nations can reflect upon the importance of these perspectives, focusing on both monetary poverty and children living in poverty "in all its dimensions according to national definitions". With national definitions of child poverty paramount, this guide aims to share information and approaches to understanding child poverty to support national decision making, but does not suggest a one size fits all approach.



## Why a focus on child poverty matters

If you are reading this guide, the importance of prioritizing children living in poverty may be self-evident. But while across almost all political spectrums the idea of all children having an equal chance in life is broadly supported, with many competing national priorities, not everyone shares a view that child poverty should receive priority focus. The arguments to prioritize child poverty, outlined in detail in Milestone 1, include:

### 1. Children are more likely to live in poverty

The last three decades have seen unprecedented progress in reducing poverty, showing what can be achieved. Despite this, children are vastly overrepresented among the world's poorest people. While children make up around a third of the population of developing countries, they make up half (50%) of those living in income poverty: that's 385 million children.

Further, these measures of extreme poverty understate the problem. Large numbers of children living in households with incomes above \$1.90 a day still experience poverty according to national definitions or are deprived of the minimum basic needs and services they need to survive, develop and thrive.

Global numbers on children living in multidimensional poverty are currently less available than for child monetary poverty, but with around 1.6 billion adults living in multidimensional poverty, the number of children living in multi-dimensional poverty is extremely high. Regional numbers for multidimensional poverty in childhood are emerging, and in sub-Saharan Africa, for example, around two thirds of children (almost 250 million) experience two or more deprivations of multidimensional poverty.

Finally, it cannot be stressed enough that child poverty is a global issue and not just one in lower-income countries. Too many children lack the minimum material standards they need in the world's richest countries. In a review of child well-being across 35 industrialized countries, UNICEF found that approximately 30 million children – one child out of every eight across the OECD – are growing up in poverty.

### 2. Child poverty does long-term damage to children and societies

Poverty is different for children than for adults. Poverty in childhood, both multidimensional and income poverty, can have especially devastating and lifelong effects. The impacts of child poverty can be understood in the following ways (for more details see Milestone 1):

- **Poverty is a violation of a child's rights.** As enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, children have a right to an adequate standard of living, and to be free from deprivations across crucial aspects of their



lives including their health, education, nutrition, care and protection. Growing up in poverty is a direct violation of these rights.

- **For children, poverty can last a lifetime.** Due to their particular life stage, poverty has especially devastating effects on children's development, often resulting in deficits that cannot be overcome later. Put another way: for a child, poverty can last a lifetime.
- **Child poverty is transmitted across generations.** First, by becoming adult poverty, and then by being passed on to the next generation of children. Breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty can only be achieved through priority attention to children living in poverty.
- **Child poverty has broader impacts on societies and economies.** Poverty in childhood is felt most immediately and brutally by children themselves, but its implications stretch much further. Failure to protect children is one of the most costly mistakes that society can make.

### 3. There are proven solutions

Knowing that child poverty has devastating effect on children and societies, and that children are overrepresented among those living in poverty, is a strong call to action. But what compels us to act – morally and practically – is that child poverty is a problem with a solution.

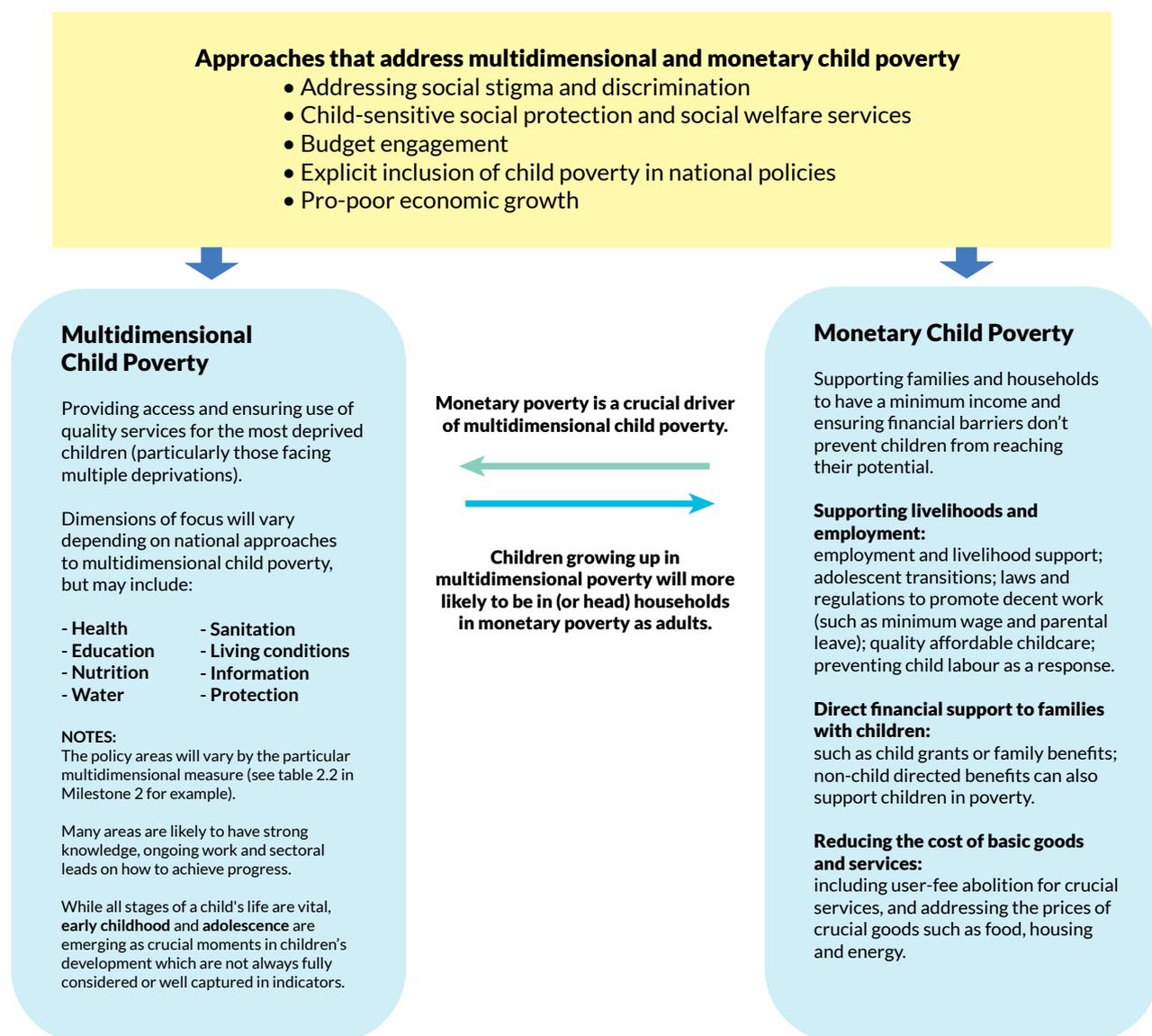
While there are many important nuances in how countries have approached addressing child poverty, there are also common threads that apply universally. At their core, the policies and programme to address child poverty will:

- (i) Address multidimensional child poverty through providing quality and accessed services for the most deprived children – including in areas such as nutrition, education and health which represent their multidimensional poverty and drive whether children will be able to fulfil their potential and end the cycle of poverty; and
- (ii) Address income or monetary child poverty through supporting families and households to have a minimum income and ensure financial barriers don't prevent children from reaching their potential.

Milestone 4 investigates in detail the approaches that can make a difference for children in these areas (summarized in Figure 1), as well as analytical tools that can support decision makers answer key questions and practical country examples of establishing and expanding the policies and programmes to address child poverty.



Figure 1: Policies and Programmes to Address Child Poverty



## Indicative milestones on a pathway to address child poverty

In building policy and programme responses to child poverty, both what to focus on and how to approach creating change will vary enormously, depending on the particular situation of children, the political opportunities that are available and can be created, the range of engagement approaches – from advocacy to technical analysis and support – that may make a difference, and the areas where child poverty advocates and their allies may be most effective.

However, across countries that have made progress on child poverty, there are similarities. Among them is an often small but dedicated group driving the issue forward; a clear sense of intention and direction to child poverty work (but that is flexible to changing circumstances); and a sustained long-term commitment to change.

This guide hopes to capture and share some of these shared factors. And to recognize the importance of having a clear sense of intention behind child poverty work, it suggests - and is organized by - an indicative set of milestones to guide work. It is important to stress that in reality countries start from different places, will choose different milestones, and that in many instances progress is not linear, and Milestone 1 focuses on developing appropriate national milestones. The indicative milestones used to organize this guide are:



### **Milestone 1: Building a national pathway to end child poverty**

A number of countries are not currently prioritizing child poverty and not producing national child poverty measures. Convening stakeholders to share information about child poverty and its responses can be an important step in understanding how, and indeed if, to move forward, and what a national pathway to achieving the SDGs on child poverty may look like.

### **Milestone 2: Measuring child poverty**

Routine national measurement of child poverty is central. Without knowing how many and which children are living in multidimensional and monetary poverty, we cannot know how we are progressing to the goal, or the impacts of particular policies and programmes on child poverty. Technically measuring child poverty is not difficult, yet there can be a number of options that can confuse, and it does require some particular statistical expertise.

### **Milestone 3: Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy**

Child poverty has been shown in many contexts to resonate with both the public and decision makers as a priority issue. Broad child poverty advocacy and communication of the results of child poverty measurement can raise the issue up national political agendas, as well as raise awareness in specific and influential audience groups. Crucially, it can begin the conversation on policy and programmatic solutions.

### **Milestone 4: Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change**

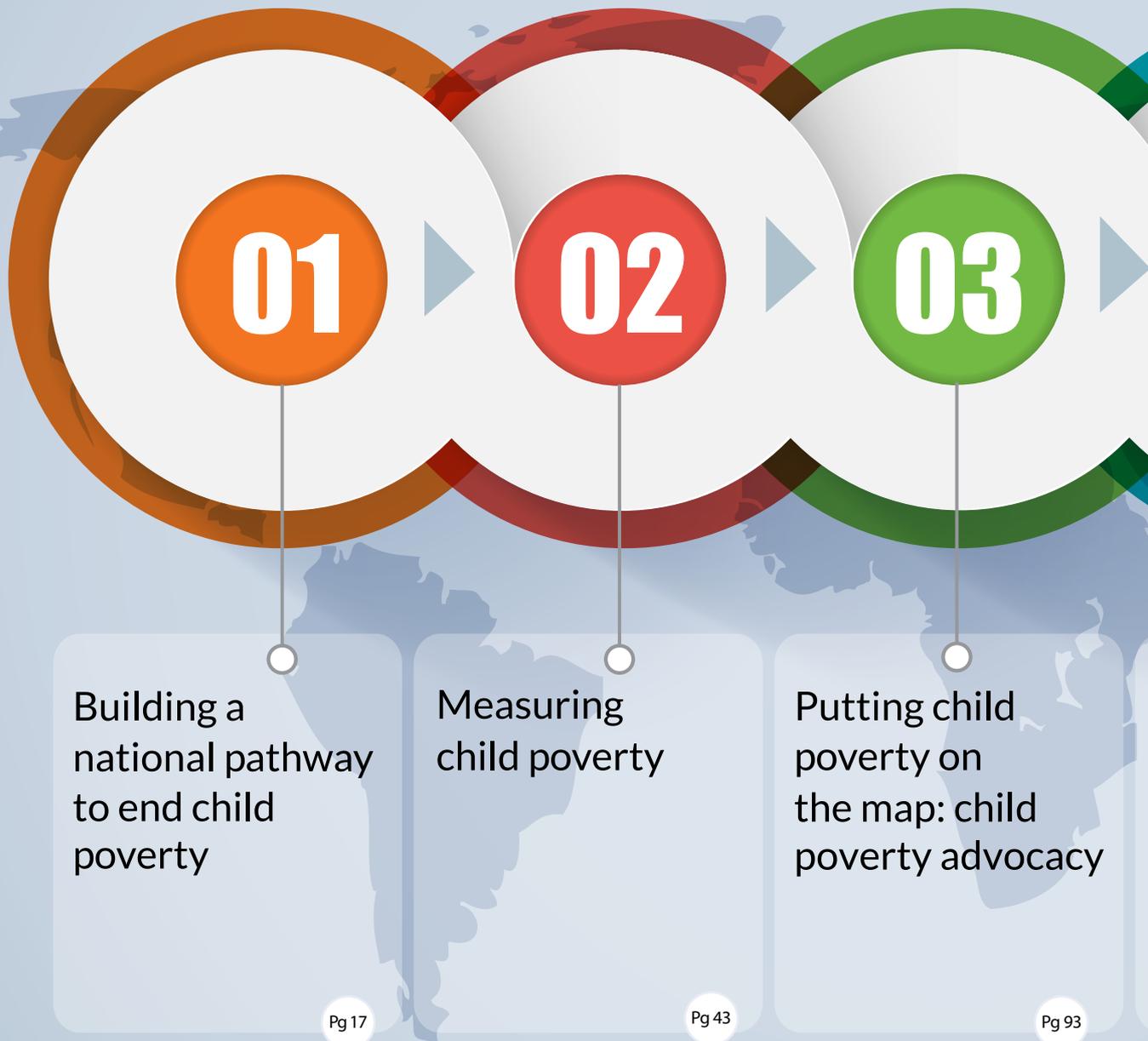
To reduce child poverty requires appropriate policies and programmes to be initiated or expanded. There are a clear set of approaches – ranging from cash transfer programmes to improving access and quality of education for the poorest children – that can make a difference. To make these changes requires clarity on which approaches are needed for the particular national context, and a combination of advocacy and technical analysis to support policy makers in forging change.

### **Milestone 5: Achieving the SDGs: ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions.**

For some countries, the final step may be integrating child poverty into a poverty reduction plan that fully considers children, or a child-specific national action plan. This can bring together the situation of child poverty with integrated policy and programmatic solutions. Crucially, the implementation of these plans should be monitored and evaluated.

FIGURE 2

## Indicative milestones on a pathway to address child poverty





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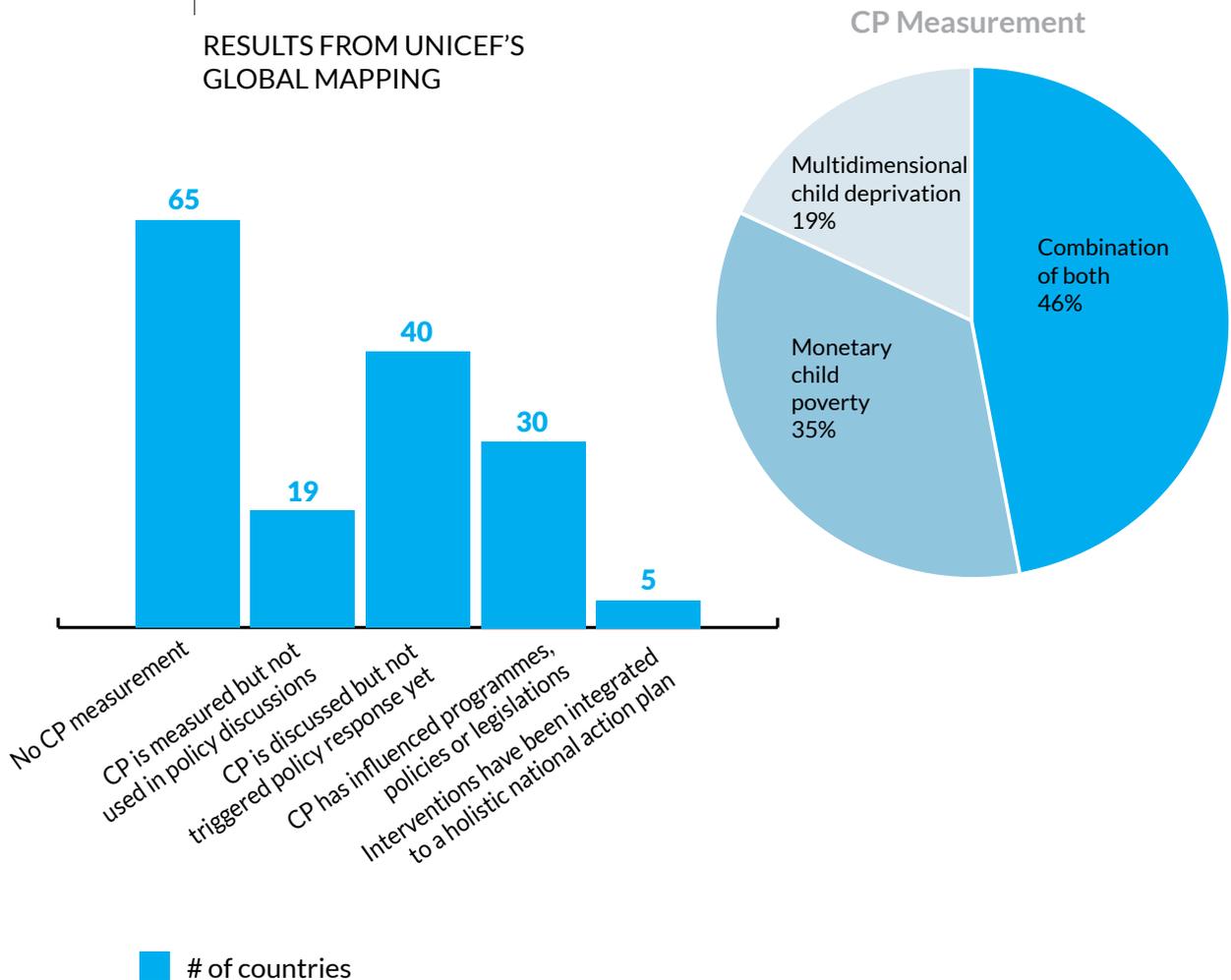


## Progress made and the challenges ahead: where we are globally

With the SDGs just coming into force, there is not currently consolidated and verified information on which countries are measuring child poverty, and where in a policy and programme sequence they fall. A 2015 survey of UNICEF staff gives an indicative picture of the global situation regarding these milestones.

Of 160 countries responding to the survey, 65 are not currently measuring child poverty, while in over 75 countries child poverty measures are part of ongoing dialogue with government including triggering policy and programme response and national action plans. The survey further showed that around half of countries measuring child poverty are using both monetary and multidimensional approaches, and around a third are focusing on monetary child poverty alone.

RESULTS FROM UNICEF'S  
GLOBAL MAPPING



Based on UNICEF experts in 160 countries (140 UNICEF programme countries and 20 National Committees)  
Source: Results from UNICEF's Global Mapping on Child Poverty (2015)

The tremendous progress found in this survey is testament to the work of child advocates across all regions of the world, both in and outside of governments – and it is important to stress this progress was made without the support of a global agreement to measure and address child poverty. The focus of the Sustainable Development Goals to address poverty in all its dimensions, with an explicit focus on children, now helps put the wind at our backs as we face the challenge ahead of measuring and addressing child poverty in every country, and work to end child poverty.

## The purpose of this guide

While this guide will use an indicative global sequence as a way of organizing material, its focus is to provide ideas and resources from across the world to support national process and decision making. Specifically, it aims to provide:

1. **Some simple tools** for understanding where a country currently is in child poverty work, and approaches for building national pathways for progress;
2. **Examples** of how countries have approached this work, including activity-level examples;
3. **Links** to in-depth guidance, background documents and supporting materials to implement detailed plans that may fit the national context; and
4. **Support, building a network of practitioners** for real-time help and advice as work progresses. As you'll hear repeatedly across this guide, if you have a thought, a question or want to share an experience, please contact [cpn@unicef.org](mailto:cpn@unicef.org).



A world  
free  
from child  
poverty

# Milestone 1 Building a national pathway to end child poverty



**END CHILD  
POVERTY**  
GLOBAL COALITION

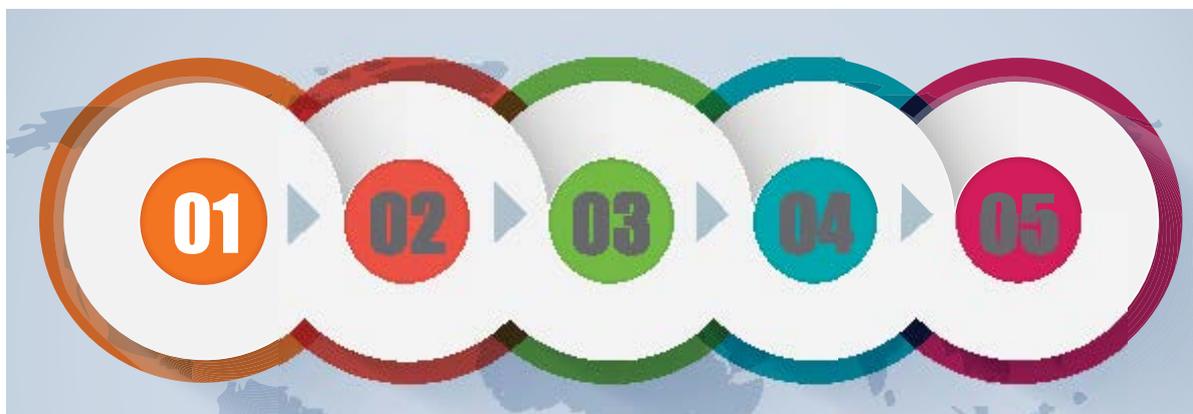


unicef 



# Milestone 1

## Building a national pathway to end child poverty



### KEY MESSAGES

- In many countries there remains no explicit focus on the measurement, analysis or response to child poverty.
- The inclusion of child poverty in global goals can (and should) provide a foundation for action in every country.
- Agreeing national milestones of progress with partners can give a clear (and widely owned) intention on how to work on child poverty.
- National experts hold the information that can help determine how to move forward, so determining national milestones can be quite fast and simple.

In many countries there is little or no explicit focus on the measurement, analysis and response to child poverty. For these countries this first step gives some ideas and experiences of how to get started. With the inclusion of targets specifying the reduction of child poverty in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), all countries should be monitoring and working towards ending child poverty by 2030.

However, with 169 targets and over 200 indicators, some of the SDGs may in practice receive less attention than others. As such, the SDGs offer an important opportunity to bring stakeholders together to thoughtfully consider where a country is on child poverty, and what the key steps or milestones to progress may be.

For the many countries already explicitly working on addressing child poverty this milestone may not be needed, although in some contexts revisiting some of these issues may usefully refresh a united sense of purpose and direction.

## KEY STEPS TO ACHIEVING MILESTONE 1

- A** BUILDING A TEAM: WHO COULD JOIN AND HOW THEY CAN BE INVOLVED.
- B** TAKING STOCK: DOES AN INCREASED NATIONAL FOCUS ON CHILD POVERTY MAKE SENSE?
- C** DEVELOPING A NATIONAL PATHWAY TO REDUCE AND END CHILD POVERTY.



## A. Building a team: who could join and how they can be involved

Across countries a broad range of stakeholders have been involved in stressing the importance of child poverty and acting to address it. In countries looking to build national policy and programme responses, perhaps most important have been the government ministries or departments that lead in the area, particularly those with expertise on poverty work, children and statistics such as Ministries of Finance, Ministries of Children or their equivalents, and National Statistical Offices.

Other stakeholders vary but frequently include civil society groups, both national and international, focused on issues of children and poverty, including members of the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty who have put this guide together. Civil society organizations can often play dual roles, both engaging in policy debate and advocacy to support national priorities, as well as directing work to address the poverty of children and their families.

Think tanks and research organizations are also crucial, with national researchers playing a vital role both in providing objective national expertise and in building a sustainable foundation of action over time. Finally, in relevant countries, the UN Country Team (such as UNICEF, UNDP, and the World Bank) can provide many strengths including expertise on children, poverty and strong relationships with governments.

Particularly if this is a first engagement on the issue it can be very useful to think beyond the minimum group of actors directly involved in poverty and child poverty measurement. Box 1.1 gives an overview of how stakeholder participation can evolve from a small core team to build broad support.

***Wherever possible, appropriate involvement of children, young people and their families makes a big difference to the quality, credibility and reach of the work.***

As work progresses and future milestones come into view, partners involved now can become crucial active allies. For example, it may be useful to involve journalists (at this stage for their perspectives rather than to build the story). Wherever possible, appropriate involvement of children, young people and their families makes a big difference to the quality, credibility and reach of the work.

BOX 1.1

## AN ORGANIZING TEAM, ALLIES AND THE UNAWARE

Across all work on addressing child poverty there is perhaps no question more important or more driven by national context than who is involved and who leads in different aspects of child poverty work. One way of thinking through stakeholders who may be involved is to identify the organizing team, building allies and reaching the unaware:

**A STRONG ORGANIZING TEAM:** In many countries a small core team of partners can play a crucial role in giving directions and focus to the work, and in organizing stakeholders, events and analysis to help move the child poverty agenda forward. Leadership is of course important, and depending on context this group may be led by government and include international organizations, local and/or international civil society organizations. The involvement of local researchers can be important both for immediate knowledge and impact and sustainability over time. Finally, as will be stressed repeatedly throughout this guide, engaging children, young people and their families, particularly those living in poverty, through CSOs or other relevant mechanisms, is hugely important to truly understand the situation of child poverty and its solutions. The composition of this group is often relatively fixed over time and its vision shared to allow for easy communication and decision making. Members of the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty – who worked on this guide – may be members of this team in many countries.

**ALLIES:** Outside of this small core team are the stakeholders who actively support the child poverty agenda and have influence over it either through direct decision making (such as government partners) or through their advocacy and support (such as members of the public). The scope of this group can be large, including government partners such as sectoral ministries and the Ministry of Finance, media, MPs, research bodies, faith-based organizations, NGO/INGOs, international bodies including financial institutions, and young people themselves. Throughout the process of working on child poverty these stakeholders will play a crucial role in advising, supporting, deciding and at key moments helping forge a shared consensus on next steps.

**POTENTIAL (BUT UNAWARE) ALLIES:** Of the stakeholders outlined above, not everyone starts as an ally. Many who have great influence and importance will not be aware of the challenges of child poverty in a country, the ability to change the situation or what their role may be. Key ‘unaware’ allies will likely include those who don’t work directly with children or on their issues, but with direct and indirect influence over the child poverty situation.

### OVER TIME – MAINTAINING AND BUILDING MOMENTUM

Addressing child poverty and moving through milestones that are established is a time-consuming process that requires dedication.

**MAINTAINING A STRONG CORE TEAM OVER TIME:** People change and so does the focus of institutions. Maintaining a strong organizing team through these changes is crucial to success. While the organizing team should remain stable, it may require changes over time, including in chairing.

**BUILD ALLIES OVER TIME:** Through stakeholder involvement and advocacy, a core aim is to build the number of stakeholders who are aware and actively engaged as needed in putting child poverty on the agenda. Of course, different allies will be needed at different moments, whether for technical analysis, media support or a big speech.

## Building an understanding of why child poverty matters

There is often an intuitive sense of why child poverty matters, and for many on an organizing team around child poverty these will be implicitly understood. However, many important partners may not be knowledgeable on why child poverty is such an important issue. Explicitly framing these arguments can be important to help build the understanding of stakeholders who may not already be knowledgeable on child poverty, and to share and package key arguments for allies to share with others.

The most useful arguments on the importance of child poverty will be nationally based. The extent of this evidence base varies by country (and issues of child poverty do not always receive high levels of research attention). While building this evidence base is important, it can take time. However, the universal nature of childhood can mean that global evidence can also be powerful in national contexts. Box 1.2 outlines seven reasons why child poverty deserves urgent attention that may be able to be tailored to national contexts.



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BOX 1.2

## **7 REASONS WHY CHILD POVERTY MATTERS:**

- 1. BECAUSE IT MATTERS TO CHILDREN AND IS A VIOLATION OF THEIR RIGHTS.**
- 2. BECAUSE CHILD POVERTY HAS DEVASTATING EFFECTS THAT LAST A LIFETIME.**
- 3. BECAUSE ALMOST EVERYWHERE, CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN POVERTY THAN ADULTS.**
- 4. BECAUSE ENDING CHILD POVERTY IS CRUCIAL IN BREAKING THE INTER-GENERATIONAL CYCLE OF POVERTY AND ADDRESSING POVERTY OVERALL.**
- 5. BECAUSE FAILURE TO END CHILD POVERTY IS ONE OF THE MOST COSTLY MISTAKES THAT SOCIETY CAN MAKE.**
- 6. BECAUSE DESPITE THE URGENCY CHILD POVERTY HAS RECEIVED TOO LITTLE ATTENTION.**
- 7. BECAUSE CHILD POVERTY IS A PROBLEM WITH PROVEN SOLUTIONS.**

### **1. BECAUSE IT MATTERS TO CHILDREN AND IS A VIOLATION OF THEIR RIGHTS**

Children make up around a third of the population globally, and as much as half in some countries. Yet their voices are seldom heard and more rarely listened to in political and decision making processes. When you listen, you hear how profoundly aware they are of the impacts of poverty on their lives (see, for example, Box 3.2 on pages 108-9). For some, perhaps many, of those who have the power to make a difference in children's lives, these voices may be more powerful than statistics and graphs.

The importance of poverty for children is enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which articulates children's right to an adequate standard of living, and to be free from deprivations across crucial aspects of their lives including their health, education, nutrition, care and protection. Growing up in poverty is a direct violation of these rights. See for example Table 1.1 according to the CRC.

## 2. BECAUSE CHILD POVERTY HAS DEVASTATING EFFECTS THAT LAST A LIFETIME

Due to their particular life stage, poverty has especially devastating effects on children's development, often resulting in deficits that cannot be overcome later. In countries with household surveys it is relatively easy to show the scale of multidimensional child poverty (see Milestone 2) or that children living in income poverty (or those in the poorest quintile depending on the survey) are less well nourished, educated and have poorer health.

The effects of these deprivations can be enduring with long-term consequences. There is a growing body of evidence across sectors of the long-term impacts of these deprivations:

- Undernutrition can permanently impact a child's growth, resulting in stunting and reduced mental development, and can lead to life-long learning difficulties and poor health.
- A lack of education strongly impacts lifetime earnings.
- Girls' education, in particular, significantly impacts both their ability to control decisions and the wellbeing of their children.
- Early childhood education is shown as being crucial for school readiness and social-emotional development.
- Poor health, even where not resulting in chronic conditions, can have long-term consequences, and impacts children's ability to play and learn.

## 3. BECAUSE ALMOST EVERYWHERE, CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN POVERTY THAN ADULTS

In almost every country with data, children are more likely to live in poverty than adults. Globally, for example, children make up about 33 per cent of the population of developing countries, but are vastly overrepresented among those in poverty, making up almost half (47 per cent) of those living under \$1.90 a day. Data also shows children are more likely to live in multidimensional poverty than adults. A powerful advocacy message in many countries has been comparing child and adults' poverty nationally (see Milestone 3).

## 4. BECAUSE ENDING CHILD POVERTY IS CRUCIAL IN BREAKING THE INTERGENERATIONAL CYCLE OF POVERTY

Breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty can only be achieved through priority attention to children in poverty. As children become poor adults and parents, poverty is then passed on to the next generation of children. While a strongly intuitive argument, evidence to support it can help make the case. Much of the research in this area is for richer countries, but it is growing in lower- and middle-income countries too.

Some of the evidence that exists shows:

- Children growing up in poverty are more likely to be poor as adults. A study of child poverty in the US found that children who experienced poverty at any point during childhood were more than three times as likely to be poor at age 30 as those who were never poor as children. The longer a child was poor, the greater the risk of being poor in adulthood.
- A substantial number of studies document the strong relationship between parent and child incomes as adults, suggesting that although income mobility varies substantially by country, it is much lower than generally thought. Most studies focus on developed countries, due to data limitations, but when estimates are calculated for Latin America and other developing countries, they show even lower levels of intergenerational mobility than most developed countries.
- Intergenerational mobility goes hand in hand with inequality: countries with low mobility tend to have high levels of inequality. In contrast, highly mobile societies are also the ones with the lowest levels of inequality.

Addressing this intergenerational transmission of poverty is vital to addressing poverty reduction, and with children representing around a third to a half of those living in poverty across countries, addressing poverty without focusing on child poverty is impossible.

## 5. BECAUSE FAILURE TO END CHILD POVERTY IS ONE OF THE MOST COSTLY MISTAKES THAT SOCIETY CAN MAKE

Child poverty results in lower skills and productivity, lower levels of health and educational achievement, increased likelihood of unemployment, and lower social cohesion. These have societal and economic impacts.

- **Child poverty is strongly linked to other national priorities.** For example, child mortality is closely linked to poverty. According to UNICEF, 22,000 children die each day due to poverty, mostly from preventable conditions and diseases.
- **Child poverty destroys national potential.** An article by The Lancet, for example, estimates that poverty and associated health, nutrition and social factors prevent at least 200 million children in developing countries from attaining their development potential, with long-term implications for economies and societies.
- **The economic costs of child poverty are high.** While there is not research on this area in all regions, an estimate of the economic costs of child poverty in the US finds that the lost productivity and extra health and crime costs stemming from child poverty add up to roughly 500 billion US dollars a year, or 3.8 per cent of GDP. A different estimate in the UK, finds that the total annual cost of child poverty in the UK is £25 billion per year, equivalent to about 2 per cent of GDP.

## 6. BECAUSE DESPITE THE URGENCY CHILD POVERTY HAS RECEIVED TOO LITTLE ATTENTION

Despite all these reasons to act urgently on child poverty, many countries still don't prioritize children in their policies and programmes to end poverty. A UNICEF survey, for example, found only around a third of countries are routinely measuring child poverty (see page 13 of the Overview).

## 7. BECAUSE CHILD POVERTY IS A PROBLEM WITH PROVEN SOLUTIONS

Knowing that child poverty has devastating effect on children and societies, and that children are overrepresented among those living in poverty, is a strong call to action. But what compels us – morally and practically – to act is that child poverty is a problem with a solution.

Milestone 4 investigates in detail the policies and programmes that can make a difference for the poorest children. It outlines that while there are many important nuances in how countries can approach addressing child poverty, there are also common threads that apply universally. At their core, the policies and programme to address child poverty will:

- (i) provide universal and high quality public services and ensure access for the most deprived children – including in areas such as nutrition, education and health which represent their multidimensional poverty and drive whether children will be able to fulfil their potential and end the cycle of poverty; and
- (ii) support families and households to have a minimum income and ensure financial barriers don't prevent children from reaching their potential.

This simple mix is the basis for a global platform of action to address child poverty, and countries that have succeeded in addressing child poverty have succeeded in these areas. But few, if any, would say the work is complete.

**Table 1.1: Child well-being dimensions according to the CRC**

Categories	Dimensions	Source
Survival	Food, nutrition	CRC Article 24
	Water	CRC Article 24
	Health Care	CRC Article 24
	Shelter, housing	CRC Article 27
	Environment, pollution	CRC Article 24
Development	Education	CRC Article 28
	Leisure	CRC Article 31
	Cultural activities	CRC Article 31
	Information	CRC Article 13-17
Protection	Exploitation, child labour	CRC Article 32
	Other forms of exploitation	CRC Article 33-36
	Cruelty, violence	CRC Article 19, 37
	Violence at school	CRC Article 28
	Social security	CRC Article 16, 26, 27
Participation	Birth registration;	CRC Article 7, 8
	Nationality	
	Information	CRC Article 13, 17
	Freedom of expression, views, opinions; being heard; freedom of association	CRC Article 12-15

Source: cross-country MODA study. Technical Note. De Neubourg et al. Nov 2012.

## B. Taking stock: does an increased national focus on child poverty make sense?

As underlined in the SDGs, every country should be explicitly monitoring and working to address child poverty. However, as different countries find themselves in different stages and in different contexts, the most effective approaches vary. Understanding the situation in a country and assessing whether and how an increased focus on child poverty makes sense can be a useful starting point to move things forward.

### Three steps to building an answer

One approach to answering this question is to break it down into three initial questions to reach an answer:

1. **What is the overall role of poverty analysis in forming national policies and programmes?**
  - ▶ In most instances the influence of child poverty measures and analysis occurs as part of broader poverty analysis debates and action. Understanding this broader framing is crucial, both in determining if child poverty measurement and analysis will have traction as well as understanding which approaches may be most effective.
2. **Where are we on child poverty? Is it being measured, analysed and used?**
  - ▶ Reflecting on the progress made so far on child poverty nationally provides a sense of what, if anything, there is to build on, and the frontiers ahead that could be tackled. If there is current work, what does it say about the situation of children in poverty?
3. **Does an increased national focus on child poverty make sense?**
  - ▶ With answers to the above questions, stakeholders can reflect whether an increased national focus on child poverty makes sense. If so, some initial ideas on future directions may emerge. If not, it may be useful to record clearly why as a reference to consider as the context evolves.

#### AN APPROACH TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

The core information to answer the above questions is likely to be readily held by relevant national experts. The best way of bringing the information together will vary both by the common working modalities within countries as well as time constraints in cases where there are particular opportunities to progress.



***Where appropriate, a participatory workshop could both provide the answers and engage relevant stakeholders***

In some circumstances, individual interviews can produce a technically sound analysis of the questions, although this may not be the most effective approach to create a discussion that can air all points of view and reach a meaningful consensus.

Where appropriate, a participatory workshop could both provide the answers and engage relevant stakeholders. In some circumstances it might be helpful to hold key informant interviews with some key stakeholders to build knowledge and understanding ahead of a workshop or meeting.

Below are three exercises that provide an approach to answering the questions. They begin by answering smaller questions and building up to an agreed overall analysis.



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## EXERCISE 1.1

What is the overall role of poverty analysis in forming national policies and programmes?

Experts may include: Ministries of Finance; President/Prime Minister's Office; journalists

POVERTY ANALYSIS AND REPORTING		Conclusions	Overall conclusion - is poverty a national priority that is guiding policies and programmes?
Does the country routinely measure poverty?	..... .....	Is there regular analysis and monitoring of poverty?	
Does the country regularly report on the MDG on poverty and will the country report on the poverty SDGs?	..... ..... .....		
Is the focus on monetary, multidimensional poverty or both?	..... ..... .....		
THE ROLE OF POVERTY ANALYSIS IN SHAPING THE NATIONAL AGENDA		What role does poverty analysis play in shaping the national agenda?	
Is poverty part of the National Development plan (or equivalent)?	..... .....		
In practice, is poverty a central part of government discussions and does it guide policy and programme priorities, including State of the National address?	..... ..... .....		
THE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES DRIVING POVERTY REDUCTION		What are some of the key policies and programmes driving poverty reduction?	
What are the signature policies and programmes driving poverty reduction?	..... ..... .....		
Is there a poverty reduction plan or equivalent?	..... ..... .....		



## EXERCISE 1.2

Where are we on child poverty – is it being measured, analysed and used?

Experts may include: Ministry of Children or similar; civil society organizations; National Statistical Office; research institutions

IS CHILD POVERTY BEING MEASURED AND ANALYSED, AND IF SO BY WHO?		Conclusions	Overall conclusion – is child poverty being measured, analysed and addressed?
Are there recent national child poverty numbers? Is child poverty routinely measured? Are the measures monetary or multidimensional?	..... ..... .....	Is child poverty being measured and analysed, and if so by who?	
Are child/young people involved in the process of defining or analysing child poverty nationally?	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....	
Is there recent report information on child poverty? What key facts about child poverty do we know?	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....	
Who leads nationally on child poverty measurement and analysis?	..... ..... .....	..... ..... .....	
IS CHILD POVERTY PART OF THE NATIONAL AGENDA AND FRAMING DOCUMENTS?		Is child poverty part of the national agenda and framing documents?	
Is child poverty addressed by decision makers? Is there media focus on child poverty?	..... ..... .....		
Is child poverty part of the national development plan (or similar)?	..... ..... .....		
IS CHILD POVERTY ADDRESSED IN NATIONAL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES?		Is child poverty addressed in national policies and programmes?	
Are children specifically included in general poverty policies and programmes?	..... ..... .....		
Are there specific policies and programmes to address child poverty?	..... ..... .....		
Is child poverty explicitly included in poverty reduction plans or is there a specific child poverty action plan?	..... ..... .....		
INCLUDING CHILDREN AND THEIR CARETAKERS		Are children and their caregivers effectively included in analysis and decision making around child poverty?	
Are there mechanisms to engage children and their caregivers in child poverty analysis and policy responses?	..... ..... .....		

## EXERCISE 1.3

With a clearer sense of the role poverty plays in guiding national policies and programmes and the status of child poverty measurement, a conclusion can be reached on whether an increased focus on child poverty makes sense. If so, some future directions may emerge. If not, it can be useful to record why for future processes.

Exercise



Does an increased focus on child poverty make sense, and if so what are some ways forward? (Some indicative scenarios)

	Is poverty a national priority that is guiding policies and programmes?	Is child poverty being measured, analysed and addressed?	Does an increased focus on child poverty make sense?	<p><b>NEXT STEPS</b></p> <p><i>Does an increased focus on child poverty make sense?</i></p> <p><i>If yes: The exercises can also give an indication of directions of future work. A more detailed analysis is then needed, on what the pathway to reducing child poverty is nationally, and the steps in that process.</i></p> <p><i>If no: Record the rationale for review at a future point as contexts evolve.</i></p>
<b>SCENARIO A</b>	Country routinely measures and reports on poverty. It is included in national plans, major speeches and there is a poverty reduction strategy outlining policy and programme response.	No current measurement of child poverty, either monetary or multidimensional.	<b>Yes:</b> Poverty is guiding programmes and policy, but child poverty not included. Need to measure for SDGs and opportunity to inform policy and programmes to reduce child poverty.	
<b>SCENARIO B</b>	Country routinely measures and reports on poverty. It is included in national plans, major speeches and there is a poverty reduction strategy outlining policy and programme response.	Child poverty measured and report, but not routinely. Significant analysis of child poverty available showing key deprivations for children, but no clear influence on overall policies.	<b>Yes:</b> Child poverty measures and analysis routinized for SDGs. Possible need for further policy analysis and advocacy towards policies and programmes reducing CP.	
<b>SCENARIO C</b>	Monetary poverty has been routinely monitored and reported for MDGs, but not driving the policy agenda or discussed publically. No current interest in multidimensional poverty.	Children living under national monetary poverty lines reported and shows children are more likely to be poor than adults, but no further analysis.	<b>No:</b> Unless CP advocacy could help create a national poverty focus. Routine CP monitoring already sufficient for SDG reporting.	

## BOX 1.3

## Reasons not to focus on child poverty and when they might be overcome: some examples from conversations with practitioners.

In the course of working on child poverty a number of reasons not to focus on child poverty come up. All are valid, some can be addressed, and others mean progressing may not be possible or that different approaches are needed. Let us know if you have come across different questions or different answers/approaches.

### Poverty is too politically sensitive to discuss.

*In these circumstances progressing on child poverty is very challenging. Unless issues of child poverty can open up this space, one option could be to focus on child well-being instead of child poverty. Measures and conclusions may be similar, but it may be a more constructive way to open discussion. Noting of course that reporting on poverty and the poverty of children is now part of the SDGs. See milestones 1 and 2.*

### There is no political appetite for child poverty specifically.

*Where there is interest in adult poverty there is normally room to focus on children, and initial results can be put together quickly. Milestone 1 and 3 outline ways of building relationships with stakeholders and advocating around child poverty.*

### Measurement is too complex with competing methodologies.

*Initial measurement of child poverty can be done very simply where there are existing poverty methodologies and can be a quick starting point. Building child-specific measures of multidimensional poverty can be more complex, but they are well tested and clear guidance is available. Milestone 2 focuses on these challenges.*

### Solutions are the same so policy makers don't see the benefit.

*Solutions can actually be very different, both regarding specific child-focused approaches, and adjustments to general poverty reduction. Milestone 4 outlines approaches and examples.*

### In fragile or humanitarian contexts, trying to measure child poverty doesn't make sense.

*Where there is a full humanitarian response, undertaking child poverty measurement and analysis can be very difficult, and may not be constructive. In fragile contexts, having ready information and analysis on child poverty and vulnerability can help build resilience through supporting programmes such as social protection, and inform humanitarian actors in their response should that become necessary. In these contexts, more specific experience sharing and guidance is needed.*

### Poverty is a field dominated by other institutions who have expertise in this area – what difference can we make?

*While many are focusing on poverty in general, the poverty of children is often forgotten – there may be no-one else who is bringing the perspectives of the poorest children to the table. Recognising and building partnerships with others working on poverty nationally, including bringing in their expertise, is vital to help ensure work on child poverty is impactful. In particular, measurement and analysis-specific expertise from national or international partners can be important for key parts of the process.*

### There are so many other issues for children, focusing on child poverty isn't the best use of our time and resources.

*Focusing on child poverty provides support to other areas of importance for children. It can put the issues of the poorest child on the agenda of the highest levels of government, as well as identify solutions to both particular sectoral problems and those that cut across sectors. Milestone 4 looks at these in more detail.*



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## C. Developing a national pathway to address child poverty

If it is clear that an increased focus on child poverty is needed, then the next step is to determine what constitutes a plausible national pathway to affect change. There is no easy or correct answer to this question, and perhaps most importantly real life always gets in the way of the best laid plans – bringing both new opportunities and unforeseen roadblocks.

Accordingly, the aim need not be to create the perfect detailed plan, but think through a plausible pathway of progress and the milestones on the way, as well as the activities that can help these milestones be reached. This approach can help build a shared national understanding of the overall goal and the steps to achieve it. It can also help identify how changing circumstances can help or hinder progress.

Exercise 1.4 suggests a hypothesized set of national milestones – a sort of ‘average’ approach distilled from experiences across countries. It outlines both a possible set of milestones, as well as the actions and activities, key actors and assumptions and indicators that can guide progress.

This ‘average’ approach can hopefully be useful as a guide, but every country is likely to have a different pathway. Not only will starting points vary, but national contexts will mean both key milestones and the activities that can help achieve them will also change.

In many contexts this pathway and milestones are thought through by a small organizing team working on child poverty, and often not explicitly. This has proven successful, and if it's not broken don't fix it! But making these milestones explicit, including through the collaboration of those with expertise and ability to make crucial decisions, can build clarity and strong foundations.

## Building a national pathway: starting and end points

### THE STARTING POINT

While the end points may be fixed by SDG obligations, the starting points will vary greatly by country. This starting point can be based on national expertise, including the previous exercise.

### THE END POINT

The SDGs provide a clear end goal signed onto by member states, namely the elimination of extreme poverty (which includes children) and halving the poverty of children by national definitions.



## Determining the milestones in the middle

**A milestone is “an action or event marking a significant change or stage of development”.**

With starting and end points defined, it can be useful to determine clear milestones of progress along the way. A milestone is “an action or event marking a significant change or stage of development”. Identifying and agreeing on key milestones with national stakeholders is helpful in both guiding immediate actions and checking on progress to see if different strategies are needed.

## A POSSIBLE PROCESS FOR IDENTIFYING A NATIONAL PATHWAY OF PROGRESS

With a crucial goal being including all national expertise on poverty and child poverty, as well as those who can make crucial decisions, involving relevant stakeholders may be an effective way of integrating views of reaching a shared agreement on milestones and activities. Where not feasible or effective, working towards consensus through key informant interviews and the creation of a nationally owned report with recommendations on next steps could be an alternative.

Some general steps in a process may be:

1. **Outlining starting and end points:** It is likely that not all stakeholders will be aware of the commitments in the SDGs, the importance of child poverty, or where the country currently is in measuring, analysing and addressing child poverty. Providing this information to stakeholders (if possible by the relevant experts) for discussion can help give everyone a shared starting point.
2. **Identifying the milestones (activities and indicators):** With a clear sense of starting and end points stakeholders can work towards identifying the key milestones in the middle. If using a workshop, one approach is to put starting and end points on different ends of a spectrum and ask participants to suggest milestones in the middle and place them in a sequence. The following pages give some examples.

**Milestones:** Limiting the sequence to no more than five or so milestones (including the beginning and end) can keep things manageable. Placing these beginning and end points on a spectrum, and encouraging stakeholders to suggest milestones in the middle, can quickly bring together a broad range of views. Sharing the indicative global sequence or possible milestones in Exercise 1.4 may be helpful.

**Indicators:** Depending on what works nationally, milestones chosen are generally broad, and then indicators will specify what it being aimed for concretely. For example, the milestone may be “national child poverty measurement”, while indicators may be: child poverty rate calculated (monetary and/or multidimensional); child poverty included in national report; routine measurement agreed by the National Statistical Office.

**Activities:** In thinking through milestones, activities can also emerge (essentially an activity is a stepping stone that will help move from one milestone to the next). The tools on the following page, and the example of China, give some examples. It of course makes sense to spend most time on the activities needed to reach the next milestones, than on milestones that are further in the future.

3. **Revising, learning and flexibility.** While a broad collection of stakeholders are often needed to chart the broader course, the organizing team may be the ones pushing the day-to-day activities and involving key stakeholders as needed. An important role these groups often play is learning from what’s working and what isn’t and being flexible to changing circumstances and bringing stakeholders back together when needed. It is important to note that very different groups may be needed to support progress on different milestones.



1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy

4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

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Exercise



## Exercise 1.4

### Identifying milestones and indicators

**01**

MILESTONES:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
INDICATORS:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**02**

MILESTONES:  
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INDICATORS:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**03**

MILESTONES:  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
INDICATORS:  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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**04**

MILESTONES:  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
INDICATORS:  
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**05**

MILESTONES:  
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INDICATORS:  
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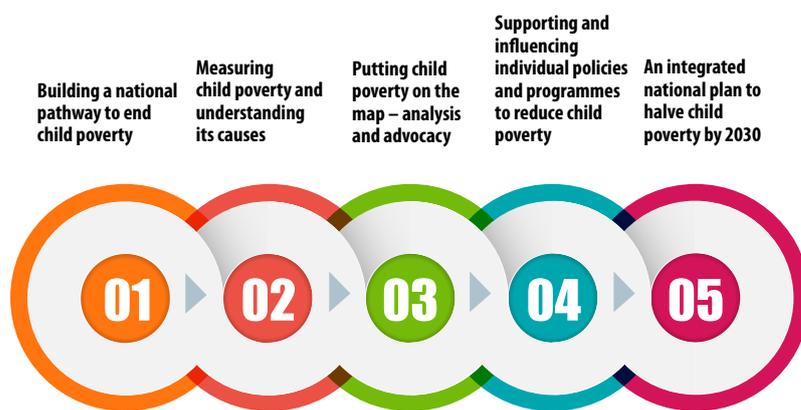
**Starting point:**  
This will vary by country - it might be 'child poverty not measured'

**End point:**  
Halve child poverty by 2030 according to national definitions

#### EXAMPLES OF POSSIBLE MILESTONES OR INDICATORS

Social protection programme designed or adjusted to reduce child poverty	Evaluation of agricultural programme included impact on child poverty and recommendations	Creation and implementation of a national action plan to halve child poverty
Child poverty part of national debate and discussion across media	Inclusion of child poverty in national development plan	National poverty eradication plan includes the policies and programmes that will have child poverty
Child poverty routinely measured by government	Chapter on child poverty included in annual progress report on poverty reduction	Budget process explicitly includes consideration of child poverty

**FIGURE 1.1:** Possible milestones and activities towards halving child poverty being part of a national poverty reduction plan.



POSSIBLE ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES				
1	2	3	4	5
<p>National stakeholders discuss where an increased focus makes sense.</p> <p>If increased focus agreed, national stakeholders create a national path of progress on child poverty and national milestones.</p>	<p>Determine with government, appropriate national approaches to measuring child poverty.</p> <p>Work with government to generate and produce disaggregated child poverty estimates (multidimensional and/or monetary).</p> <p>Provide technical training and support on child poverty analysis to relevant government and other counterparts.</p> <p>Work with governments to understand causes and determinants of child poverty.</p>	<p>Develop advocacy objectives, indicators and key messages building on measurement.</p> <p>Write national child poverty report with government.</p> <p>Engage in major policy discussions (e.g. Budget Framework Papers, State of the Nation etc...) with actors such as MoF, World Bank and other stakeholders.</p>	<p>Carry out in-depth analysis of the causes of child poverty.</p> <p>Mapping of existing policies and programmes to reduce child poverty.</p> <p>Targeted technical analysis and advocacy on programmes and policies that could reduce child poverty.</p>	<p>Comprehensive analysis with government and stakeholders on policy and programme mix that could halve child poverty.</p> <p>Development of an action plan to halve child poverty and inclusion in a national Poverty Action Plan (or similar).</p> <p>Develop and support monitoring evaluation and reporting back on progress as determined by national processes.</p>
POSSIBLE INDICATORS OF PROGRESS				
<p>Meeting with key stakeholders at appropriate levels completed.</p> <p>National pathway of progress created and key milestones identified.</p>	<p>Child poverty rate (monetary and/or multidimensional) calculated.</p> <p>Child poverty rate published in appropriate government or independent report or similar.</p> <p>Routine monitoring agreed.</p>	<p>Completion and launch of child poverty report including analysis of key bottlenecks and opportunities.</p> <p>Child poverty appears in media/social media.</p> <p>Child poverty measures stressed in major policy discussions e.g. budget framework papers and State of the Nation address.</p> <p>Actors such as Ministries of Finance and World Bank use child poverty analysis in publications.</p> <p>Stakeholders are stressing the importance of child poverty.</p>	<p>Evidence on child poverty becomes part of the formulation, goals and evaluation process of major programmes (e.g. social protection programmes, budget planning).</p> <p>Change in implementation and scale of programmes and policies, such as social protection programmes.</p>	<p>Actions to halve child poverty incorporated into a national poverty reduction plan or similar (or specific Child Poverty Action Plan created).</p> <p>Resources allocated to support implementation.</p> <p>Reductions in the child poverty rate in line with SDGs.</p> <p>Independent evaluation of progress with recommendations.</p>



# CHINA

## Generating momentum to end child poverty, one county at a time

The Government of China recently announced its ambition to lift 70 million people out of poverty before 2020, which aligns well with the SDGs to end poverty in all its dimensions. Until recently, poverty reduction strategies were linked to economic growth and development; however, with increased efforts on strengthening capacity, there is mounting emphasis on integrated interventions addressing multiple deprivations and disparities. China's pathway to address child poverty spans the entire policy spectrum from identifying, recognizing and measuring child poverty to using the evidence to design, implement, monitor and resource relevant county child poverty plans.

FIGURE 1.2

China's approach to addressing child poverty



## Addressing child poverty in China: milestones, indicators, actions and actors

Steps on the pathway	Indicators	Activities to complete the step	Key actors
<b>Starting point: the lack of strategic focus on child poverty, separate to adult poverty, and as a key development priority for China.</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Policy makers and stakeholders are committed to eradicating child poverty.</b>	Child poverty reflected in the Ten-year National Rural Poverty Reduction Strategy 2011-2020.	Child poverty seminars, with participation from line ministries, key actors and global leaders and experts on poverty, to promote understanding and knowledge sharing of multidimensional poverty.	The State Council Leading Group Office of Poverty Alleviation and Development (LGOP) and UNICEF China.
<b>Local level impact: child poverty action plans at the county-level will be implemented.</b>	Hubei Baseline Child Poverty Survey. Hubei MODA survey. Hubei Child Poverty Analysis. Hubei Child Poverty Action Plan.	Analyse survey to produce an analysis, and a child poverty action plan in collaboration with stakeholders.  Conduct a workshop on Child Poverty Reduction and Integrated Child Development in Hubei.  Raised funds through the private sector and Bestseller foundation to implement the plan.	Academic Institution, Provincial LGOP, LGOP and UNICEF China.
<b>Regional level impact</b>	Review of the Hubei child poverty strategy - the baseline survey, analysis and child poverty plan.  Understanding of child poverty and evidence based planning expanded to other counties.	Explore the creation of multidisciplinary 'champions' comprised of policy-makers, researchers and practitioners working on child poverty in China.	LGOP, provincial LGOP, local government and UNICEF China.
<b>National level impact</b>	Guidelines for county-level implementation of child poverty plans.  Child Poverty Report for China.  Stakeholder ratings on the relevance, acceptance, appropriateness and effectiveness of UNICEF support.  Sustained or increased national government expenditure on essential social services as share of GDP.	Workshop to discuss, contextualise and refine the Guidelines.  Design and implement stakeholder assessment.  Disseminate the Guidelines to maximise the advocacy impact of the approach.  Identify potential funding opportunities with the government and private sector.	The State Council Leading Group of Poverty Alleviation and Development.  UNICEF China.  Ministry of Finance.
<b>End point: SDG achieved by 2030 (end of extreme child poverty and halving of child poverty by national definitions).</b>	An identified set of priority SDG indicators most critical for children in China.	Translate the SDGs to be relevant and a strategic priority for China, through seminars, policy briefs and other advocacy efforts.	LGOP, National Bureau of Statistics, National Working Committee on Children and Women, and UNICEF China.

## Conclusion

This milestone has aimed to give some ideas and tools towards reaching national agreement on whether an increased focus on child poverty makes sense, and if so to identify the best ways forward. The milestones that follow look at approaches and examples from a range of contexts that have helped countries take the next steps, and measure, advocate and respond to child poverty.

### MILESTONE 1 CHECKLIST: INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

---

- ✓ Relationships built with key stakeholders.
- ✓ Clear understanding of the role poverty measurement and analysis plays in national decision making.
- ✓ Clear understanding on the situation of child poverty measurement and analysis, and agreement on whether increased action is needed.
- ✓ As appropriate, agreement on key milestones and activities to measure and address child poverty.



A world  
free  
from child  
poverty

## Milestone 2 Measuring child poverty



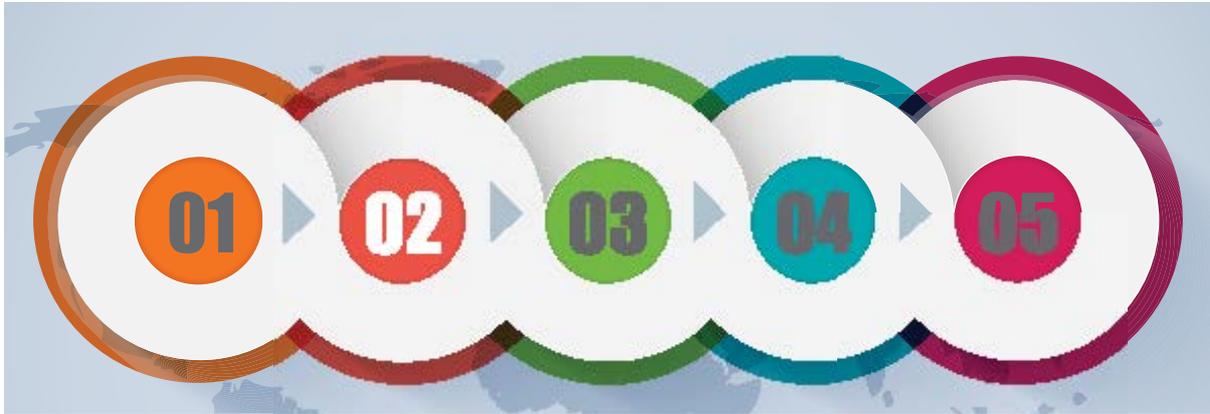
**END CHILD  
POVERTY**  
GLOBAL COALITION

unicef 



# Milestone 2

## Measuring child poverty



### KEY MESSAGES

- Routine child poverty measurement is a requirement of SDG reporting, and a foundation in ensuring child poverty is being reduced.
- Measuring child poverty does not need to be a technical, long and costly process.
- There is extensive existing guidance on how to approach child poverty measurement.
- National ownership and involving children can ensure measures are meaningful and used.

It is hard to imagine a scenario where a country is focused on reducing child poverty without quality, routine and nationally supported measurement.

Child poverty measures not only help build knowledge and understanding of the scale and scope of child poverty, but can be the foundation for understanding the policies and programmes that contribute to child poverty reduction. As many examples in this guide show, a robust and nationally-owned measurement, combined with advocacy, is often a catalyst in raising awareness and also influencing policies.

The section also challenges the idea that poverty measurement is a technical, long and costly process exclusively led by technical experts. In some countries, child poverty can be initially quickly measured by disaggregating the existing poverty rates for the general population. For other countries that choose to create their own child-specific multidimensional poverty measure, the process of constructing the measures are well established and laid out in existing guidance.

While measuring child poverty is an essential starting point, it is also crucial to understand child poverty. This includes building a national child poverty profile and understanding the underlying drivers of child poverty in a country. While this is touched on at the end of this Milestone, it is considered in more detail in Milestones 3 and 4.

With an aim to help countries in selecting the most appropriate child poverty measure and to make the best use of it, this section will briefly review why measuring child poverty is important, and then look in detail at the following key steps:

### KEY STEPS TO ACHIEVING MILESTONE 2:

- A** UNDERSTANDING WHAT IS AVAILABLE (AND NOT) TO MEASURE CHILD POVERTY
- B** SELECTING THE MOST APPROPRIATE CHILD POVERTY MEASURE(S).
- C** PRODUCING CHILD POVERTY RATES AND KEY DATA BASED ON THE CHOSEN METHODOLOGY.
- D** COUNTRY EXAMPLES.

## Why measure child poverty? The SDGs... and beyond

Most simply the SDGs have created a mandate agreed by all Member States to measure and address child poverty, with the explicit inclusion of children (Goal 1, Target 1.2, see Box 2.1)

For many, perhaps all countries, this mandate may be sufficient. However, it can also be important to understand why child poverty measurement is part of the SDGs. This can help ensure that child poverty measurement isn't an exercise in ticking a box, and that the measures are used towards advocacy and creating and sustaining the policies and programmes that can achieve the targets of the SDGs (Box 2.2).

.....

**Firstly**, child poverty measurement provides critical information in understanding the nature of child poverty in the country and the challenge that is faced. The measures can tell us:

- How child poverty relates to, and can be integrated with, the overall

poverty situation in a country.

- The scale of child poverty in the country and (depending on available data) how it compares to other countries.
- How child poverty compares to adult poverty and the poverty of other groups (it is almost always higher).
- Where child poverty is highest geographically, and if there are particular groups of children who are more likely to be poor.
- Where measured over time, if child poverty is increasing or decreasing.
- What the drivers of child poverty are.
- Depending on the measure, it can highlight the dimensions of poverty that are most affecting children.

**Secondly**, child poverty measurement is the basis for answering more specific policy and programmatic questions needed to end extreme child poverty, and halve child poverty by national definitions:

- How effectively are existing poverty reduction efforts benefiting the poorest children? For example:
  - ▶ Analysis to show if spending is benefiting children in poverty or those who are better off.
  - ▶ Evaluations that highlight the impact of programmes and policies on child poverty.
- What impact would a new programme (say a new cash transfer or subsidy reform) have on child poverty and how could it be best designed? For example:
  - ▶ How should a social protection programme be designed to target the most disadvantaged?
  - ▶ Analysis of costs and benefits of new programmes.
  - ▶ Simulations of impact on child poverty and other indicators of new programmes and policies.

#### Box 2.1

### GOAL 1: END POVERTY IN ALL ITS FORMS EVERYWHERE

#### **1.1 By 2030, eradicate extreme poverty for all people everywhere, currently measured as people living on less than \$1.25 a day**

*Indicator:* Proportion of the population below the international poverty line, disaggregated by sex, age group, employment status and geographical location (urban/rural)

#### **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**

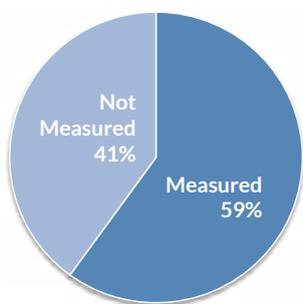
*Indicator 1:* Proportion of the population living below the national poverty line, disaggregated by sex and age group

*Indicator 2:* Proportion of men, women and children of all ages living in poverty in all its dimensions according to national definitions

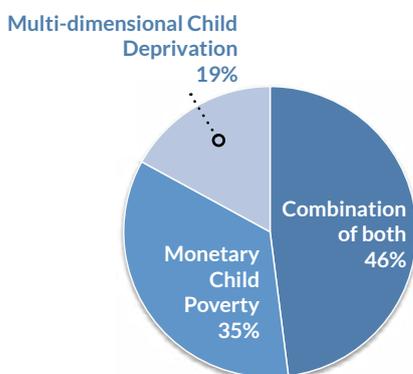
Box 2.2

## Where we are globally – child poverty measurement

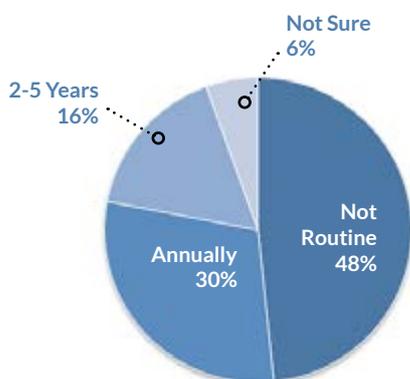
To understand where the world is on child poverty measurement, UNICEF conducted an internal survey, asking staff members to identify each country's status in terms of the milestones. The survey collected information from 160 countries (including 20 National Committees based in higher income countries) about the existence of government supported measurement, approaches and frequency.\* Here are some of the global findings:



**CHILD POVERTY MEASUREMENT:** 41% of the countries reported not having child poverty measurement that is official or supported by the government. While many low-income countries lack official child poverty measurement, it is also true that many developed countries also lag on this front.



**METHODOLOGY:** Among countries that are measuring child poverty, almost half of the countries measure using both monetary and multidimensional measures. For countries that use either a monetary or multidimensional approach, monetary measures are twice as prevalent as multidimensional measures.



**ROUTINE MEASUREMENT:** Around half of the countries that measure child poverty were not measuring routinely. However, among the countries that have routine measurement – mostly middle and high income countries – the majority were measuring child poverty annually.

\* All the responses reflect the best knowledge of UNICEF field officers on the measures, but of course, should be interpreted differently from any official data (for example verified by the government).



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## A: Understanding what is available (and not) to measure child poverty

### What is the status of poverty and child poverty measurement nationally?

In many countries, a good starting point is to review what national poverty measurement and data sources exist in the country. This analysis can provide important information in determining how to select the best child poverty measurement (see Exercise 2.1).

For example, if there is already an official, routine and robust measurement of poverty for the general population, it might be useful to begin by disaggregating that measure for children while working towards child-specific measures.

Or, you might find that the existing child poverty measure is not supported by the government. Understanding the reasons behind this will provide vital information in creating a more relevant and owned measure. You may also want to understand the key players in the field to identify who should be involved in the process later.

Exercise 2.1 provides some examples of questions that may help you in analysing the status quo.



**Exercise 2.1. What is the current status of child poverty measurement?**

Key Questions	Sub-questions	Implications
<b>Is there any measurement of poverty for the general population?</b>	<p>If yes, how is it measured (monetary or multidimensional)?</p> <p>Is the measurement officially endorsed by the government?</p>	<p>If there is already a strong poverty measurement for the general population in the country, it makes more sense to make the child poverty measurement aligned to the general measurement.</p>
	<p>If not, why has there not been any measurement of poverty?</p> <p>Are there any advocates for poverty measurement?</p>	<p>If lack of data, political sensitivity or humanitarian crises are preventing a country from measuring poverty, a country has to decide if it is realistic to advocate for poverty measurement. Partnering with other development partners and CSOs for measurement might give stronger weight.</p>
<b>Is there any measurement of CHILD poverty?</b>	<p>Is the poverty rate for the general population disaggregated for children or is there a specific measurement methodology for children?</p> <p>Is the measurement officially endorsed by the government?</p>	<p>If child poverty measures exist and are gaining political support, that is a great starting point. Next steps may be to discuss ways to improve measurement accuracy in capturing the multidimensional nature of child deprivation or routinizing measurement (more details in the next section).</p>
	<p>If not, what are the possible reasons?</p>	<p>If child poverty measures do not exist or exist but are not supported the government, advocacy and policy engagement efforts to highlight the critical differences between adult and child poverty rates might be effective.</p>
<b>Who are the key actors involved in poverty measurement?</b> (see also Box 2.3)	<p>Which ministry considers poverty reduction as their mandate?</p> <p>Which partners have been actively involved in measurement?</p>	<p>Getting support from the key actors are critical, especially for the measurement to impact on policy responses. Before taking any action to create or improve child poverty measurement, it would be good to know how the engaged actors understand the achievements and challenges around existing poverty measurement.</p>

## Major players in poverty measurement

Identifying the key actors in poverty measurement can help develop partnerships that can make an impact. While these actors will vary significantly by context, below is a short list of institutions that play a major role in many countries.

**National Statistics Office (NSO)** is usually a government agency responsible for collecting, analysing, publishing, and disseminating statistics relevant to the economy, population and society. They will likely play the lead role in collecting poverty data and lead on SDG reporting. For existing poverty measures they should be able to disaggregate child poverty relatively easily from existing poverty measures. They also often conduct the census, family expenditure/income survey and lead (or support) other household surveys, including MICS, LSMS or DHS.

**Ministries of Finance and Planning.** While actors across government and outside use poverty analysis, Ministries of Finance and Planning often play leading roles in the analysis and reporting of poverty. Their support in building and using child poverty measures is often a crucial foundation for child poverty analysis to be owned and used.

**Independent and autonomous agencies.** In some contexts independent bodies are chosen to lead poverty measurement and help ensure credibility of results. In Mexico, for example, the Congress endowed The National Council of Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) with a highly independent structure in order to minimize the potential for the government to misuse the power and report false information.<sup>7</sup> Economic Policy Research Center (EPRC) in Uganda is another example of an autonomous, independent think-tank that conducts research on socioeconomic issues.

**The World Bank** has been leading the work on monetary poverty analysis particularly in lower- and middle-income countries and provide rich resources on global monetary poverty measurement as well as country level reports on poverty analysis. More recently, in response to the report of the Global Commission on Poverty, World Bank has also outlined its immediate commitment to show global poverty profiles for children (aged 0–17), work on multidimensional poverty as an additional and complimentary approach using a dashboard of indicators as well as a multidimensional index using the Alkire-Foster methodology (as used in MPI).

**UNICEF** leads development and application of child poverty measures, including the Bristol methodology and more recently Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis. Between 2011–2015, UNICEF has conducted activities on child poverty globally: 72 countries have conducted a child poverty study or report, such as the Global Study or MODA; 83 countries undertook advocacy or policy engagement without producing a child poverty study or report; and 46 countries had other types of research or analysis on specific policies (such as the impact of a child grant on child poverty), or specific aspects of child poverty (for example, in urban slums).<sup>8</sup>

**UNDP** developed a multidimensional poverty index (MPI) together with OPHI. In many countries, both organizations publish a country brief on poverty based on MPI. The global outlook is published in the Human Development Report annually.

**Civil society and research institutes** play an important role in advocating to keep the poorest children and families central to the agenda. Interviews, stories or qualitative studies of children living in poverty can shed light on the issue of child poverty and influence the government to establish a child poverty measure. For example, in countries where there is no official measurement of child poverty, estimates by civil society organizations or local research institutions can help raise public awareness, which in turn puts pressure to support child poverty measurement.

\* All information is based on UNICEF's internal mapping exercise, conducted in August–October, 2015

## What data are available for child poverty measurement?

It is also important to be aware of the underlying data that are available to measure child poverty. Almost all child poverty measurement is based on existing surveys and data, and it is rare for countries to undertake a new survey to measure poverty given the complexity and cost.

*The most common sources of data used for policy analysis are:*

- **Multiple Indicator Cluster Surveys (MICS):** A nationally representative household survey conducted with UNICEF's support in over 100 lower- and middle-income countries. MICS surveys capture many of the dimensions of poverty used in common methodologies such as MODA and Bristol. Data on expenditure is limited (and so monetary child poverty cannot be constructed using the survey), but wealth quintiles constructed by assets are possible. MICS surveys tend to be collected every 3–5 years and take a year or so to be finalized, meaning routine child poverty is available at these intervals. Optional modules exist for child discipline, maternal mortality, child disability and security of tenure and durability of housing. Information on countries with MICS and the data can be found at: <http://mics.unicef.org>.
- **Demographic and Health Survey (DHS):** Similar to MICS, a nationally representative household survey conducted with USAID's support in more than 90 lower- and middle-income countries. They are typically conducted every five years and the surveys include a wide range of indicators in the area of population, health, nutrition, education, household assets, and domestic violence. The survey does not have a module on income or expenditure (and so monetary child poverty cannot be constructed using the survey), but disaggregation by wealth quintiles constructed by assets is possible. Datasets are accessible upon request at: <http://dhsprogram.com>.
- **National Household Surveys:** While the name of national household surveys may vary, from socioeconomic survey to household panel survey, these surveys are periodic surveys owned and conducted by the government to provide routine monitoring of the poverty situation in the country. While the national ownership and periodic nature of the survey are advantages, one of the common challenges is the limited information about child indicators. Where access is open to the public, it may be available from the national statistical office or from global survey catalogues, such as the International Household Survey Network at: <http://www.ihsn.org/home/survey-catalogs>.
- **Living Standards Measurement Surveys (LSMS):** A global household survey, supported by World Bank, available in 39 countries as of 2015. LSMS has a detailed component on household income and expenditure, which can be the basis upon which to compute the monetary poverty

rate. Additionally, the survey also covers areas such as education, health, water and sanitation, which makes it an ideal source to analyse both multidimensional and monetary poverty. Data is available at: <http://microdata.worldbank.org/index.php/catalog/lsm>

- **Luxembourg Income Study Database (LIS Cross):** The database provides microdata for over 40 mostly middle or high income countries. LIS acquires datasets with income, wealth, employment, and demographic data from a large number of countries, harmonizes them to enable cross-national comparisons and makes them available for public use by providing registered users with remote access at: <http://www.lisdatacenter.org>.
- **EU Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC):** A cross-sectional and longitudinal survey sample survey, coordinated by EuroStat that covers member states of the EU. Components of the survey include social exclusion and housing-condition information (collected at household level) and income (at the individual level), as well as labour, education and health observations for persons aged 16 and over. For details, visit: <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/income-and-livingconditions/overview>.
- **The OECD Income Distribution database (IDD):** The database has been developed to benchmark and monitor countries' performance in the field of income inequality and poverty. It contains a number of standardised indicators based on the central concept of "equivalised household disposable income", (the total income received by the households less the current taxes and transfers they pay, adjusted for household size with an equivalence scale). Household income is comparable for all 35 OECD countries and data on income distribution and poverty go back to the 1980s in many OECD countries. For more information, see, <http://www.oecd.org/els/soc/inequality-and-poverty.htm>.



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Box 2.4

## A weakness in household surveys: children living in greatest poverty can be missed

While the household surveys outlined in the milestone are usually the most reliable sources to compute poverty rates, they may miss or underrepresent the poorest and most vulnerable children. This may be either because the households where children live are not included in the sampling framework, or that children are not living in households at all. While it is challenging to figure out how many are missing (and how many of those missing are living in poverty), one study estimates that as many as 250 million people could be missing globally from sampling frameworks of household surveys. With the SDGs' strong focus on "leaving no one behind", the importance of increased efforts and innovation to count poverty for all children is being globally recognised.

Groups (including children) not covered by surveys include:

- Households in unregistered slum or squatter settlements.
- Undocumented citizens who fear official registration with local municipalities.
- People living in conflict zones where there is a high security risk to enumerators.
- Nomadic populations.

The second missing group consists of children who are not counted because they live outside of households. This includes:

- Children living on the street.
- Child-headed households.
- Children in institutional care.
- Children staying in correctional facilities.
- Trafficked children.

As each group of missing children and households varies significantly, it is no simple task to estimate the size of those excluded and understand their poverty situation. Challenges include high costs for complex surveys, sampling challenges and factors such as obtaining information from minors who cannot legally consent.

This lack of data is a pressing concern as the uncounted children are very likely to be among the most vulnerable in the country, and if efforts to address child poverty do not shed light on these children they could be ignored entirely in programme and policy responses. In order to address this challenge, over 175 organizations have submitted an open letter to improve and expand data collection to ensure all children are represented.

As a starting point, all child poverty efforts should begin by acknowledging these children and the limitations of available data to understand the scale and scope of their challenges. Further, while they may be missed in surveys, other sources of data can provide some information. For example, administrative data may cover parts of the population living in institutions or correctional facilities. While the data quality or accessibility may be problematic, it can provide a starting point to get a rough sense of how many children are living in such situations. Other existing national studies or global reports on specific groups of disadvantaged children may not give a sense of the size of the uncounted population, but can help in understanding and highlighting the specific challenges they face.

Another potential approach is to conduct a complementary survey to capture poverty in specific

settings. For instance, slum populations are often undercounted due to the chaotic nature of living situations, but a separate survey that has a specific sampling frame to capture certain slums can address these challenges (see the Egypt case study in this milestone). Similarly, it may be possible to conduct a special survey targeted to children living in institutions. Qualitative surveys such as life history interviews can also help build and share an understanding of the lives of children living in these situations, which numbers alone can fail to do.



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Where household surveys are not effectively capturing groups of families, participation of the local population in designing the surveys or mapping survey areas have also been proven to be effective when communities have a better knowledge of local areas than officials. In Madagascar, for example, no census has been carried out since 1973 and thus survey sampling relies on administrative data, leaving some informal settlements unrecognized. Working with local communities, ATD Fourth World found that a majority of households living on a garbage dump in the north of the capital were not registered with the local authority. With the help of household heads, ATD Fourth World undertook a participatory mapping exercise to identify the characteristics and deprivations of people living in the area. For example, as many as 70% of the residents were under the age of 20, and a majority lacked an official ID card or birth certificate. Involvement of vulnerable groups in the process had benefits beyond collecting information about habitats in informal settings and the participatory method brought the community together to identify, discuss and address some of the challenges in the community.

New technology is also offering approaches to build an understanding of those missed by surveys. Innovations such as satellite imagery with on the ground verification is increasingly used in developed countries to identify transient groups. In the US, mobile and GPS technology has been used to record the location, number and condition of homeless people by social workers and the data is shared with other agencies. While the application to developing countries is still limited, the model could expand to developing contexts, following the increasing penetration of mobile phones.

For any of these approaches, special ethical considerations are needed as data collection may also put certain populations at risk. Surveys of children in correctional facilities, undocumented immigrants or street children should not be conducted without an appropriate adult's consent. Thus, considerable time and efforts should be taken in explaining the purpose of a survey, the anonymous nature of the data and to guarantee the safety of respondents and ensure no additional risks are imposed on these already vulnerable populations.

#### Further Reference:

Carr-Hill (2013) Missing Millions and Measuring Development Progress, World Development.

Villegas and Samman (2015) Exclusion in household surveys: causes, impacts and ways forward. ODI Report.

Le défi urbain à Madagascar. Quant la misère chasse la pauvreté", 2012, page 47, téléchargeable à: <https://www.atd-quartmonde.fr/produit/le-defi-urbain> (in French).

Pullum et al. (2012) Systems and strategies for identifying and enumerating children outside of family care. Child Abuse and Neglect 36, pp. 701-710. This reviews eight methodologies to identify and enumerate children outside of family care.

Over 175 signatory organizations as of 30 March 2016: All Children Count but Not All Children are Counted, an open letter to the UN Statistical Commission and Inter-Agency Expert Group on SDG Indicators.



## B. Selecting the most appropriate child poverty measures (for now and for the future)

One of the challenges in building national support for child poverty measurement can be the seeming plethora of complex options, and the challenges in balancing technical considerations with political realities on the ground. While there is no simple answer to these issues, this section tries to unpack some of the most common debates and encourage a practical sequenced approach of starting where progress can be readily made.

### Monetary or multidimensional child poverty, or both?

Monetary poverty is an important dimension of poverty for children, but it is not the only one. Multidimensional measures can get closer to children's felt experiences of poverty: whether they go to school, whether they are nourished or have access to healthcare. While each individual indicator (such as school dropout rate) can be well used and known in a particular sector, a multidimensional child poverty tool can go beyond individual areas and address the holistic situation of children.

Monetary measures, on the other hand, can give important information about the financial barriers that children and families face in the fulfilment of child rights. It is often children living in monetary poverty who are denied the right to food and nutrition, safe shelter, medical services or protection from child labour (see Table 2.1 for a discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of both approaches).

Most importantly, conceptually and in terms of measurement, it is not either/or. Both monetary and multidimensional measures can be calculated and analysed to give a fuller picture of the poverty children experience and is what is pointed to in the SDG targets and indicators (see Box 2.5).

This standard of measuring and analysing both monetary and multidimensional child poverty may be hard to reach quickly, particularly for countries starting from scratch, and the best way of moving in this direction will vary enormously. In countries with strong conceptions of multidimensional poverty, building child measures alongside monetary measures may be relatively straightforward.

In other countries, where policies are driven by monetary poverty, years could be spent trying to change conceptions of poverty to multidimensional approaches. While this can be time well spent, it may be combined with quickly getting child poverty influencing policy agendas through disaggregating national monetary poverty measures for children.

***Both monetary and multidimensional measures can be calculated and analysed to give a fuller picture of the poverty children experience and is reflected in the SDG targets and indicators.***

**Table 2.1 An overview of the strengths and limitations of monetary and multidimensional poverty measures**

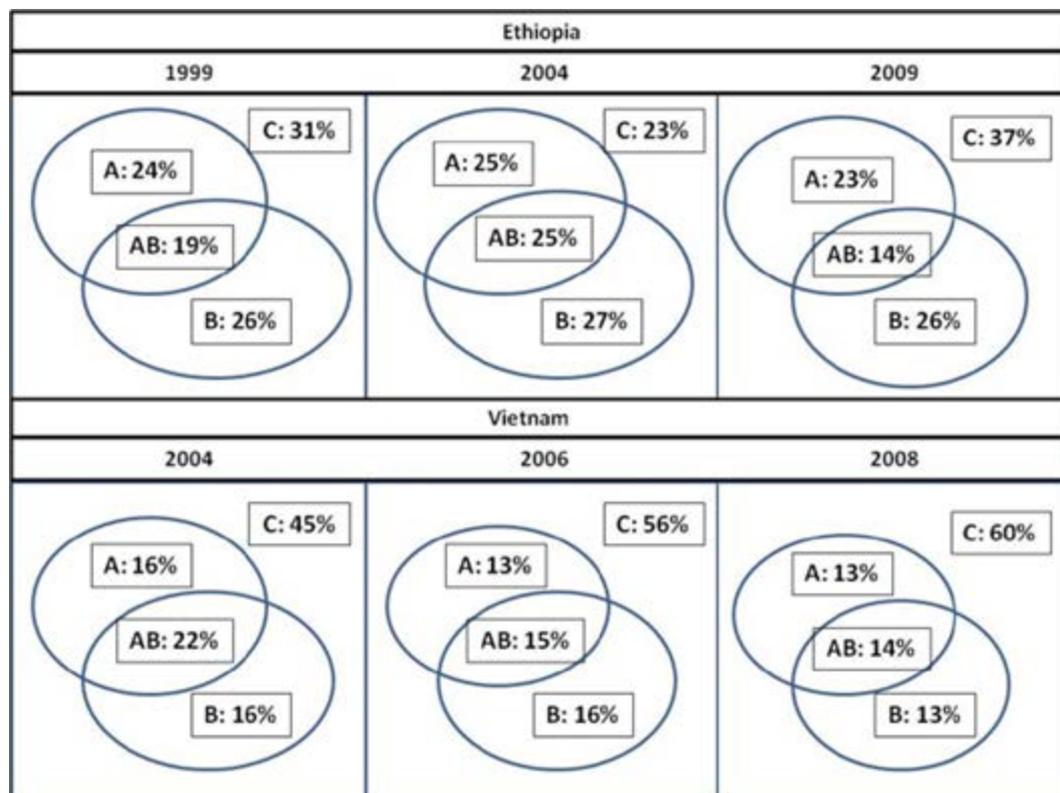
	Monetary child poverty measures	Multidimensional child poverty measures	Measuring and analysing both measures
<b>What it can show about child poverty</b>	<p>Monetary child poverty rate.</p> <p>Monetary situation of the household in which a child lives.</p> <p>Regional, age group and other disaggregation possible.</p>	<p>Multidimensional child poverty rate.</p> <p>Captures deprivations (often following CRC) that directly capture children's experience of poverty.</p> <p>Analysis can show key deprivations driving poverty.</p> <p>Regional, age group and other disaggregation possible.</p>	<p>In addition to individual strengths allows analysis of relationship between monetary poverty and other dimensions of child poverty, including where there are overlaps and where children may be missed by one or other measure.</p>
<b>Strengths</b>	<p>Important aspect of children's experience of poverty.</p> <p>Rich evidence and guidance from the World Bank, OECD, EU and others.</p> <p>Monetary poverty is correlated with many multidimensional indicators</p> <p>Can be applied in all countries where there is a survey on expenditure or income</p> <p>Allows direct comparison of child poverty to adult poverty.</p> <p>Links to national poverty measures for easy integration to national priorities in many countries.</p>	<p>More directly captures children's full experience of poverty.</p> <p>As measures use child-specific and household relevant measures, this avoids problems of intra-household allocations inherent in monetary measures.</p> <p>Surveys available in most countries (DHS, MICS, LSMS).</p> <p>For countries well versed in multidimensional poverty measurement, including child multidimensional poverty is relatively straightforward.</p> <p>Could be flexible to include country-specific dimensions, age groups or indicators.</p>	<p>Captures all (measurable) aspects of child poverty.</p> <p>In many countries may allow immediate impact of current monetary measures, while building understanding of multidimensional approaches.</p>
<b>Limitations</b>	<p>On its own does not capture children's experience of poverty but rather the monetary situation of the household the child is in.</p> <p>Usually only calculated at household level, so children could be living in a non-poor household but be deprived because of intra-household allocation (conversely children in income poor families may not experience other deprivations).</p> <p>Some aspects of child deprivation may not be captured especially where not correlated with household monetary situation.</p> <p>May divert attention from multidimensional child poverty measures.</p>	<p>Methodologies less clear in higher income countries where monetary poverty predominates. In these contexts, it can detract from the simplicity and accountability of monetary approaches.</p> <p>If multidimensional poverty not already understood and used by government, can lead to conceptual rather than policy discussion. It could also take time to agree on the dimensions, indicators and thresholds.</p> <p>Initially measurement can be more challenging where NSOs or similar are not familiar with it.</p>	<p>Can make communication burden more complex expressing two child poverty rates.</p> <p>Can make analysis more complex.</p> <p>In higher income countries multidimensional measures are less commonly used.</p>

## Complementary use of monetary and multidimensional measures for child poverty

An expanding empirical evidence base suggests that monetary and multidimensional measures of child poverty cannot serve as a proxy for one another. This holds across high, middle and low-income country contexts with monetary and multidimensional measures leading to different child poverty rates and identifying different groups of children as being poor. The Poverty and Social Exclusion study in the UK observes groups of deprived children living with non-poor adults and vice versa. Research in Ethiopia and Vietnam indicates that monetary and multidimensional measures identify different groups of children as being poor regardless of the indicators. The figure below shows that while significant groups of children experience both types of poverty, the proportions of children experiencing either only monetary poverty or multidimensional poverty are at least twice as large. A single measure will be unable to signal the full magnitude of the problem and identify all vulnerable children, inevitably excluding children in need of support from policies and programmes. The complementary use of measures is vital for obtaining a comprehensive picture of child poverty and ensuring that needs of all vulnerable children are identified and appropriately addressed.

In terms of the Venn:

A = multidimensionally poor; B = monetarily poor but not multidimensionally poor; AB = both  
C = Neither monetary or multidimensionally poor



### Sources:

Main and Bradshaw (2014) Child poverty and social exclusion: Final report of 2012 PSE study. Poverty and Social Exclusion in the UK. University of York.

Roelen (2015) Reducing all forms of child poverty: the importance of comprehensive measurement. *IDS Policy Briefing 98*.

## Monetary child poverty measures

Generally monetary child poverty measurement is considered much simpler than multidimensional child poverty measurement. This is largely because in many countries monetary poverty measurement has a long history and is regularly calculated by National Statistical Offices. As such, disaggregating these numbers to calculate how many children live in households under the poverty line, as well as other relevant disaggregation, is relatively straightforward.

Beyond the fundamental challenge of missing data in many countries (See Box 2.4), two other considerations can also be of practical and policy importance. The first consideration is the make-up of the poverty lines which determine child poverty. The two basic approaches are:

- **National poverty lines** are either **absolute** poverty lines calculated as minimum income required to meet basic calorie intake and other non-food goods or **relative** poverty line, defined in reference to the overall distribution of a country's income or consumptions. Relative poverty lines are particularly common in higher income countries.
- **The international poverty line** (\$1.90 per day per person) is set with reference to the national poverty lines in the poorest countries to measure the population living in extreme poverty. Since the first estimation in 1990 that formed the dollar-a-day poverty line, the value was updated in 2005 to \$1.25 and then to the current value in 2015.

For both poverty lines, an important questions may be: are they sufficient for children above them to be truly free from poverty? For example, in countries where the national poverty line is based on a basket of basic goods, are these up-to-date and do they well reflect the goods that are needed in childhood? Similarly, is the international poverty line too low and should higher lines (such as \$3 or \$5) also be considered?

The second consideration is 'equivalence scales'. The key question here is whether children have lesser requirements than adults (children may eat less but have higher healthcare and education costs, for example), and whether larger households – proportionately more common for children – benefit from economies of scale. Where this is so, total poverty - and child poverty in particular - may be overestimated with a per capita approach. It is important to note, however, that recent research by UNICEF and the World Bank shows child poverty is higher than adult poverty across regions, regardless of changing assumptions on equivalence scales.

In some contexts engaging in these debates could be important for children, but they also underline that the 'complexity' of multidimensional poverty measurement may be a reflection that it is relatively new rather than fundamentally more complex than monetary child poverty measurement.

**For more information on the make-up of poverty lines:**

- World Bank (2015) FAQs: Global Poverty Line Update
- World Bank: Choosing and Estimating a Poverty Line

**For more information on equivalence scales:**

- Batana. et al. (2013) Global extreme poverty rates for children, adults and the elderly. Economic Letters.



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## The choice of multidimensional measures

With Target 1.2 of the SDGs specifically mentioning poverty “in all its dimensions”, countries are expected to begin measuring the multidimensional poverty of children. The indicators, however, do not specify a particular methodology, leaving countries to move forward according to their own definitions.

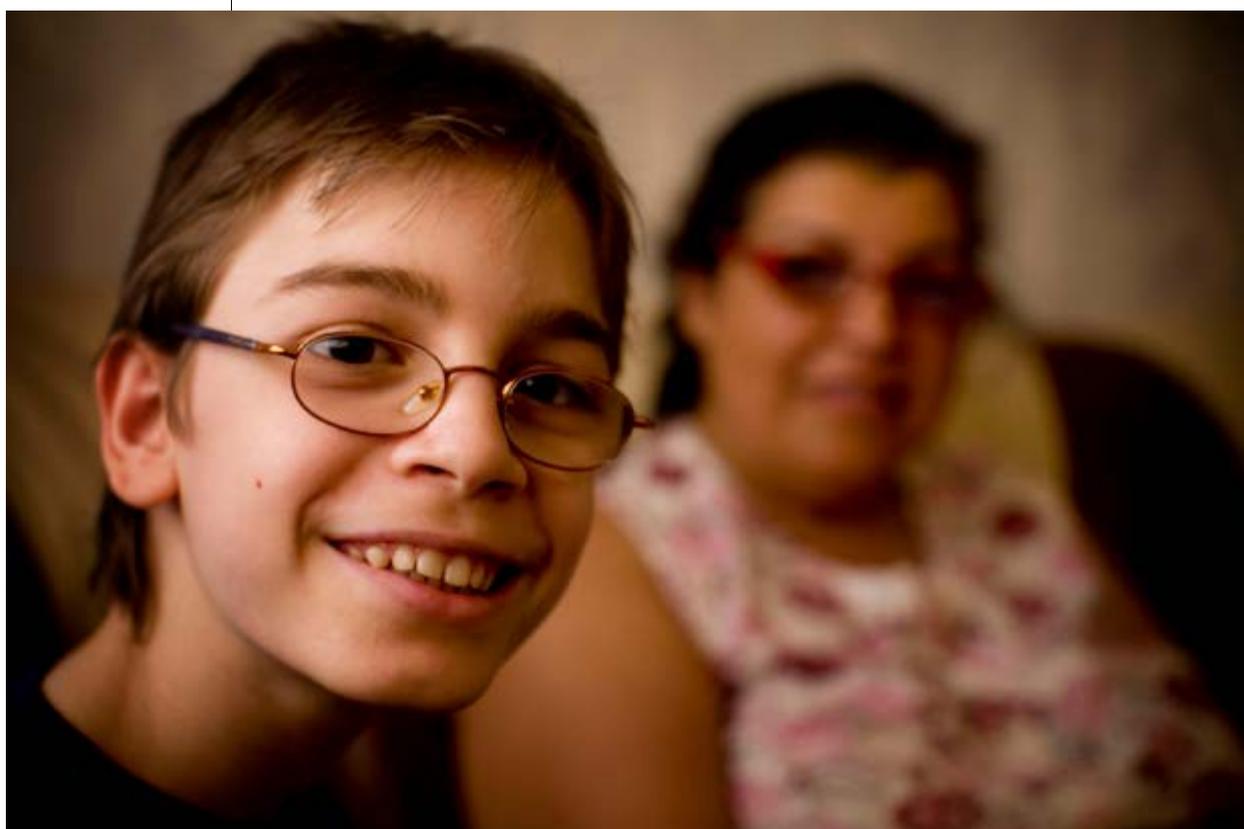
While there are limited approaches to calculating monetary child poverty, approaches to multidimensional child poverty have increased significantly over the last decade since UNICEF’s 2004 State of the World’s Children report, and there are a number of tried and tested methodologies to measuring multidimensional poverty.

Choice, however, can bring challenges. It leaves a decision for many policy makers and child-focused institutions to choose from a varied and diverse set of options. Particularly in countries where concepts of multidimensional child poverty are new, there is a risk that this wealth of options may confuse rather than inspire.

So what are the options for measuring the multidimensional poverty of children, what are the similarities and differences, and what do we know (and not know) about what might work best for children?

The three key methodologies used most often outside of high-income countries are:

- a) **The Bristol Approach** (used in UNICEF's Global Study on Child Poverty). Developed by the University of Bristol, the approach builds a set of dimensions based on the Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- b) **MODA** - or Multiple Overlapping Deprivations Analysis. It was developed in 2012 by UNICEF, building on the Bristol Approach and MPI. The same approach could be applied for country-specific analysis (N-MODA) or cross-country analysis (CC-MODA). As the name indicates, analysis focuses on how different dimensions overlap with each other, providing important information for cross-sectoral interventions.
- c) **The MPI** - developed by OPHI and UNDP's Human Development report. It has captured multidimensional poverty in over 100 countries. As with national poverty lines, national MPIs can be readily disaggregated to highlight children living in multidimensionally poor households. Among the indicators are some that focus on the situation of children, namely school attendance and nutrition. Work is also underway to develop a child-specific MPI that focuses solely on children (rather than others in the household) and adds a child specific dimension for additional indicators (see Bhutan case in this milestone).



Each of these approaches have elements of complexity, ranging from conceptual foundations to the selection of indicators and 'cut-offs' (determining the level of deprivation at which a child or household is considered deprived). Table 2.2 tries to capture some of the basic similarities and differences.

**Table 2.2 – Summary of similarities and differences in multidimensional poverty measures**

	<b>'Bristol-UNICEF'</b>	<b>MODA-UNICEF</b>	<b>MPI-OPHI/UNDP</b>
<b>Conceptual foundation</b>	Child rights (CRC)	Child rights (CRC)	Capabilities/human development
<b>Headline number</b>	Headcount: % of children living in moderate poverty and severe poverty. Intensity of child poverty. Adjusted headcount (headcount x intensity of poverty).	Headcount: % of children living in poverty. Intensity of child poverty. Adjusted headcount (headcount x intensity of poverty).	Headcount: % of people living in poverty. Intensity of poverty. Adjusted headcount (headcount x intensity of poverty).
<b>Main unit of analysis</b>	Child	Child	Household
<b>Dimensions (HH=household level indicator &amp; ages covered)</b>	Education (6–17) Health (0–4) Nutrition (0–4) Water (HH – all ages) Sanitation (HH– all ages) Shelter (HH– all ages) Information (HH– all ages)	Education (5–17) Health (0–4) Nutrition (0–4) Water (HH– all ages) Sanitation (HH– all ages) Shelter (HH– all ages) Information (HH – all ages) Protection from violence (2–14)	Education (attendance of school-aged children and years of schooling of adults in HH) Health (child mortality and underweight among 0–4 and low BMI among adults) Living Standard (electricity, safe water, sanitation flooring, cooking fuel, assets ownership, HH)
<b>Determining what is considered deprived in each dimension</b>	Determined at country level for national analysis. Deprivation cut-offs for each indicator, where multiple indicators for a dimension aggregation methods vary, and can produce different results.  Determines moderate and severe deprivation in each dimension.	Determines deprivation in each dimension.	Determines standard deprivation and destitution measure (or more extreme deprivation cutoffs) in each dimension.
<b>Ages covered</b>	Generally 0–17 It can distinguish between the needs of children of different ages: early childhood, school age, and adolescence.	0–4 & 5–17 It distinguishes between the needs of children of different ages: early childhood, school age, and adolescence.	Household (can be disaggregated for children living in multidimensionally poor households. Child-specific modules being developed.
<b>Defining poverty</b>	Severe poverty: two or more severe deprivations. Moderate poverty: two or more deprivations.	Generally if a child is deprived in two or more dimensions they are considered poor. Depth of poverty considered through headcount adjusted by intensity of poverty. It focuses on the type and number of deprivations experienced simultaneously by each child.	The dimensions are weighted equally and the indicators within each dimension are also weighted equally. Considered poor if deprived in at least one third of the weighted indicators.
<b>Group analysis</b>	All categories in DHS/MICS (wealth, location, gender, HH size, education of HH head, orphanhood).		



With different approaches generally applied in different places, there has been limited work analysing the variations in results of the different approaches, and what this means for the groups of children who may or may not be considered poor. These are important questions where more research is needed.

There are many conclusions one can reach in comparing the approaches – and the guidance on each approach gives the full details – but here are some broad conclusions on some similarities and differences.

- **They all are built from nationally-led processes:** All the methodologies are designed to be tailored to national contexts to create national poverty rates, with final indicators, thresholds and composition methods determined by national stakeholders. As such, whichever method is chosen, it is the national process which will define multidimensional poverty and the end results. It is worth noting that both MODA and MPI have versions that can be used for regional or global comparability.
- **Similarity of indicators:** Many of the underlying indicators used are very similar (and particular so for the Bristol and MODA approaches). Given the need to rely on household surveys this is no surprise, but shows a similarity in the foundation of the indices and the aspects of multidimensional poverty being looked at. The MODA guidance suggests including an indicator on violence against children, but its application depends on data availability and context.
- **Children vs. households:** The Global Study and MODA conceptually focus squarely on children, using child-level indicators where possible, whereas the MPI looks at household-level poverty. However, there are some nuances: first, the MPI uses a number of child-level indicators to determine household deprivation and, due to data availability, a number of indicators in the Bristol Approach and MODA rely on household-level indicators (for example water and sanitation). Secondly, MPI can produce a headcount of children living in these poor households. And finally, there is work underway towards an MPI methodology that looks more directly at children.
- **Differences in aggregation and relationship to the rights based approach:** Bristol and MODA are relatively similar in determining deprivation within a dimension e.g. nutrition, health etc. and seeing how many dimensions a child is deprived in to determine whether a child is poor. This is closely attuned to a rights-based approach to poverty measurement, whereby each dimension or right is considered separately. In MPI, deprivation is determined by indicator, and then weighted to be aggregated into an overall poverty measure. There is a lot of complexity behind this, but the bottom line is they may potentially produce quite different results.
- **The depth or severity of poverty:** A simple poverty headcount (percentage of children in poverty) can mask the depth of poverty e.g. how far on average children or households are below the poverty line, that children experience. All three approaches offer ways to look at the depth of poverty and adjust the overall poverty by the depth. These combined numbers can be hard to communicate but they all allow overall poverty and depth of poverty to be presented separately.

- **Looking at overlaps rather than an index:** A critique of indices (and not just multidimensional ones) is that they ‘mash-up’ numbers in a way that makes interpretation difficult. While certainly true, this is also part of their utility in a world where single numbers can carry great influence. MODA in particular, in its implementation as much as its methods, encourages users to focus on the dimensions where children are deprived, and the specific overlaps between them, including where data allows looking at overlaps with monetary poverty. The Bristol Approach has also been applied to look at the overlap between deprivation and monetary poverty, particularly in Latin America. As outlined below, there is growing discussion of using ‘dashboards’ to present multidimensional poverty information without the use of a composite index.

### INDICES OR DASHBOARDS?

With ongoing discussions on the value of composite indices and the SDGs leaving measuring open to national definitions, some countries may prefer to simply create a dashboard of key indicators without aggregating into an index.

A dashboard could allow policy makers and child poverty advocates to look at multidimensional poverty without agreeing on a single method to weight and aggregate them into an index. With the recent development in technologies, dashboards can also allow some simple analysis on an online platform, including: overlap with monetary poverty or wealth index, analysis of different degrees of deprivation, disaggregation or correlation between selected indicators.

There are, however, some downsides. One of the key aims of multidimensional child poverty measures is to capture the attention of policy makers and focus policy and programmes to respond. Dashboards require a higher level of attention and focus than a single indicator, and whether such an approach would work for an area like child poverty can of course only be fully thought through and understood at the national level.

Hybrid approaches are also possible, whereby there is a national multidimensional child poverty index (such as Bristol, MODA or the MPI) complimented by a dashboard that allows policy makers to see dimensions and indicators separately and assess progress and how policies and programmes can affect change.

Some guidance and examples of approaches that may spur thinking are:

- Households’ economic well-being: the OECD dashboard: <http://www.oecd.org/std/na/household-dashboard.htm>
- World Bank: MDG Progress Status: <http://data.worldbank.org/mdgs>
- Alkire and Robles (2016) Measuring Multidimensional Poverty: Dashboards, Union Identification and the Multidimensional Poverty Index. OPHI Research in Progress 46a. University of Oxford.

## Box 2.6

## Child poverty or child well-being?

Well-being is a relatively new concept that has been used to complement or substitute traditional measures of poverty or deprivation. The approach comes from the perspective that purely monetary/material approaches to measuring human development are insufficient to capture many aspects of what makes people, and children, thrive.

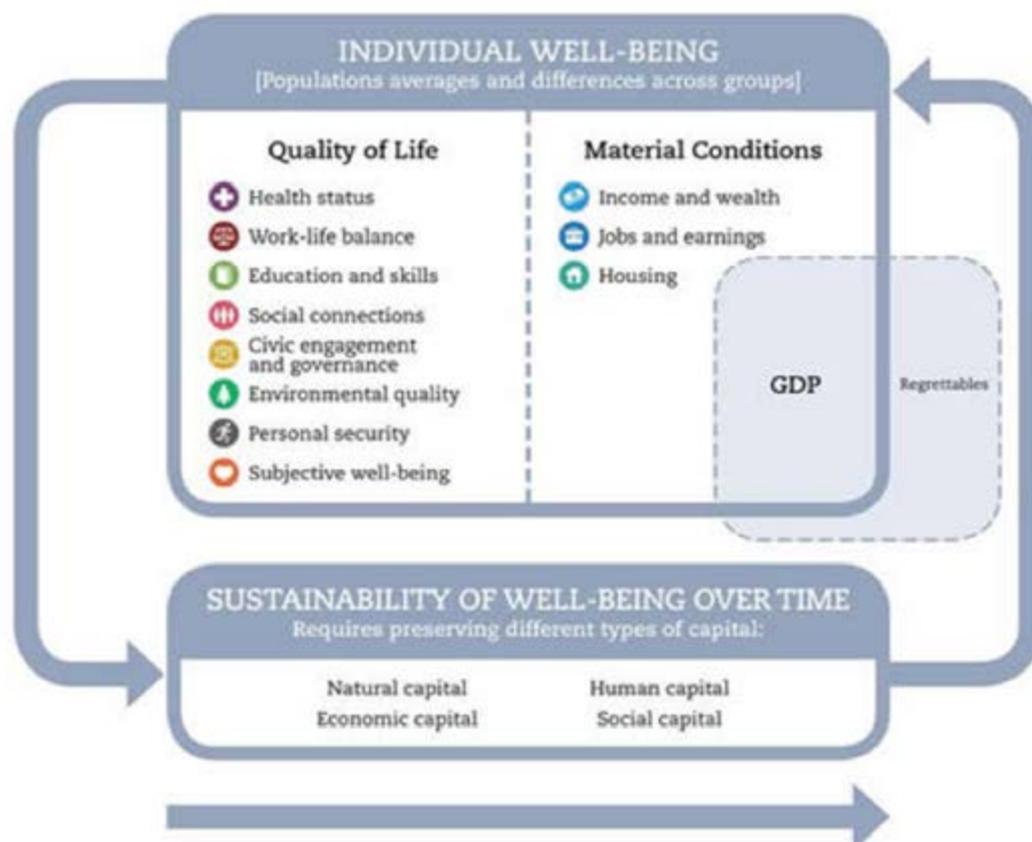
While the SDGs (and so this guide) are focused squarely on poverty (both monetary and multidimensional), there may be both political and conceptual reasons to focus on well-being in some contexts. In some contexts there can be political reluctance to focus on poverty that may be hard to overcome. Even where this is not the case, there may be situations where a positive focus on well-being may be more effective.

Conceptually, well-being approaches may be preferred as they focus beyond material deprivations on indicators of non-material well-being (such as happiness, psychosocial health, parenting and familial patterns and ecological concerns) which are of real significance to the lives of children. For example, the OECD framework for measuring well-being and progress includes items such as 'social connections', 'environmental quality' or 'work-life balances' as pillars of the quality of life.

Considering the different nature and potential policy response to poverty/deprivation and well-being, one approach is to have separate indicators for the two areas. For example, in Mexico, there are a set of indicators for social cohesion that capture economic inequality, social polarisation, social networks and income ratio, reported separately from the multidimensional poverty index.

Resource:

OECD: (2013) Measuring Well-being and Progress: Well-being Research



Source: OECD, 2013

## Which poverty measure to choose: technical vs political considerations

There are many important technical considerations in a national discussion on which child poverty measurement to use, such as the statistical properties of a chosen measure, details on thresholds and cut-offs, or regional and international comparability.

However, often as important are the political considerations around measurement. If the measurement of child poverty fails to reflect what the policymakers or the population consider as poverty, the measurement is unlikely to stimulate discussions or trigger policy response (see Box 2.7).

As such, considerations of what may get traction for the poorest children should come to the fore. For example, where the conception of poverty is entirely monetary and monetary poverty drives policy and programmes, starting with children living in monetary poverty may make sense. Where there are strong foundations and responses to rights-based approaches, an approach such as MODA could have most traction. Where a government strongly supports the MPI, starting with a disaggregation for children and building a child-specific MPI might be most effective. It is important to stress that the SDGs now require reporting of monetary and multidimensional poverty, including for children, which will hopefully ease some of these constraints.

## Building owned and routine measurement, and involving children

While there is no 'correct' way to increase ownership in developing child poverty measurements, in almost all cases it is important for appropriate parts of government to lead the process and key actors to be involved in the process of construction, calculation and dissemination. One activity for this step is to hold a national consultation process or workshop, where the rationale of having child poverty measurement is shared, existing approaches are introduced, and choice of approach, as well as aspects of the measures, are discussed among a wide range of stakeholders. Ideally this would be led by the government and include the NSO, civil society, research organization or donors.

Political support and ownership is closely related to the important step of routinizing child poverty measurement. As shown in UNICEF's global child poverty mapping, in many middle- and high-income countries, routine measurement has become a standard process. While the frequency may depend on data availability and may be subject to political changes, where child poverty measurement is institutionalized, it is calculated, reported and used alongside general poverty measures.

## Box 2.7

## Reasons why some child poverty measures may not get traction

Not all child poverty measures receive widespread use. As a global mapping on child poverty by UNICEF found, in around 20 countries with child poverty measures, child poverty data is not being explicitly discussed or acted upon. Choosing the right measure and process is crucial in getting traction. Problems can occur when:

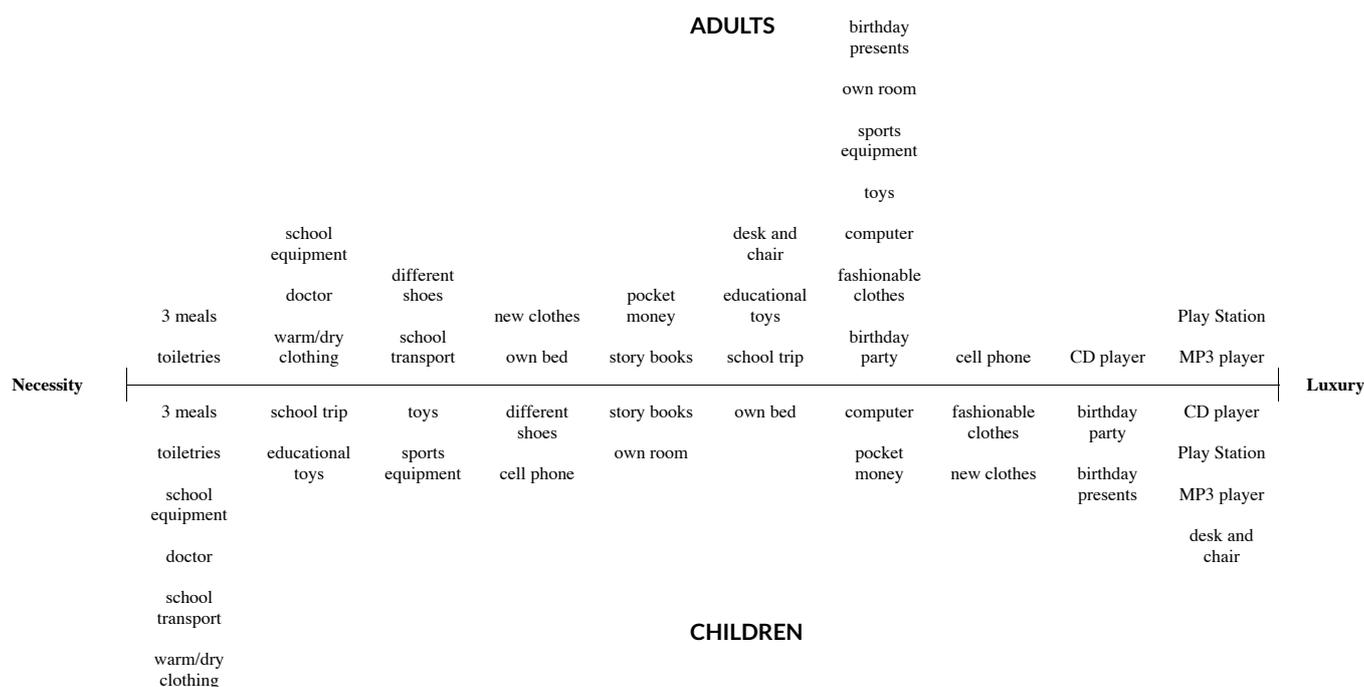
1. **The indicators do not match the country's understanding of poverty and deprivation:** each society has a different understanding of the concept of poverty and within the society perceptions vary. Where approaches are not in line with national thinking poverty measures are likely to get less traction. Read the experience of OPHI [here](#).
2. **Key players are not involved from the onset:** how much engagement occurs in the process will determine how much it will be used afterwards. Measurement is not only a technical process but a political one of engaging various actors.
3. **There is too much political sensitivity to discuss and measure poverty:** some governments may not acknowledge that poverty is a problem in the country. In such situations, other indicators, for example child well-being, could work as a measurement without politicizing the issue. It is important to note of course the SDGs do now require poverty and child poverty reporting.
4. **The child poverty measure is isolated from general poverty measurement:** in countries where there is already a mainstream poverty indicator for the general population, creating something entirely different for children could lessen its effectiveness. One can instead think of how to disaggregate the general measure for children or how to add child-specific indicators to the existing approaches.
5. **The child poverty measure is too complicated and technical:** particularly for multidimensional measures, the weights, indicators and aggregation could look complex and thus may not be accepted. Countries have recently used infographics (such as the infographic of *Índice de pobreza multidimensional* from Ecuador), for example, to communicate what and how poverty is measured with the general public.
6. **The process of creating a child poverty measure is too long:** another challenge in creating new measurement is the time it can take. One way to handle this is to start from disaggregating existing measures for children ('a quick win'), while building more sophisticated measure for children.
7. **The survey is too old:** at the end of the day, without data from a household survey, it remains difficult to construct a measurement. So the best measurement will be heavily influenced by the available survey and a quick stock take can be useful before deciding which measurement to use.

### INVOLVING CHILDREN IN THE PROCESS

Involving children in the process of measuring child poverty not only respects the right of children to participate in processes relevant to their well-being, but is also an effective way to reflect their experience and views about different dimensions of deprivation. There are ongoing research efforts to develop methodologies to reflect the opinions of children into child poverty measurement.

One approach to understand the needs and priorities of children is to ask them what matters most to them. In a study in South Africa that aimed to understand the similarities and differences in the perception of basic social needs among adults and children, children were asked to list items they considered necessary for an acceptable standard of living and then rank them from the items that are most needed to the items they viewed as luxuries. The comparison with adults' views (Figure 2.1) points to the differences in the views of adults and children and thus highlights the importance of taking into account children's views.

Figure 2.1 A comparison of the adult and child views



SOURCE: BARNES AND WRIGHTG (2015)

Another approach uses information from children about their subjective well-being to adjust the weighting of different dimensions. For example, a study by Young Lives in Vietnam looked at the correlation between children's subjective well-being and their outcomes/achievements in five dimensions of the poverty index: education, health, shelter, water and sanitation and child work. It showed that children who were more satisfied with their lives overall had better outcomes in dimensions that had the most immediate impacts on their lives such as shelter, water and sanitation, rather than education and health. Such judgements were taken into account in constructing a multidimensional index and more weights were assigned to the dimensions that were highly associated with child subjective well-being.

While the value of involving children in the process is widely understood in principle, there are challenges to incorporating their perspectives in practice. There are risks of only using children's views in developing a multidimensional poverty index as there could be important aspects that they may not prioritise (it may be challenging for young children, for example, to understand the long-term benefits of nutrition). Their views will also change along cognitive and behavioural development, and depending on their development stages. Accordingly, methodologies and questionnaires must be appropriate to age level and cultural context, and consent from caregivers and children about the purposes and scope of the study must also be sought.

Children's experiences and voices can also be reported separately from quantitative measurement. Where focus group interviews have been conducted with children and youth (or in some countries with child parliaments), their voices have successfully added the reality of child poverty in their own words, improving the effectiveness of child poverty reports for advocacy. See milestone 3 for more on using children's voices helping put child poverty on the map.

**Resources:**

Dat et al. (2015) Weighting Deprivations using Subjective Well-being: An application to the Multidimensional Child Poverty Index in Vietnam, Young Lives Working Paper 142.

Barnes and Wright (2015): Defining child poverty in South Africa using the socially perceived necessities approach.

Graham et al. (2013). Ethical Research Involving Children. UNICEF Office of Research - Innocenti.



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## Measuring poverty in higher-income settings

The SDGs are global goals and thus bind not only developing countries but also middle- and high-income countries to end extreme poverty, and halve child poverty according to the national poverty lines, and in all its dimensions, by 2030.

Much of the proceeding sections are equally relevant across all income settings, however measures for this target may be different in middle- or higher-income countries in several ways. Here, are some common shifts in poverty measurements as countries move through development.

### MONETARY MEASURES

First, while poverty is captured by household consumption in most developing countries, income is more frequently used in higher-income countries. Many advanced economies have been using income-based measures since the 1960s. At the same time, it has also been argued that consumption is considered more closely related to well-being, as it captures the outcome, as opposed to available resources, captured by income (for more details, see references below). Thus, which measure to use is an on-going debate among experts, and more importantly, the choice will depend on context, such as data availability, history of measurement or credibility of reporting. When income measures are used, the net disposable amount (i.e. the amount of regular periodic inflow of resources, after taxes and transfers) is widely used, as it considers the effect of taxes and transfers which can be very important in poverty status for middle- and high-income countries.

Secondly, many higher-income countries adopt a relative poverty line in replacement of, or in addition to, absolute poverty lines. Absolute poverty lines are often based on estimates of the basic costs of food needs and non-food needs. On the other hand, relative poverty lines are drawn from a country's overall income or consumption distribution. For instance, OECD defines the poverty line as 50 per cent of the median income (i.e. the income level where exactly half of the households earn more and the other half earn less), while the EU define it as 60 per cent of the median income. Relative poverty lines build on the idea that nobody should live with "resources that are so seriously below those commanded by the average individual or family that they are, in effect, excluded from ordinary living patterns, customs and activities" (as articulated by a leading authority on this issue, Peter Townsend). Still, there is a risk in using relative measures. For example, when the relative poverty line does not guarantee access to basic needs it will underestimate the number of those living in poverty. To complement each measure, the UK, for example, uses combination of both absolute and relative poverty measures in monitoring child poverty.

Finally, equivalence scales are often different in higher-income countries. To rank households of different sizes, the household level consumption is often divided by the number of members of the household size to compute

per capita consumption in developing countries. The scaling is different in many OECD and EU countries, where they assign different weight for additional adult members and children. There are different methodologies, for example EUROSTAT adopts an OECD modified scale, which assign a value of 1 to the household head, 0.5 to each additional adult member and of 0.3 to each child. An additional adult member has lower weight, since some of the household goods and services can be shared without adding the same cost for the first adult (for example, housing or electricity). Children are given a lower rate and given a lower cost for their consumption, such as food. However, in contexts where the needs for children are as high as adults due to the cost of healthcare or education, a per capita scale may be more appropriate.

**Further resources:**

**General resources on monetary measurements:**

The Poverty Site – relative poverty, absolute poverty and social exclusion.

World Bank: Defining welfare measures

**Income or consumption:**

Maxwell (1999) The Meaning and Measurement of Poverty. ODI policy briefing.

**Absolute or relative:**

Townsend Centre for International Poverty Research – Relative Deprivation Concept.

**Per capita or different equivalence scales:**

OECD: What are equivalence scales?

Bellu and Liberati (2005) Equivalence Scales: General Aspects.

## MULTIDIMENSIONAL MEASURES

In higher-income countries it is also common to combine income with other dimensions of poverty, but practices on multidimensional poverty measurement vary considerably among different countries and institutions. This reflects the changes in social norms and perceptions regarding minimum living standards, as well as increased data availability that can capture more aspects of child well-being.

Ireland was the first EU country to adopt a poverty target in 1997, based on a combination of both a relative poverty line, as well as multidimensional deprivations. The EU has adopted a similar approach, using both a relative monetary poverty line and multidimensional deprivation, to monitor progress on poverty and social exclusion. Technical working groups are set up to construct child material deprivations to be used in the region. In addition to official government poverty statistics, there are regional or global institutions that produce multidimensional measures of child poverty, using different indicators to highlight diverse aspects of child well-being. Results from regional comparisons have been particularly effective in advocacy, as the ranking of countries often stimulates policy debates and attracts media attention.

Table 2.3: Approaches to measuring child poverty in higher-income settings

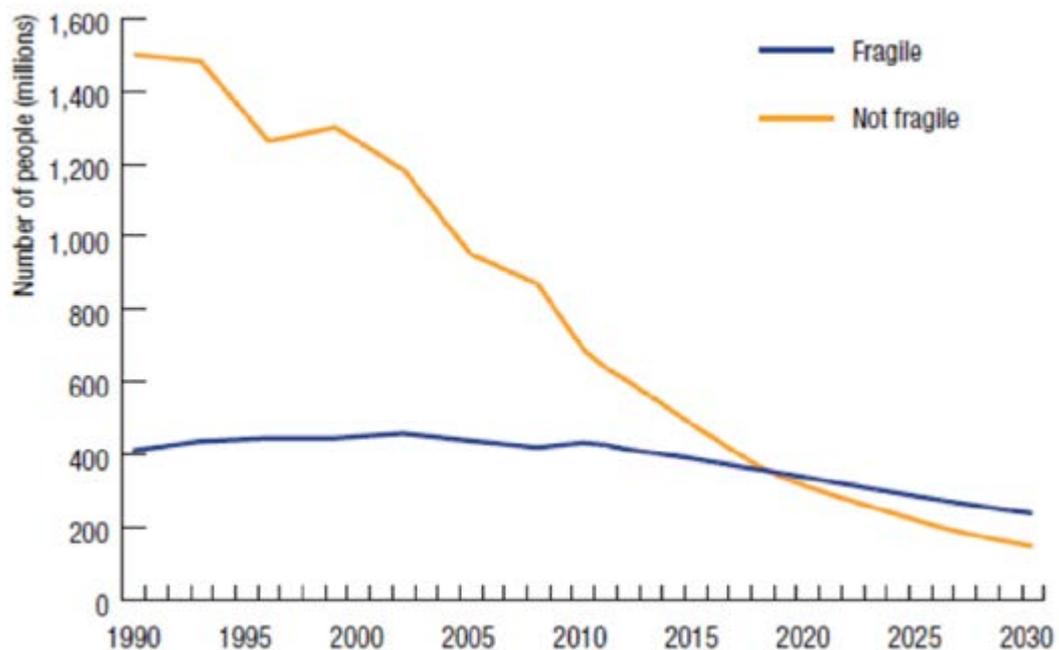
Country/ Organization	Measurement	Resources
<b>EU (EUROSTAT)</b>	<p>The EU monitors progress towards The Europe 2020 strategy based on the AROPE ('at-risk-of poverty or social exclusion') indicator, which consists of three sub-indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Monetary poverty:</b> 60% of the national median equivalized disposable income.</li> <li>- <b>Material deprivation:</b> People deprived in at least 4 out of 9 deprivations (such as inability to pay rent or utility bills, take a week holiday away from home, or lack of TV, telephone, washing machine or a car).</li> <li>- <b>Exclusion from the labour market:</b> People living in households with very low work intensity calculated as those aged 0-59 living in households where adults worked less than 20% of their total work potential during the past year.</li> </ul> <p>The data is collected through EU-SILC; as of 2015, the indicators specific to children are currently under development.</p>	<p>EU-SILC Recent data</p> <p>Source: Guio. et al. (2012) Measuring Material Deprivation in the EU: Indicators for the Whole Population and Child-Specific Indicators</p>
<b>OECD</b>	<p>The <b>Child Well-being Module (CWBM)</b> is a new dataset for age-specific child well-being information including data on policies, family and community contexts, and outcomes. However, there is no aggregated index produced for each country.</p>	
<b>UNICEF – Office of Research (Innocenti)</b>	<p>Innocenti's report card series include a league table ranking the OECD countries using different measurements. Report Card 10 ranked 29 countries based on the child deprivation rate, calculated as the percentage of children (age 1 to 16) who lack two or more of 14 items. The items included, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Three meals a day.</li> <li>- Internet connection.</li> <li>- Money to participate in school trips.</li> </ul>	<p>UNICEF (2014) Measuring child poverty</p> <p>Innocenti Website</p>
<b>Ireland</b>	<p>Ireland was the first EU country to adopt a poverty target in 1997.</p> <p>The official child poverty measure defines a child as poor if either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Living below 60 % of the median income; or</li> <li>- Lacking two or more items from a list of 11 items (including shoes, coat, new clothes and heating).</li> </ul>	<p>Government of Ireland, Department of Social Protection</p>
<b>USA</b>	<p>The Census Bureau has been responsible for officially measuring poverty since the 1960s when President Johnson declared a war on poverty. The measure uses pre-tax cash income and a threshold that is set at three times the cost of a minimum food diet in 1963, updated annually for inflation using the Consumer Price Index and adjusted for family size, composition, and age of householder. The poverty rate is disaggregated by age group, ethnicity and other demographic groups.</p> <p>Since 2010, a second measure called the Supplementary Poverty Measure has also been used, taking into account government benefits and necessary expenses such as taxes.</p>	<p>Infographics by the Census Bureau (2014)</p> <p>Kids Count Data Center by the Annie E. Casey Foundation</p>

## Measuring child poverty in fragile and humanitarian contexts: challenges and innovations

Conflicts, political instability and humanitarian crises have been one of the largest challenges in the world's efforts to eradicate extreme poverty. Rough estimates suggest that the overall size of the problem is huge, with about a third of people in poverty living in fragile states, with that proportion expected to rise to more than a half by 2030. The consequences for children, both immediate and on their long term development, can be catastrophic.

Given the lack of security and governance to conduct surveys, building more precise and usable national data on poverty and child poverty is a significant challenge in such environments. Not surprisingly, fragile and conflict-prone countries were a key group among the 29 countries that collected no monetary poverty data, or the 28 countries that only collected poverty data once, between 2002–2011.

**Figure 2.2 Number of people in poverty: fragile states versus stable countries, official estimates and baseline scenario, 1990–2030**



Source: CHANY, ET AL (2013)

While there is no easy solution to these challenges of measurement, some countries are experimenting with new approaches and using new technologies to fill the data gap.

- In Somalia, a high-frequency survey using a questionnaire on a smartphone has significantly reduced the time and cost of conducting a survey, compared to the traditional approaches.
- During the Ebola crises in Liberia, where in-person interviews were difficult to conduct, the World Bank, with the Liberian Institute of Statistics Geo-Information Services and Gallup, conducted five rounds of mobile-phone surveys to identify the socioeconomic impact of the crises.
- The World Food Programme (WFP) has piloted the use of the airtime credit (or top-ups) as a proxy for food security and poverty indicators and found a high correlation between the airtime credit and the data on food consumption, collected through a traditional survey for comparison.
- UNICEF Jordan used the Inter-Agency Vulnerability Assessment Framework (VAF) to identify the most vulnerable families eligible for the child cash grant targeted to Syrian refugees in the country. VAF uses beneficiary profiles, built from a simple survey, to predict the expenditure level of the households, assisting prioritization of the refugees in most need of help.

This a crucial but emerging area of work. Some useful references include:

**On the situation of poverty in fragile and humanitarian contexts:**

Chandy et al. (2015) From a Billion to Zero: Three Key Ingredients to End Extreme Poverty

**On countries without poverty data:**

Serajuddin et al. (2015) Data Deprivation: Another Deprivation to End

**On innovative approaches:**

World Bank (2015) Measuring Poverty in 60 minutes to Help Somalia Address Data Deprivation

World Bank (2015) The Socio-Economic Impacts of Ebola in Liberia

Nielsen (2016) WFP harnesses the power of modern mobile data collection with Nielsen pro bono support

**On VAF:**

UNHCR (2015) Introducing the Vulnerability Assessment Framework

## C. Producing child poverty rates

A concern that can arise in child poverty measurement is that it is technically complex and time-consuming. However, once a preferred measure has been chosen, there are established methodologies and approaches to moving forward. This section gives an overview of these approaches and points to available guidance.

### CASE 1: DISAGGREGATING THE NATIONAL MONETARY POVERTY RATE FOR CHILDREN

If the poverty rate is already calculated for the general population, then the monetary poverty rate for children can be simply obtained by disaggregating the national poverty rate (see Box 2.7 for an indicative example). It is important to receive support from all actors involved in the general poverty calculation, to make sure that child poverty information is used whenever the general poverty rate is discussed.

#### **Results produced:**

- Monetary poverty rate for children, in comparison with the national poverty rate.
- The child poverty rate will vary depending on the poverty threshold (international poverty rate \$1.90 per day or national poverty line).
- Disaggregation available by age range (0-4, 5-9, 10-14 and 15-17); geographical region; urban-rural; gender and ethnic/linguistic; disability and other sub-groups as appropriate.

#### **Actors often involved:**

- National government. Often led by the National Statistical Office and Ministry of Finance/Planning.
- The World Bank has rich experience and expertise in measuring and analysing monetary child poverty globally.
- In many countries, independent researchers/institutes support the government to compute and analyse the monetary poverty rate.

**Process, considerations and timeline:**

The table below is a sample process and timeline to produce a monetary poverty rate disaggregated for children. It is assumed that the country already has some estimate of the national monetary poverty rate for the general population without age disaggregation to estimate the child poverty rate. The process will differ if a country needs to start from building a monetary poverty rate for the general population (more guidance on this is available in the resources from the World Bank listed below).

	<b>Process</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Rough timeline</b>
1	Identify if there is recent measurement, availability of age disaggregation and the main actors involved in the process.	Additional useful questions may include: - How was the poverty rate disseminated and received from policymakers or public? - Are there any plans to update the calculation?	Up to 1 month.
2	Build political support from the concerned actors to disaggregate poverty rate for children.	See Milestone 1. The most simple and universal reason to do this is the SDGs target that requires poverty reduction for all men, women and children.  Building a partnership of agencies with similar interest could give more strength in advocacy.	Depends on context.
3	Data analysis to compute the child poverty rate.	Some items to be discussed in this step are: poverty thresholds (for example, international poverty line, national poverty line), equivalence scales, options for disaggregation and dissemination.  Technically, the only additional information required for disaggregation for children is the number of children living in households under the poverty line.	1 month.
4	Produce briefing/reports with dissemination activities.	One of the advantages of calculating the monetary child poverty rate is it's comparability with the adult poverty rate. Thus, in disseminating the results, it will be most effective and influential if the child poverty rate and analysis is integrated into the country's overall poverty report or assessment.	1-2 months.

**Guides and materials:**

- The World Bank, Measuring Poverty: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/measuringpoverty>
- The World Bank's Poverty Databank: <http://povertydata.worldbank.org/poverty/home/>
- PEP training material on poverty assessment and poverty analysis (<https://www.pep-net.org/training-material-2>) and recommended readings (<https://www.pep-net.org/recommended-readings-2>). DAD is a software that can be used to analyse poverty and inequity and DASP is a STATA package to help analyse the distribution of living standards (<http://www.pep-net.org/dad-dasp>).

## Box 2.8

**HOUSEHOLD POVERTY RATE VS. CHILD POVERTY RATE:  
AN INDICATIVE EXAMPLE**

HH ID	# of Children	Poverty status
HH1	2	Poor
HH2	0	Non-Poor
HH3	1	Non-Poor
HH4	3	Poor
HH5	2	Non-Poor
<b>Total</b>	<b>8 children</b>	

**Household  
Poverty Rate**  
=  $2/5 = 40\%$

**Child Poverty Rate**  
=  $5/8 = 62.5\%$

**CASE 2: DEVELOPING A MULTIDIMENSIONAL  
CHILD POVERTY MEASURE (BRISTOL, MODA OR MPI)**

As there are many similarities in the process for creating a multidimensional poverty measure for children regardless of the methodology (for example Bristol, MODA or MPI), this case covers all three approaches, noting key differences.

**Results produced:**

- Multidimensional child deprivation rate.
- Child deprivation rate by dimension (such as health, education) or by indicator (for example, primary school enrolment rate) and how they overlap with each other (MODA).
- How much the deprivation overlaps with monetary poverty or subjective well-being (only when the same dataset covers different areas).
- The intensity of deprivation among the deprived, and the adjusted multidimensional deprivation rate.
- Disaggregation including for: different age ranges (0-4, 5-9, 10-14 and 15-17); by geographical region; urban-rural; gender and ethnic/linguistic; disability and other sub-groups as appropriate and available.

**Actors often involved:**

- National government, including the National Statistical Office, Ministry of Finance.
- Country-level process will establish indicators and cut-offs (in effect the multidimensional poverty line) and so needs to be appropriately broad often including sector Ministries. National and/or international technical experts may be involved.
- Globally, Bristol University leads the methodological development of the Bristol Approach and is often supported in country by UNICEF.
- UNICEF has developed guidelines to MODA, and has also conducted cross-country analysis (CC-MODA).
- OPHI and UNDP globally lead the advocacy and technical discussion on MPI. Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN) supports policymakers to develop multidimensional poverty measures.

**Process, considerations and timeline:**

	<b>Process</b>	<b>Considerations</b>	<b>Timeline</b>
1	Identify existing monetary and multidimensional poverty measures and any data gaps, and how they are used in policy discussions.	For the next step, it will also be useful to understand if there is general support in constructing multidimensional measures for child poverty.	Up to 1 month.
2	Build political support to measure child poverty multidimensionally.	If necessary, conduct short training or workshop on existing multidimensional measures with government officials and partners. If this process is prolonged, one option will be to start from disaggregation of general poverty measures (eg national poverty rate or MPI) while building support for longer and more comprehensive measurement.	Depends on context.
3	Based on identified data source, agree on the construction of child poverty measure, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Age group definitions.</i></li> <li>• <i>Dimensions of child poverty by age groups.</i></li> <li>• <i>Indicators for each dimensions by age groups.</i></li> <li>• <i>Cut-off for each indicator.</i></li> <li>• <i>Method of aggregation into single indicator, including the weights.</i></li> <li>• <i>Multidimensional poverty cut-off (extreme and moderate in the case of the Bristol methodology).</i></li> </ul>	A national consultation could be an effective activity to increase ownership of the results. It could serve two objectives: <p>(1) Introducing the methodology; and</p> <p>(2) Receiving feedback on how to make it fit to national context.</p> <p>Given how poverty is often understood differently by different actors, it is important that the consultation process is inclusive of a wide range of actors.</p>	1 month.
4	Calculating the national child poverty rate, deprivation rates by different age groups and dimensions and overlaps across different dimensions.	There is a slight difference in the way each methodology analyses the headcount or overlaps. See the comparison in Table 2.2 above.	1-2 months.
5	Additional analysis, such as intensity of deprivation among deprived children or combination with monetary dimensions or subjective well-being.	While this can add information regarding different aspects of child poverty, there is a risk of the report being too long or technically complicated.	2-3 months.
6	Produce country reports and dissemination of results.	In many cases, a national child poverty report or brief is published as an outcome (see Milestone 3). Stronger advocacy if combined with workshops or dialogue with the politicians.	2-3 months.

**Guides and materials:****Bristol Approach:**

- UNICEF (2007) ***Global Study Guide*** - a detailed and comprehensive guide to conduct Global Study, including statistical tables and template Terms of Reference.
- Gordon and Nandy (2012), ***Measuring Child Poverty and Deprivation*** - technical guide, more focused on the Bristol Approach to measure child poverty and deprivation.
- UNICEF and ECLAC (2014) ***Guide to Estimating Child Poverty*** details how the Bristol method was adapted to Latin American countries.

**MODA:**

- The UNICEF Office of Research (Innocenti) ***MODA website*** is a great place to find country examples, as well as cross-country analysis.
- De Neubourg et al. (2012) ***Step-by-step Guidelines to MODA*** provides detailed instructions on how to calculate child poverty rates based on MODA.

**MPI:**

- ***OPHI website***: recent updates on measurement, policy applications and research.
- Alkire and Robles (2015) ***Multidimensional Poverty Index - Winter 2015/16: Brief Methodological Note and Results*** provides the latest updates of estimations in various countries, as well as brief notes on the methodology.



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## D. Country examples



# CAMBODIA

## Advocacy to disaggregate monetary poverty rate for children as an indicator of a national development plan

### TIME

2013–2016: from advocacy for equity-focused monitoring to an official adoption of child poverty as part of key indicators for national development strategy, and further mainstreaming of child poverty measurement in the national poverty assessment process.

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- Cambodia Socio-Economic Surveys (CSES).
- Cambodia Demographic Health Surveys (CDHS).
- Ability to analyse household datasets.
- Positioning to influence national development planning.

### STAKEHOLDERS

- Ministry of Planning, including National Institute of Statistics
- Ministry of Economy and Finance
- Supreme National Economic Council
- Social ministries
- UNICEF
- UNDP
- UNFPA
- WB
- ADB

As part of the discussion to develop indicators for the new National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP), UNICEF as a member of the inter-sectoral working group, advocated successfully for the monetary poverty rate to be disaggregated for children and also to include the child poverty rate as one of the key target indicators of NSDP. Collaborative work with the government is ongoing to add a multidimensional approach to measuring child poverty.

### THE APPROACH

1. In 2012, the Ministry of Planning (MoP) set up an inter-sectoral National Working Group on Monitoring and Evaluation of National Strategic Plan (NSDP) to address the recommendations from the Mid-Term Review of the NSDP 2009–2013. The main function of the National Working Group was to develop key indicators for the new NSDP covering the period of 2014–2018. UNICEF, as a member of the working group, has advocated for the inclusion of indicators and targets that captures widening inequality across many dimensions of well-being of the population, particularly children.
2. In the above context, UNICEF also advocated for measuring monetary poverty not only for total population but specifically for children and setting concrete target for child poverty reduction in the new NSDP. As a result, the NSDP 2014–2018 includes child poverty as one of the key indicators with concrete annual targets, along with age-disaggregated indicators regarding health, nutrition, water and sanitation, and education with focus on the bottom quintile.
3. In 2014, UNICEF provided technical support on monetary child poverty analysis to MoP, involving two key departments - The General Department of Planning (GDP) and National Institute of Statistics (NIS) - in order to produce the monetary child poverty rate based on the 2012 household survey. The analysis revealed that child poverty was 29 per cent, significantly higher than the national poverty rate of 18.9 per cent.

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4. In 2015 UNICEF and the MoP jointly reflected on the needs to further strengthen the national capacity to measure and report child poverty on an annual basis, particularly using a multi-dimensional approach. It was also agreed to integrate child poverty analysis into the national poverty assessment process to strengthen linkages with recommendations and follow-up actions by different government institutions. In this regard, future capacity development will target broader stakeholders composing the National Poverty Assessment Working Group which includes the MOP, Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF), Supreme National Economic Council (SNEC), and key social ministries such as the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Affairs.



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1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy

4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions



# THAILAND

## Conducting the global study with strong national ownership

National ownership was a key principle guiding UNICEF's Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities Initiative and a key element in influencing national policy-making processes. Thailand followed an approach that allowed for ownership among national stakeholders, including leadership of the process by the National Economic and Social Development Board (NESDB), the main planning agency under the Prime Minister's Office.

### TIMELINE

- 2007: launch of the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities.
- 2010: launch of Thailand's Child Poverty Report.
- 2013: social protection national assessment.
- 2015: child support grant was introduced.

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- Ability to compute multidimensional child poverty rate from MICS and SES data.
- Understanding of local policies.
- Ability and experience to work with multiple stakeholders.

### STAKEHOLDERS

- NESDB
- Ministry of Social Development and Human Security
- National Statistics Office
- Other government agencies
- Academia
- NGOs

### THE APPROACH

1. Thailand conducted its child poverty report focusing on three components: a review of development policies, child poverty and disparities measurement (using the Bristol methodology), and policy recommendations.
2. From the onset, NESDB senior officials encouraged staff members to actively participate in the study as an opportunity to build their research capabilities and enhance knowledge on the impact of poverty on children.
3. The child poverty rates were calculated together with the leading national economic think tank (Thailand Development and Research Institute), academia and other experts. The calculations showed that despite the government's success in the almost universal provision of services, approximately one in ten children were malnourished and out of school.
4. Focus group meetings were held with a wide range of stakeholders at senior level, providing inputs to the policy recommendations.
5. Given that deprivations were particularly severe in the Northeast region and among vulnerable children such as children with disabilities and minority populations, the study recommended expansion of service provision with emphasis on the most marginalized. The full report was published in Thai with an executive summary in English.
6. Following the launch of the report, advocacy focused on strengthening the national social protection system, including the introduction of a child support grant for all children under 6 years. Continuing to implement the principle of 'national ownership', a strategic partnership was initiated between the Law Reform Commission, academia, civil society, and other key stakeholders, which led to the introduction of a child support grant in 2015.

#### For more information:

For Thailand's Child Poverty Study, please go to: <https://sites.google.com/site/thailandchildpovertystudy/>

The brief is available at: <http://www.devinfolive.info/childdisparities/ChildDisparitiesWebService/stock/RefernceDocuments/ASITHA.pdf>

#### Source:

Fajth et al. (2012) A multidimensional response to tackling child poverty and disparities: reflections from the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities in Global Child Poverty and Well-being, edited by Alberto Minujin and Shailen Nandy, p. 531.



# MALI

## Conducting MODA with key national stakeholders

Mali's first national estimates of child deprivation rates were produced using the MODA methodology through a national process involving a wide range of key stakeholders. The study puts overlapping analysis at the core and closely examines the relationships between multidimensional deprivations and monetary poverty.

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- MICS (included both monetary and multidimensional indicators).
- Ability to organize and analyse household datasets.
- Ability to engage the government and CSOs in the process.

### STAKEHOLDERS

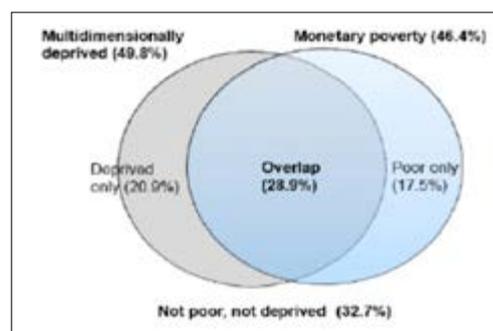
- Ministries of Planning and Finance and UNICEF conveyed a national participatory process.
- National Statistical Institute and other development partners participated in the technical group to decide on details of the methodology.

### For more information:

de Milliano and Handa. (2014) Child Poverty and Deprivation in Mali. UNICEF

### THE APPROACH

1. **The rich dataset that existed in Mali**, especially the integrated survey allowing analysis of both monetary and multidimensional poverty, led the country to use national MODA as their child poverty measurement.
2. **At the initial phase of the process, a national workshop was held to define the age groups, dimensions and indicators.** This workshop was inclusive and participatory, involving key ministries, development actors and the National Statistical Office.
3. **Based on the consultation process, the national child deprivation rate was computed.** The calculation was made by UNICEF Innocenti, with inputs from local policymakers during two missions. The computed child poverty rate (50%) was slightly higher than the national monetary child poverty rate of 46%.
4. **The study then looked at the overlap across different dimensions.** For instance, the overlap analysis between nutrition, health and information for children aged 0–23 below shows that only 2.2% of children are deprived of information only and the rest (51%) of children who are deprived of information are also simultaneously deprived of nutrition, health, or both.



5. **Finally, the study analysed the overlap between multidimensional deprivations and monetary poverty.** This revealed that only 58% of deprived children live in poor households. Thus, it was recommended that targeting policies should not solely rely on monetary measures as this could miss a large portion of multidimensionally deprived children.
6. **A national training programme** is planned to equip local policy makers with technical aspects of the analysis and use of data, and to develop national strategies to address child poverty, especially among the most deprived children.





# BHUTAN

## Creating a child multidimensional poverty index

After being one of the pioneers in constructing a national official multidimensional poverty index (MPI), Bhutan became the first country in the world to develop an official national child-specific MPI (C-MPI). This measure focuses exclusively on children and reflects the overlapping deprivations experienced by poor children.

### TIMELINE

- 2010: Launch of National MPI
- 2012: Update of National MPI
- 2016: Launch of National C-MPI

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- Household survey which covers key household and children-specific deprivations.
- Expertise in managing large household datasets.
- Technical capacity to develop and compute a multidimensional poverty index.
- Ability to engage different stakeholders in the process.

### STAKEHOLDERS

- Bhutan's National Statistics Bureau
- UNICEF Bhutan
- National Commission of Women and Children
- Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative

### THE APPROACH

1. Bhutan developed a child-specific MPI to illustrate how such a measure can inform public policy targeting children and to catalyse more regular collection of the data required to assess child poverty in all its dimensions. The study used the Bhutan Multiple Indicators Survey (BMIS 2010), a customized version of UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey. There are more recent datasets, but these include very little information on the particular deprivations of children. This study highlights the need to include in future household surveys a set of indicators that are more appropriate for a measure of poverty covering children at every stage throughout childhood (0–17 years).
2. Taking the individual child as its unit of identification, the C-MPI retains the three dimensions used in Bhutan's national MPI (health, education, and living standards), and adds a fourth dimension, childhood conditions, focused on children's specific needs. This measure permits meaningful decompositions by age cohort and gender, and also permits an analysis of intra-household patterns of deprivations.
3. One of the main challenges of creating an individual child poverty measure is to develop indicators with age-specific specifications, to capture relatively comparable deprivations across different age cohorts within childhood. In the case of Bhutan's C-MPI, the two indicators focused exclusively on how the child's own achievements, namely cognitive skills and childhood conditions, have different specifications for children in different age groups. For instance, the childhood conditions of children aged 0–4 are assessed based on malnutrition, while the childhood conditions of children 5–14 are based on child labour. In early childhood, intellectual stimulation, evidence of play, and adequate care are considered as investments in cognitive skills, akin to schooling in the later cohorts.
4. Bhutan's National Statistics Bureau used this multidimensional framework to investigate the inequality in the incidence of the different types of child deprivations across age, gender, as well as urban and rural areas, districts, household types, and wealth quintiles.
5. The development of the C-MPI was accompanied by a rich portfolio of qualitative interviews with children living in poverty. Interviews uncovered children's own views. The findings of this study will be published together with the quantitative analysis of the C-MPI, to provide a groundbreaking study that will also inform the development of the next C-MPI in Bhutan.

#### For more information:

Alire, S., et al. (2016) Child Poverty in Bhutan: Insights from Multidimensional Child Poverty Index and Qualitative Interviews with Poor Children. National Statistics Bureau.



# MEXICO

## Creating a national index to measure multidimensional poverty

Mexico became the first country in the world to officially adopt a multidimensional poverty methodology which is directly linked to the policy process. This methodology is the result of a thorough research process where national and international experts provided important contributions. It created a unique opportunity to link the programme's design and implementation with their social policy objectives. Mexico's example also demonstrates how engaging with a national poverty index, and not one focused exclusively on children, can have significant impacts in reducing child poverty.

### TIMELINE

- Eight years from first conception to poverty measure being the official measure.
- One year to develop the multidimensional index.

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

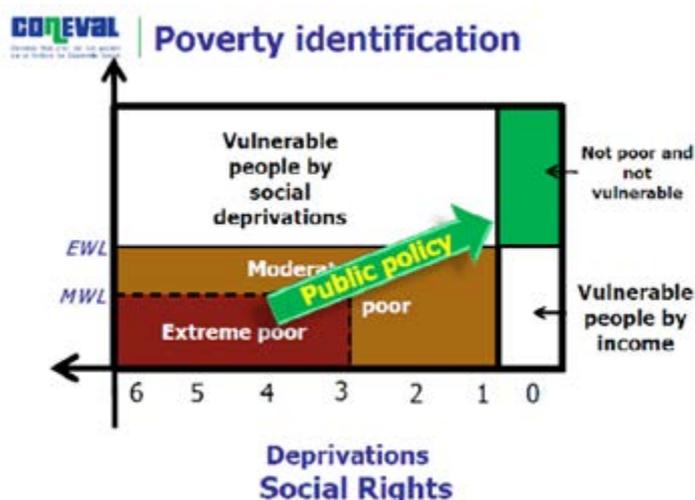
- Household survey which covers key deprivations and consumption (spending).
- Expertise in managing large household datasets.
- Knowledge of global approaches to multidimensional poverty.

### STAKEHOLDERS

- High level government stakeholders (Presidency, Ministry of Social Development, Ministry of Finance, other ministries).
- Independent statistical body.
- 6 out of 10 members of the CONEVAL Board are independent academic researchers.
- International and national experts.

### THE APPROACH

1. **Multidimensional poverty measurement is mandated by law.** Mexico's Congress approved the General Law for Social Development which established an independent Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) in 2004. CONEVAL was given technical and administrative autonomy to undertake two major tasks: firstly, to design the multidimensional poverty methodology that combines economic well-being and social rights, and secondly, to regulate and undertake the evaluation of social policies.
2. **In 2009, the government adopted a multidimensional poverty measure that incorporates indicators of income (current per capita income), social deprivations and the degree of social cohesion.** The social deprivation index measures six social rights guaranteed by the National Constitution, namely: educational attainment, access to healthcare, access to social security, housing, quality of living spaces, and food security. A person is multidimensionally poor if he/she is deprived in one or more social rights and their income is lower than the estimated cost to cover their basic needs (Economic Wellbeing Line). A person is extremely poor if they are deprived in three or more social rights and also living under a total income that affords a basic food basket (Minimum Wellbeing Line). The indicators for social cohesion (reported separately) are economic inequality, social polarization, social networks and income ratio.



While the index is not exclusively focused on child poverty, it covers critical dimensions of child deprivation. These include child specific components such as educational attainment, and as well as deprivations that are shared with other family members such as housing and food security. This highlights that effective general approaches to poverty reduction, not just child specific ones, can have significant impacts on child poverty.

3. **Routine measurement of multidimensional poverty at state and municipal level.** The same law also makes it mandatory to measure poverty routinely every two years at the national and state level and every five years at the municipal level. The results have been presented in a colour-coded map on CONEVAL's website, making it accessible to the public in an intuitive manner.
4. **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 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 the Federal Government to provide a social safety net through pensions for the elderly not covered by existing, employment-related schemes.
5. **CONEVAL and UNICEF have jointly produced estimates of child poverty to bring attention to the situation of children and child-focused policy responses.** During 2010–2014, the child poverty rate (53.9%) was significantly higher than the national poverty rate (46.2%). The full reports have had a wide impact in national media, civil society, and government publication on social programmes. They have also opened an ongoing discussion about how child poverty can be included in the new social development targeting framework. The child poverty rates are planned to be updated every two years.

**For more information:**

The CONEVAL website gives full details on the methodology and results.

CONEVAL and UNICEF (2013) Pobreza y derechos sociales de niñas, niños y adolescentes en México, 2010-2012, [www.unicef.org/mexico/spanish/UN\\_BriefPobreza\\_web.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/mexico/spanish/UN_BriefPobreza_web.pdf)

CONEVAL and UNICEF (2014) Niñez y adolescencia, especialmente la indígena, las más afectadas por la pobreza en México', [www.unicef.org/mexico/spanish/PR\\_UNICEFCONEVAL\\_abril2014final.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/mexico/spanish/PR_UNICEFCONEVAL_abril2014final.pdf)

CONEVAL and UNICEF (2015) Pobreza y derechos sociales de niñas, niños y adolescentes en México, 2014. [http://www.unicef.org/mexico/spanish/MX\\_Pobreza\\_derechos.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/mexico/spanish/MX_Pobreza_derechos.pdf)

**Sources:**

OPHI Measuring Multidimensional Poverty: Insights from Around the World





# EYGP

## Capturing child poverty in urban slums

In Egypt, a specific survey focusing on households living in urban slums was conducted to complement the national household survey and shed light on the poor living conditions in the cities affecting over 10 million children.

### TIMELINE

*Two years from initiating the project to the release of publication.*

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- Household survey targeting urban slums.
- Familiarity with the urban slum setting.
- Ability to compute child deprivation rate from household surveys.

### STAKEHOLDERS

- Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS)
- Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements
- Informal Settlements Development Facility (ISDF)
- National Council for Childhood and Motherhood
- Ministry of Social Solidarity
- Ministry of Finance

### THE APPROACH

1. Around 13 million children were estimated to be living in urban areas in Egypt in 2012. While, on average, poverty among families with children living in urban areas is lower than in rural areas, widening disparities within urban settings pointed to the existence of substantial pockets of poverty that were hidden in existing national surveys.
2. To fill the knowledge gap on child poverty in urban slums and unplanned areas, UNICEF and the Informal Settlements Development Facility (ISDF) of the Egyptian Government conducted a household survey, which included a community questionnaire in selected urban slums and unplanned areas in four major Egyptian cities. The survey design drew from previous research undertaken through the multidimensional child poverty reports conducted as part of the Global Study on child poverty and disparities but also incorporated measures of income poverty.
3. The study found that child poverty in urban slum areas were high, in some cases reaching or exceeding that of rural areas. For example, the monetary poverty rate in selected slums (42 per cent) was almost 10 percentage points higher than the rural average of 33 per cent and 16 percentage points higher than the national average of 26 per cent. In addition, more than half of children living in slums were multidimensionally poor, experienced severe deprivation in more than one key dimension of well-being, especially those related to housing and access to water and sanitation, as well as nutrition and education.
4. Based on the findings, the report also developed concrete integrated policy recommendations to address child poverty in urban slums and unplanned areas, with a focus on interventions such as ensuring access to social protection interventions to address deprivations identified, integrating them with housing and infrastructure interventions, education, health, child protection and recreation for children.
5. The launch of the report, with the Ministry of Urban Renewal and Informal Settlements generated policy dialogue with ministries, governorates and local NGOs, and stimulated the discussion for a national strategy to address child poverty in urban areas.

#### Source:

UNICEF (2013) Multidimensional child poverty in slums and unplanned areas in Egypt.



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1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy

4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

## Conclusion

Routinely measuring child poverty is the foundation to understanding, communicating and ending child poverty. Subsequent milestones look at how child poverty data can be analysed and brought to life. It's important to note that in many contexts this analysis is done at the same time as measurement is undertaken. These steps include:

**Advocating around child poverty data and building a child poverty profile (Milestone 3).** Child poverty data is at the heart of advocacy on child poverty, and Milestone 3 looks at key ways child poverty data can be used to highlight the situation of children in poverty and the aspects of their lives that are most affected.

**Understanding the causes of child poverty as a basis of influencing policies and programmes (Milestone 4).** To know how to address child poverty, it is important to know not only the child poverty profile of a country but also the causes of child poverty. These may range, for example, from discrimination to insufficient funding of services.

**Monitoring child poverty targets through appropriate national and international mechanisms (Milestone 5).** Ultimately child poverty data should be used to track and respond to progress (or the lack of it) through national mechanisms, which may vary from national poverty commissions to child poverty action plans, as well as international reporting for the SDGs.

### **MILESTONE 2 CHECKLIST: INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- ✓ Agreement on national approach to measuring child poverty, including for SDG reporting.
- ✓ Child poverty rate and key disaggregations calculated.
- ✓ Key actors engaged, and national ownership and publication of data.
- ✓ Agreement to routinize measurement as relevant surveys are produced.



A world  
**free**  
from **child**  
**poverty**

## Milestone 3 Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy



**END CHILD**  
**POVERTY**  
GLOBAL COALITION

unicef 



# Milestone 3

## Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy



### KEY MESSAGES

- Having clear (but flexible) advocacy intentions is important – formalized strategies may or may not be helpful.
- Experience shows the issue of child poverty can effectively capture national attention.
- Building broad based support can be crucial for ensuring sustainable support for child poverty that can survive political changes.
- General advocacy can be the foundation for targeted policy and programme change (considered in Milestone 4).

Across political spectrums there is virtually universal agreement that every girl and boy deserves to grow up free from poverty and with an equal chance to achieve their full potential.

Accordingly, the vision of ending child poverty has the power to capture the sentiment of a broad range of policy makers as well as members of the public. Building this support is crucial both for immediate action, but also sustainable support for the poorest children that can survive shifting political winds and priorities.

Raising the profile of child poverty needs a proactive plan with clear intentions. While measurement is a vital and necessary first step, numbers have a habit of sitting in computers or in tomes on shelves. The experience of many countries shows that advocacy to put child poverty on the map is an important step forward, that is then built on with more targeted analysis and advocacy for specific policy change.

This milestone focuses on these more general areas of advocacy to put child poverty on the agenda. The next milestone (Milestone 4) then looks in detail at how child poverty analysis can support and influence specific programmatic and policy change.

### KEY STEPS TO ACHIEVING MILESTONE 3:

- A** IDENTIFYING ADVOCACY OBJECTIVES AND INDICATORS.
- B** DEVELOPING CLEAR MESSAGES FOR CHILD POVERTY USING KEY DATA AND INFORMATION.
- C** COUNTRY APPROACHES TO PUTTING CHILD POVERTY ON THE MAP.

## A. Identifying advocacy objectives and indicators

### A formalized advocacy strategy or going on instinct?

There are detailed approaches to creating comprehensive advocacy strategies (see Box 3.1). While in some contexts these formal and in-depth approaches to building an advocacy strategy will be helpful, experience shows that successful strategies are not always written down or derived from complex processes, but from the key stakeholders driving them having a keen awareness of their objectives and audiences. In other words, what works best will vary.

Further, information from a UNICEF mapping shows there is already great strength and expertise on the ground in how to bring important child issues to national attention.

Given the existing guidance, the wealth of knowledge and experience and the very context-specific approaches to undertaking advocacy, this section hopes to stress the incredible importance of this work, and highlight a few key areas of advocacy approaches specific to child poverty advocacy.

## BOX 3.1

**Building advocacy strategies: useful references**

There are a number of useful guides out there on developing advocacy strategies. Two which are particularly focused on children are:

**Advocacy Matters: Helping children change their world.** An International Save the Children Alliance guide to advocacy.

**Advocacy Toolkit:** A guide to influencing decisions that improve children's lives. UNICEF.

**ADVOCACY TO PUT CHILD POVERTY ON THE MAP (AND KEEP IT THERE)**

Generally, child poverty is an issue that resonates across broad parts of society, and building a strong understanding of child poverty can create a strong and sustainable foundation for including children living in poverty in the policy process. While the support of politicians and civil servants is vital, their priorities can change – and without a strong foundation in the national consciousness the issue can lose traction.

Having clear objectives and indicators for child poverty advocacy is essential to targeting this work towards results and learning over time what works and what doesn't. While audiences and approaches will vary greatly by context, Table 3.1 aims to give ideas of possible objectives and indicators for child poverty advocacy which might support national thinking.

***Having clear objectives and indicators for child poverty advocacy is essential to targeting this work towards results and learning***

Finally, it is important to stress that having clear objectives is not the same as having fixed objectives. A change of government or a national event that hits the news can create new opportunities and block old ones, and over time support and energy for any issue can dim. Allowing advocacy intentions and objectives to be flexible to changing opportunities and environments is essential.

**ADVOCACY AND ANALYSIS TOWARDS ACHIEVING THE MILESTONES**

While this milestone focuses on the broad advocacy objective of putting and keeping child poverty on the agenda, each of the milestones outlined in this guide may have particular advocacy objectives to reach and influence key decision makers.

For example, establishing routine national measurement of child poverty (Milestone 2 in this guide) may require support of the head of national statistics, who perhaps is influenced and informed by particular technical experts or a national statistical office (see Table 3.2). Reaching an end point of incorporating halving child poverty into an evaluated national action plan will require extensive advocacy engagement across different stakeholders – possibly reaching prime ministerial or presidential levels.

**Table 3.1 Putting child poverty of the map: possible advocacy objectives and indicators**

<b>Building support of members of the public</b>	
<b>Possible objectives</b>	<b>Possible indicators</b>
Annual coverage of child poverty across key media platforms (print, radio, television, social media).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appearances by platform (national media, social media).</li> <li>• Numbers reached and demographics.</li> </ul>
Reach to members of the public through civil society organizations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # citizens reached and/or engaged.</li> <li>• New citizen platform is created.</li> <li>• Toolkit for engagement is created.</li> <li>• Social media engagement (indicators below).</li> </ul>
Engaging young people, including those living in situations of poverty to support their voices be heard.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social media engagement of young people.</li> <li>• # of young people living in situations of poverty engaged.</li> </ul>
Bringing in support of a high visibility champion or champions to speak out on the issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Champion(s) identified and on board.</li> <li>• # appearances/messages.</li> </ul>
<b>Building support of civil society</b>	
<b>Possible objectives</b>	<b>Possible indicators</b>
Identify CSOs that are influential and supportive (this could include professional groups such as health professionals who could lend significant support).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping of civil society organizations for interest and outreach.</li> </ul>
Creation of coalition or more informal engagement with CSOs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National stakeholders meet to discuss child poverty updates and coordinate advocacy work.</li> <li>• Forming a coalition or alliance.</li> <li>• Producing joint advocacy or research materials.</li> </ul>
CSOs sharing child poverty information and messaging as part of their engagement and outreach.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # CSOs include child poverty in their messaging.</li> <li>• # of people reached by CSOs.</li> </ul>
<b>Building support of the media</b>	
<b>Possible objectives</b>	<b>Possible indicators</b>
Identification of key national media platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mapping of media outlets and demographic outreach.</li> </ul>
Engaging editors and key journalists in roundtables and other direct discussions of child poverty.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• number of round tables.</li> <li>• number of journalists reached.</li> </ul>
Building a social media presence around child poverty on relevant platforms.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # followers.</li> <li>• Impressions/likes/retweets.</li> </ul>
<b>Building support of key decision makers and influencers</b>	
<b>Possible objectives</b>	<b>Possible indicators</b>
Stated support from highest members of government.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mention of child poverty in State of the Nation or similar.</li> </ul>
Stated support from key ministries.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inclusion of child poverty in ministerial speeches.</li> </ul>
Stated support from parliamentarians.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # questions or statements raised in parliament.</li> <li>• Hearings on child poverty.</li> </ul>

**Table 3.2 An example using the nine advocacy questions (from the UNICEF advocacy toolkit) for national statistical measurement**

Questions	Possible answers and approaches
<b>Question 1. What do we want?</b> (To understand the situation)	Routine national measurement of child poverty.
<b>Question 2. Who can make it happen?</b> (To understand stakeholders, their relative power and how change happens)	Head of national statistical office, and/or head of poverty measurement section, and/or head of SDG reporting.
<b>Question 3. What do they need to hear?</b> (To reach a specific audience)	i) That it is technically feasible and within their capacity. That they will be supported as necessary. ii) That key audiences are demanding the data.
<b>Question 4. Who do they need to hear it from?</b> (To identify the right messenger for your audience)	i) On technical feasibility – from respected technical experts (inside or outside the NSO). ii) On demand – from key users – e.g. Ministry of Finance, SDG reporting team, international organizations.
<b>Question 5. How can we make sure they hear it?</b> (To identify processes, opportunities and entry points)	i) Individual high level meetings. ii) Workshops and seminars. iii) Demand from media/public/MPs .
<b>Question 6. What do we have?</b> (To recognize capacities and gaps)	i) SDG indicators. ii) Strong relationships in NSOs and government counterparts.
<b>Question 7. What do we need?</b>	i) Expert on child poverty measurement to support and share information with NSO.
<b>Question 8. How do we begin to take action?</b> (To set goals and interim outcomes and develop an action plan)	i) Set meeting with technical team working on poverty and SDG reporting. ii) Set meeting with head of NSO. iii) National workshop on next steps. iv) Begin measurement process.
<b>Question 9. How do we tell if its working?</b> (To monitor and evaluate advocacy)	i) Review meetings/conversations with stakeholders to assess if they think there is progress and understand ongoing concerns.

The nine steps are adapted by Jim Schultz of the Democracy Center. The full toolkit can be found at: [http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Advocacy\\_Toolkit.pdf](http://www.unicef.org/evaluation/files/Advocacy_Toolkit.pdf)

## B. Developing clear child poverty messages – key data and information

To put child poverty on the map requires clear messages. With a strong foundation in statistics and measurement, combined with the universally compelling nature of the issue, child poverty is ideally situated to generate compelling information.

While messages will be very context specific, this section outlines a broad approach to these messages and the arguments behind them, and gives examples of how countries have expressed them. These messages can be grouped into three broad areas:

- **Message One: What's the problem?**  
Giving audiences a sense of the extent of child poverty in the country is a fundamental building block, and builds from the work on measurement in Milestone 2. At the heart of this is building a national child poverty profile – this is covered in detail in this Milestone.
- **Message Two: Why does it matter?**  
The importance of child poverty will be self-evident for many audiences, but not all. Even those who recognize its importance may not know all of its impacts on children and societies, and may benefit from structured information to share with others. While this is very context specific, general arguments were covered in Milestone 1.

- **Message Three: What are the solutions?**  
There is limited motivation to focus on an issue that can't be addressed. Outlining what can be done to address child poverty, makes it a problem with a solution with which comes a moral to act. This milestone outlines broad solutions which are considered in more depth in Milestone 4.

There are many different forms and mediums in which to share these messages depending on particular objectives and audiences. Figure 3.1 gives an example of a one page advocacy flyer from Save the Children on the global challenge of child poverty.

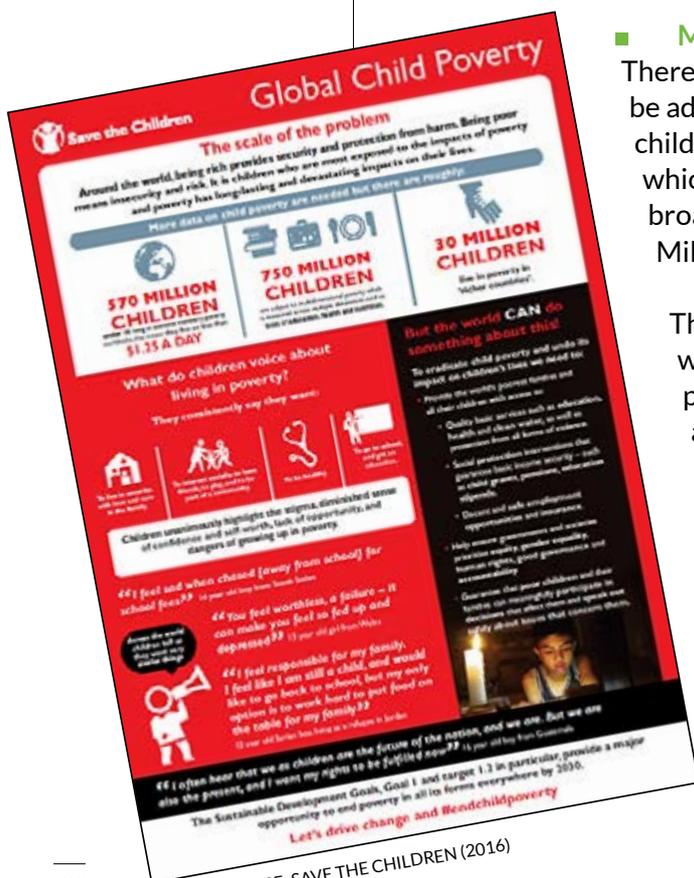


Figure 3.1 – An example of sharing messages on child poverty

## Message One: What's the problem?

### BUILDING A NATIONAL CHILD POVERTY PROFILE AND DRAWING KEY MESSAGES

The foundation of most messages outlining the situation of child poverty is building a national child poverty profile from the measurement carried out in Milestone 2 (as with many elements of the approach laid out in this toolkit, the national sequence of this work may vary significantly). For example, child poverty reports (see Box 3.3) have been frequently used to both galvanise measurement of child poverty profiling and lead advocacy.

The basic elements of child poverty profiling (and messaging) may include:

#### Who and where are the poorest children? (Considered in this milestone)

- What is the percentage and number of children in poverty?
- Are there regional, linguistic or ethnic differences in child poverty rates?
- Is the child poverty situation changing (for the better or the worse) over time?
- Are children more likely to be poor than adults?
- Are younger or older children more likely to be in poverty?
- Are there particular dimensions of child poverty that are worse than other areas?
- What are children and young people's perceptions of poverty?
- How does child poverty in the country compare to other countries?

#### Why are children in poverty? (Considered in Milestone 4)

- While a harder question to answer, methodologies allow some understanding of what is driving child poverty, which can have clear policy implications.

The rest of this section looks at the question of who and where are the poorest children, with Milestone 4 addressing the approaches to understanding the drivers of child poverty as a basis of identifying the specific policies and programmes that can address it.

### WHAT IS THE PERCENTAGE AND NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN POVERTY?

Often the first key message, and first step in child poverty profiling, is to estimate the child poverty rate (this is the percentage of children living in poverty which is also referred to technically as the 'headcount ratio'). This is often the lead number that captures the headlines. The child poverty rate is particularly useful because it allows comparisons to be made over time, without being influenced by the changes in population.

While the overall poverty rate in a country is often well known, the child poverty rate may not be. It is this indicator that is included in the SDGs. The child poverty rate could be both monetary or multidimensional.

**The monetary child poverty rate as required by the SDGs can show:**

- The proportion of children living in households below the international poverty line of \$1.90 per day.
- The proportion of children in the country living in households below the national poverty line.

**The multidimensional child poverty rate can show:**

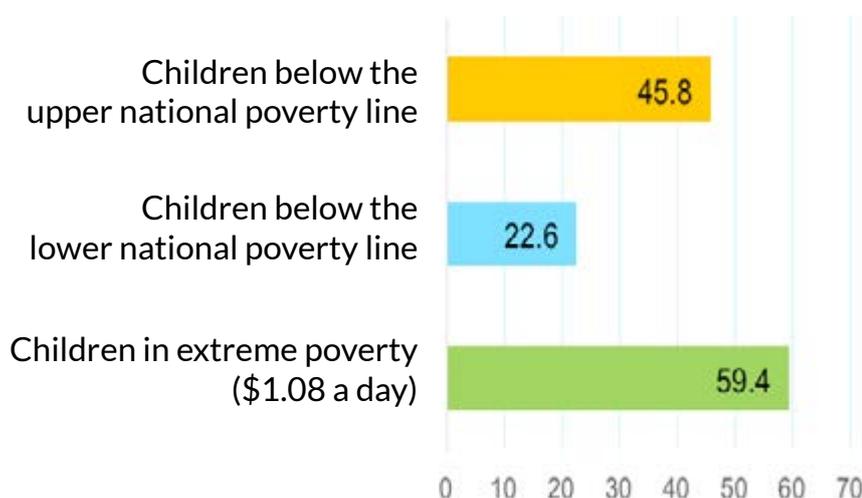
- The proportion of children living in multidimensional poverty (depending on the measure this could be, for example, experiencing two or more dimensions of poverty for example using MODA or under the multidimensional poverty threshold in a child specific MPI).
- The proportion of children living in households below the national multidimensional poverty lines – such as national MPI.

For example, an analysis in Bangladesh using the national official definitions revealed that 45.8 per cent of children were living below the national poverty line, with 59.4 per cent of children living below the international poverty line of \$1 a day (Figure 3.2).

Similarly, multidimensional poverty measures can be used to complement child poverty estimates using the national poverty line. Using other data in Bangladesh, UNICEF estimated the number of children deprived of key dimensions (Figure 3.3). This multidimensional measures provide a better indication of how children experience poverty in other dimensions, and where action can be taken to address deprivation.

As well as calculating the proportion of children living in poverty, calculating the absolute number of children in poverty (or the child poverty headcount) can be a powerful and less abstract communication tool.

**Figure 3.2. Status of child poverty in Bangladesh according to different poverty lines (2005)**

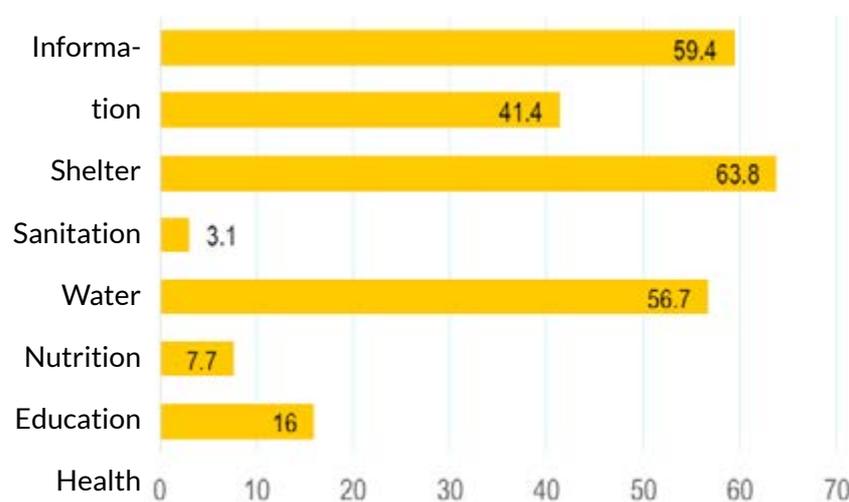


SOURCE: UNICEF (2009)



© UNICEF/UNI9707/Mersiani

Figure 3.3. Deprivation status of children in Bangladesh, by dimension (2006)



SOURCE: UNICEF (2009)

### Child poverty rates at different thresholds

An important critique of poverty measures (including child poverty) is that they can hide the depth of poverty – that is how far a person or a child is, on average, from the poverty line. Perhaps they are close to the line and a small change would see them lifted out of poverty, or they may be far below it.

While some of the methods of calculating poverty depth can be hard to intuitively express in broad messages, showing poverty rates at different thresholds can be a simple way to give a sense of the distribution of poor household and children. Possible thresholds may include:

#### Monetary poverty thresholds:

- International poverty line (\$1.90).
- Other 'upper' thresholds (such as \$3.10, a second poverty line used for global headcount).
- National poverty line (defined in each country as the minimum amount of money to meet person's basic needs).

**Multidimensional poverty thresholds:**

- Different numbers of deprivations used to define poverty.
- Different cut-off at indicator level (for example severe stunting and stunting).

**ARE THERE REGIONAL, LINGUISTIC OR ETHNIC DIFFERENCES IN CHILD POVERTY RATES?**

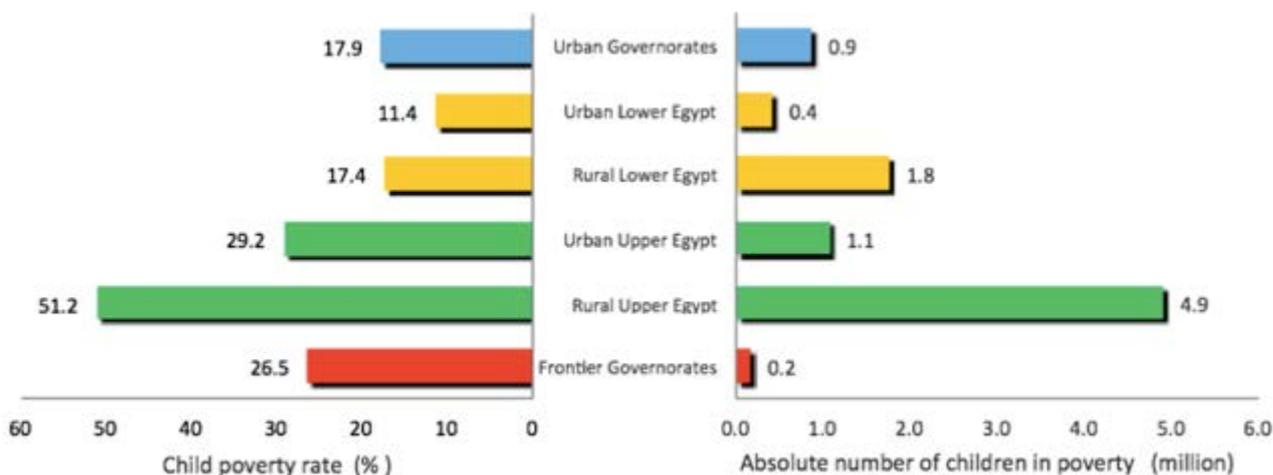
Rarely is child poverty evenly distributed within a country, and child poverty analysis can help identify the regions or groups where poverty is more severe. This is an important part of a child poverty profile and can be a powerful message, as while eliminating child poverty can seem a challenge, highlighting that some groups of children are suffering more seems, and is, immediately actionable.

The extent to which this disaggregation can be done is driven by the data available in the surveys. In almost all countries a regional disaggregation is possible. For example, Figure 3.4 shows that more than half of children living in monetary poverty in 2012/13 were in rural Upper Egypt. In addition, high levels of poverty were prevalent in urban Upper Egypt and the frontier governorates. The child poverty rates present a different picture, namely that rural Upper Egypt and rural Lower Egypt have the highest numbers of children living in poverty.

Disaggregation that allows an understanding of the poverty of children of particular ethnic or linguistic groups or children with disabilities are less common, but do exist in some countries. It is also vital not to forget the children that are forgotten in surveys (see Box 2.4 in Milestone 2) when creating a child poverty profile and sharing messages on the situation of children.

Finally, regional analysis in particular can throw up challenges in child poverty measurement. For example, data may point to child poverty being much lower in urban settings – but does it really capture the true experience of children in urban slums (see Egypt’s work on urban poverty in Milestone 2).

**Figure 3.4. Child poverty in Egypt’s regions**



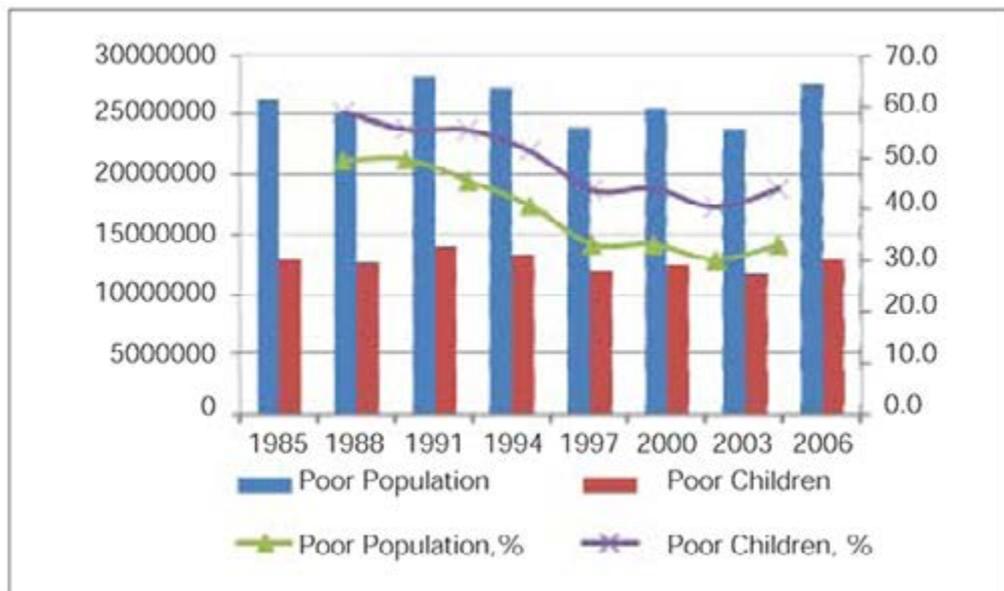
SOURCE: CAPMAS AND UNICEF (2015)

**IS THE CHILD POVERTY SITUATION CHANGING (FOR THE BETTER OR THE WORSE) OVER TIME?**

While static analysis - particularly where child poverty is being discussed for the first time, can be very powerful - showing how things are changing over time - can be very powerful, showing where things are improving, and where challenges remain. The basis of being able to do this is routine measurement as outlined in Chapter 2.

Considering the number of children in poverty is a useful complement to child poverty rates to gauge progress. For example, official estimates of income-based poverty in the Philippines show a child poverty rate of 44 per cent in 2006, showing impressive declines from child poverty levels around 1990 (Figure 3.5). However, when analysing the number of children living in poverty, it shows that the number of children living in poverty has actually increased slightly over the same period - showing that the country still faces significant challenges in the fight against child poverty.

**Figure 3.5. Magnitude and percentage of poor population and children, Philippines, 1985–2006**



SOURCE: PIDS AND UNICEF (2010)

### ARE CHILDREN MORE LIKELY TO BE POOR THAN ADULTS?

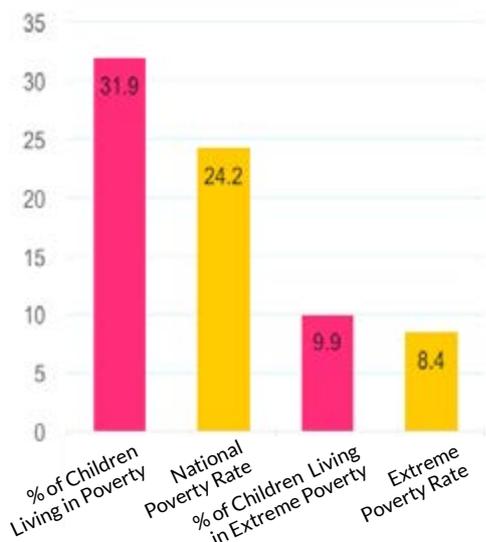
Comparing the child poverty rate with the overall poverty rate (or the poverty rate among the adults) is a simple and powerful way of expressing the deep injustice of child poverty.

Globally, and in almost every country with data, children are more likely to be living in poverty than adults. For example, in Ghana 32 per cent of children are living in poverty according to national definitions, whilst 24 per cent of the overall population are in poverty (Figure 3.6). Similarly, more children are likely to live in extreme poverty than other age groups. The concentration of poverty on children has potential long-term implication for the fight to end poverty, and implies that more efforts should be taken to protect children from poverty.

#### Child poverty shares

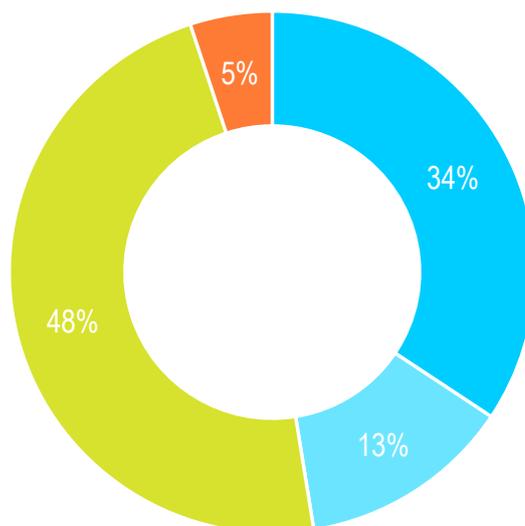
While the child poverty rate provides the proportion of children who are living in poverty, it can also be powerful to express the proportion of those living in poverty who are children (or the child poverty share). For example, globally, the most recent World Bank numbers show that of the 1.2 billion people who are struggling to survive below the poverty line, 47 per cent of these are 18 years old or younger. When compared to children's share in the global population (around 33 per cent) it is clear that children are vastly overrepresented among those in extreme poverty (Figure 3.7).

Figure 3.6. Child poverty rate vs. general poverty rate



SOURCE: COOKE ET AL. (2015)

Figure 3.7. Percentage of people living on less than \$1.25 per day by age, 2010.



- Children 12 years old or younger
- Children 13 to 18 years old
- 19 to 60 years old
- 61 years old or older

SOURCE: WORLD BANK (2013)

### ARE YOUNGER OR OLDER CHILDREN MORE LIKELY TO BE IN POVERTY?

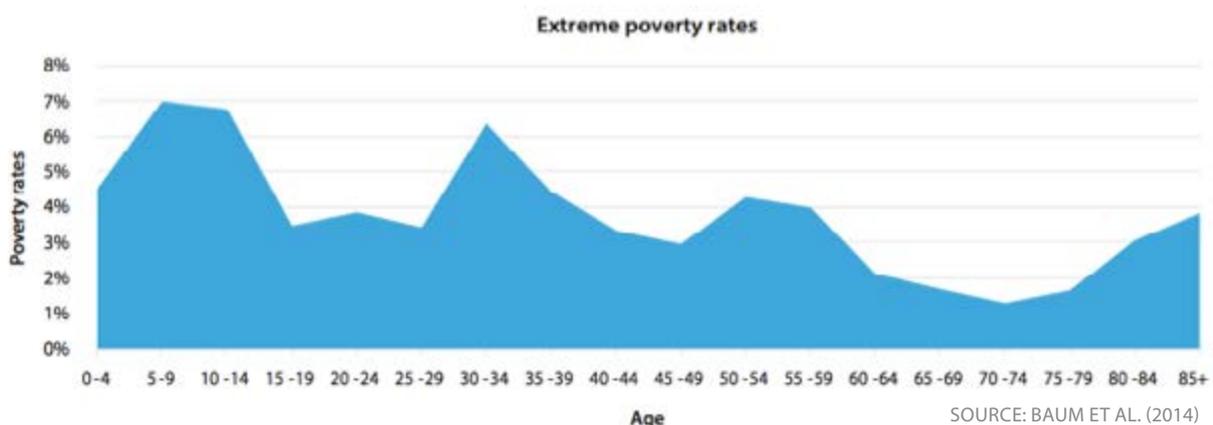
Children have varying physical, cognitive and social needs across the course of their childhood. The failure to address deprivations that may occur at each stage, from a lack of adequate nutrition, to lacking access to basic services, can have long-term, irreversible consequences for children's lives.

While the data used to construct child poverty rates sometimes limit the extent of age breakdowns that are possible to calculate, some disaggregations are possible and can powerfully convey the poverty of children at different ages.

Age breakdowns commonly used for children are 0–4 years for early childhood; 5–9 years; 10–14 years and 15–17 years. Monetary poverty rates for children often are able to be broken down into these age ranges as the composition of households is collected. For example, the graph below shows the changing poverty rates across age ranges for Georgia – showing a strong spike in children aged 5–14 (Figure 3.8).

The clustering of dimensions and method of data collection means that age disaggregation for multidimensional child poverty measures is more limited. Data is usually collected for the 0–4 age group (for example dimensions of health, nutrition, water, sanitation) and 5–17 age group (health, education, water, sanitation and information).

Figure 3.8. Georgia – extreme income poverty rates by age group



### WHAT ARE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERCEPTIONS OF POVERTY?

Children's views on what poverty means to them, what drives it and what the solutions might be are essential to all aspects of child poverty work, from guiding measurement to approaching solutions. In terms of communicating the issue, children's voices can bring the challenge to life – child poverty is about real children, their futures and where a country

stands in supporting the most vulnerable (see Box 3.2). Evidence is increasingly showing that while data is vital to build understanding and drive effective policy, engaging people and encouraging action is driven by the personal not just the technical (see box 4.5 in Milestone 4).

The complexity of meaningfully engaging with children in understanding the experience of poverty should not be underestimated. Not only are there challenges in terms of engaging children of different ages, but depending on the context there can be cultural and linguistic barriers. Despite the difficulties there are excellent guides and approaches to undertaking this work, be it depth perception studies interviews and focus groups, to opinion and other polls for older children (see for example, 'Involving Children in the Process' in Milestone 2).

BOX 3.2

## Why does poverty matter to children?

### Voices from Save the Children's Global Report on Child Poverty and Young Lives

Save the Children's Global Report on Child Poverty included an extensive focus on listening to children, which drew on discussions with groups of children in different parts of the world. While there is no way to distil the varied contexts and perspectives, the key messages from that chapter are instructive.

- Children are often not heard or consulted, and when they are their views are not widely acted upon by adults. When they are, children living in poverty have less voice than their better-off peers, especially those in developing countries.
- Children living in poverty are widely exposed to stigma and discrimination, and are greatly disturbed by experiences of exclusion and humiliation, which cause stress, anxiety, frustration and anger.
- They often recognize the importance of education but are frustrated and sad to be denied opportunities, and feel certain that nothing will improve.
- Children living in poverty describe discrimination and exclusion in public institutions, especially school. Bullying by teachers and pupils are reported around the world. Children often give up as a consequence.
- Children living in poverty highlight the problems of being forced into adult roles - in the home, as wives, or as workers.
- Children living in poverty may be exposed to violence or alcohol abuse at home or outside. Most cannot avoid this without exposure to further danger.



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**Young Lives tells the story of a 16-year old boy from an ethnic minority group in Vietnam:**

*"[A child] says that another boy "mocked me for being 'an ethnic'" and then "punched me with his fist". He could not put up with the continued bullying and adds, "I couldn't digest the lessons. So I felt tired of learning." He has now left school and is working on the family farm."*

**A male child from the UK:** *"I hate [school] because my mum and dad can't afford the trousers so I have to wear trackies. But I always really annoy [the headteacher]. He goes 'You've got to get your trousers sorted out!'"*

**In a refugee camp in Ethiopia, a 16-year old female South Sudanese refugee describes her responsibility for her siblings, and recounts how she lost her parents.**

*"Now I am the mother of the house. The responsibility for taking care of four children is hard. I wake up early in the morning to prepare food, collect firewood, and fetch water. Every month I bring the ration food to our home. We lost our mother due to illness and got separated from our father during the war."*

**A 14-year old boy from the Philippines works 12 hours a day in a small-scale gold mine:**

*"Sometimes I would accidentally drop the sack of ore on my toes. It's 30 kilos.... It's tough, carrying the ore and pulling it. It's so heavy that when I take a rest, I feel weak.... I didn't like being there. It's tough being there. It's frightening because it might collapse."*

**For more information:**

Save the Children (2016) 'Children's Voices: Why does child poverty matter to Children?' In "Child Poverty: what drives it and what it means to children across the world.

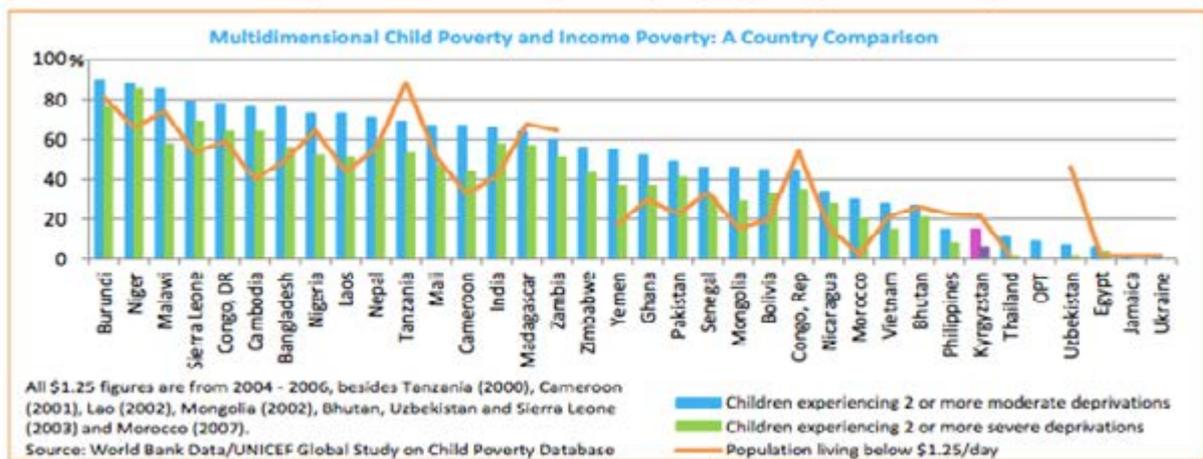
Young Lives and Save the Children. (2013) Growing up with the promise of the MDGs.

Young Lives. (2012) Changing Lives in a Changing World.

## INTERNATIONAL CHILD POVERTY COMPARISONS

The interest in comparisons of countries and rankings can often drive media attention and touch on a universal interest to compare progress, particularly with those we know and compare ourselves to. Child poverty lends itself readily to these comparisons (see Figure 3.9), but can be outside the remit and expertise of country teams. Here regionally and globally published and available comparators can be helpful. In Latin America, for example, UNICEF and ECLAC have partnered to develop internationally comparable child poverty profiles, including a guide for estimating child poverty.

Figure 3.9: Global and regional comparisons of child poverty rates – monetary and multidimensional



SOURCE: UNICEF (2012)

## WHY ARE CHILDREN IN POVERTY?

The child poverty profiling outlined above can give a clear and compelling sense of what the situation of child poverty is in a country and the children most affected. However, it does not get to the underlying questions of why these children are in poverty, which is crucial in identifying the policies and programmes that can make a difference.

When focusing on putting the issue of child poverty on the map, being able to share an understanding of why children are in poverty answers a fundamental question of those we are engaging (including the media). Beyond this, however, understanding why is a crucial foundation in the development of policy responses that can alleviate child poverty.

These are complex questions to answer, but approaches to identifying these root causes are considered in detail in Milestone 4.

## Message Two:

### Why does child poverty matter?

While for many, and perhaps all, potential audiences there is a clear and intuitive sense of why child poverty matters, the full extent of its impacts are not always fully understood or simply packaged.

Milestone 1 outlined seven reasons why a focus on child poverty is so important and some of the underlying evidence. For practical messaging to inspire audiences, seven reasons may be four, five or even six too many. But the list may serve as reminder of possibilities for nationally tailored messages that could fit particular audiences based on the child poverty profile, national evidence and political context.

#### **7 REASONS WHY CHILD POVERTY MATTERS:** (For full box, see in Milestone 1)

1. BECAUSE IT MATTERS TO CHILDREN AND IS A VIOLATION OF THEIR RIGHTS.
2. BECAUSE CHILD POVERTY HAS DEVASTATING EFFECTS THAT LAST A LIFETIME.
3. BECAUSE ALMOST EVERYWHERE, CHILDREN ARE MORE LIKELY TO LIVE IN POVERTY THAN ADULTS.
4. BECAUSE ENDING CHILD POVERTY IS CRUCIAL IN BREAKING THE INTER-GENERATIONAL CYCLE OF POVERTY AND ADDRESSING POVERTY OVERALL.
5. BECAUSE FAILURE TO END CHILD POVERTY IS ONE OF THE MOST COSTLY MISTAKES THAT SOCIETY CAN MAKE.
6. BECAUSE DESPITE THE URGENCY CHILD POVERTY HAS RECEIVED TOO LITTLE ATTENTION.
7. BECAUSE CHILD POVERTY IS A PROBLEM WITH PROVEN SOLUTIONS.

## Message Three: What are the solutions?

Knowing that child poverty has a devastating effect on children and societies, and that children are overrepresented among those living in poverty, is a strong call to action. But what compels us – morally and practically – to act is that child poverty is a problem with a solution.

***What compels us – morally and practically – to act is that child poverty is a problem with a solution.***

The next milestone (Milestone 4) focuses fully on the specific child poverty analysis, and the policies and programmes, that can reduce child poverty. But these require in-depth analysis that can be challenging to complete as part of an overall push for child poverty to be recognized.

Building towards these it is possible to identify some broad areas that make a difference in child poverty. The following agenda – derived from the Joint Statement of the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty – may be a useful starting point for broad national recommendations:

1. **Every country should ensure that reducing child poverty is an explicit priority on their agenda, and included as appropriate in national plans, policies and laws.** This includes national definitions and measurement of multidimensional and monetary poverty, as well as promoting the participation of children living in poverty. If child poverty is not expressly considered, it is unlikely to be effectively addressed, even where overall poverty reduction efforts are in place.
2. **Provide quality and accessed services for the most deprived children.** This is the foundation addressing multidimensional child poverty and giving every child an equal chance. There are significant inequities in public service provision with the poorest children often lacking effective access to quality services including health, education, water and sanitation, and electricity. Lack of access to quality services will not only have immediate impact on children but also is critical for children to fulfil their potential in the future and to end the cycle of poverty. More needs to be done to improve and ensure access of the poorest families to these services, including reducing barriers that may be rooted in discrimination and exclusion. This includes an overall strategy to reach and include the poorest and most excluded, backed by explicit policies, programmes, standards and budgets.
3. **Support families and households to have a minimum income and ensure financial barriers don't prevent children from reaching their potential.** As the poorest children often live in economically-marginalized families without essential productive assets or the ability to find productive work, supporting livelihoods and employment can play an important role in reducing child poverty. At the same time, they are not a solution for all families. Some families may be labour constrained and unable to work, or unable to find decent work. Direct financial support, including child and family grants, are therefore a critical part of the agenda to lift the most excluded households out of poverty and to provide safety nets for all, along with policies and programmes to address financial barriers to basic goods and services (such as fee removals or subsidies).



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1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

**3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy**

4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

BOX 3.3

## Child Poverty Reports: for measurement, advocacy or policy change? (Or all of them)

A leading approach to tackling the issue of child poverty in many countries has been the development of national child poverty reports. In many ways, these began with the Global Study on Child Poverty led by UNICEF from 2006 and have evolved with increasing use of UNICEF's MODA.

In higher-income countries, national reports are less commonly used (although with notable exceptions such as New Zealand and Spain), but reports such as UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre report cards on child poverty are often used for advocacy in higher-income countries. As part of its recommendation on children, the EU has also produced a number of national level reports.

Child poverty reports can support progress across areas – including those outlined in the milestones in this guide. They are frequently used in the following ways:

- **Building stakeholder engagement:** The process of creating reports often includes extensive engagement with many stakeholders and can play a key role in building allies and awareness as outlined in Milestone 1 of this guide. Most child poverty reports are created in coordination with the government.
- **Driving measurement:** In many contexts the reports have been used as a vehicle to create the first child poverty measurements in a country, particularly multidimensional child poverty measurements (as outlined in Milestone 2).
- **Leading advocacy:** Where created, child poverty reports are powerful advocacy tools to create media and policy maker interest and put child poverty on the map (as outlined in Milestone 3).
- **Undertaking profiling and analysis:** At the heart of child poverty reports is analysis of child poverty data that looks in detail at which children are worst affected, what their situation is, and the drivers behind it (outlined in more detail in Milestone 4).
- **Policy analysis and conclusions (although sometimes often broad ones):** Child poverty reports include a focus on policy analysis and recommendations. Given the breadth of the reports, the analysis can sometimes be at a more general level than the more specific policy and programme recommendations (Milestone 4).

### SOME CONSIDERATIONS IN UNDERTAKING A CHILD POVERTY REPORT – WHEN IT MIGHT BE RIGHT

Given the breadth of impact that child poverty reports can have, they can be a very logical choice to make progress. However, with changing circumstances and growing experience, it is worth thinking through if and when undertaking a child poverty report makes sense.

**Changing circumstances – the establishment of the SDGs.** When the Global Study on Child Poverty began, the issue of child poverty was not considered at all in many countries. Creating a child poverty report offered a very effective approach from a standing start to build understanding and momentum. Today, and supported by the momentum the global study created, child poverty has been included in the SDGs and, as such, countries start from a different place with different opportunities to make progress.

**Learning from experience: moving from advocacy and analysis to programme and policy impact.** In reviewing a decade of progress on child poverty work, a UNICEF mapping identified the challenge of moving work on from successful broad advocacy to programme and policy impact. As

outlined in Milestone 4, countries that have had success here have generally undertaken detailed child poverty analysis on particular aspects of programmes and policies.

### Some questions to think about when considering undertaking a child poverty report:

- **Are there simpler, faster ways to make progress on measurement?**

In the context of today's SDGs, and where there is no measurement, a meeting and an agreement with the national statistical office and technical engagement and support around methodology and measurement may create child poverty measures more effectively than a full report.

- **Is a report the best way to routinize child poverty measurement?**

A challenge with child poverty reports has been routinizing measurement as part of government processes. Sometimes the child poverty measures would be linked to the report rather than part of regular and routinized government child poverty reporting. Alternative national reporting, such as government poverty reports, may help achieve this.

- **How to sustain the momentum and reach advocacy objectives of a major report?**

For most advocacy objectives, a national report can be an excellent vehicle for media and policy maker attention. However, there is a risk of it being a one-off event, and continuing momentum after the report is important.

- **How focused do policy and programme recommendations need to be?**

Child poverty reports have proven excellent vehicles for child poverty profiling and analysis. However, their broad nature means it can be a challenge for them to have specific enough levels of focus and analysis to influence particular policies and programmes. Depending on the situation, they may be sufficient to achieve change or they may provide the foundation for more detailed policy and programme work. In other circumstances it may be best to move directly from measurement to specific policy and programme analysis to create change.

- **If not undertaking a report, what are alternative plans for stakeholder engagement?**

The process of creating a full child poverty report requires extensive stakeholder engagement and ownership, a linchpin of long-term success. Where other approaches are chosen, it can be important to recognize this partnership building may not happen without additional explicit efforts.

- **Do you have the time (and the money)?**

Creating a full child poverty report can be lengthy and relatively expensive. The details depend on the extent of technical work needed involving external consultants, involvement of children in the process, and the depth of stakeholder engagement. Suffice to say, in resource-constrained settings, more targeted approaches regarding measurement, advocacy or analysis may be more time and resource efficient.

- **Is a regular child poverty report needed to assess progress towards achieving the SDG to halve poverty?**

The ultimate goal this guide has suggested is a comprehensive, implemented and evaluated plan to half child poverty. At this stage, the importance of a regular child poverty report-type publication may be an excellent mechanism to monitor and evaluate progress towards this goal.

### RESOURCES

UNICEF (2007) Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities 2007-2008: Guide

De Neubourg et al. (2013) Step-by-Step Guidelines to the Multiple Overlapping Deprivation Analysis (MODA)

UNICEF Innocenti Report Cards

EU Reports - Investing in Children: Breaking the cycle of disadvantage

## C. Country approaches to putting child poverty on the map

Given the extensive on the ground expertise in advocacy and the fundamental importance of context in how to undertake advocacy, this milestone has focused on approaches to identifying advocacy objectives and indicators and approaches to data and messaging. This final section moves from the general to the specific, looking at examples of how countries across the world have approached putting child poverty on the map.



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# KYRGYZSTAN

## Engaging the public through campaigns and social media

In Kyrgyzstan, civil society and UNICEF have effectively mobilized the public and engaged political processes through visual materials and social media campaigns, resulting in a significant reform of the social protection programme.

### TIMELINE

- *Advocacy for increased funding on child benefit started in 2011.*
- *Major progress was observed in 2015.*
- *The social movement and campaign started on International Children's Day and lasted for one month.*

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- *Understanding of social protection schemes.*
- *Analysis of social protection budget*
- *Public campaigning.*

### STAKEHOLDERS

- *Child rights NGOs (key players in advocacy activities).*
- *UNICEF (main role was to provide evidence and technical advice).*
- *Expert's working group on social protection.*
- *Development partners, led by EU and GIZ.*

### Resources (in Kyrgyz language)

An example of a campaign video for 'Survive on 18 Kyrgyz Soms a day'  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSL\\_wAmplel&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BSL_wAmplel&feature=youtu.be)  
 A blog post about the campaign:  
<http://kloop.kg/blog/2015/06/26/video-kak-bishkekskie-aktivisty-pytalis-prozhit-na-18-somov-v-den/>

### THE APPROACH

1. Since 2011, there has been continuous public advocacy aimed at increasing overall awareness of child poverty and a call to improve coverage and effectiveness of the social protection programme. While there was a social transfer for poor and vulnerable families, the scheme faced two shortcomings: the eligibility criteria was too high, excluding many vulnerable families; and the method to calculate benefit level resulted in low and inaccurate payments.
2. The advocacy efforts were carried out by a broad range of actors, including experts, civil society organizations and development organizations. As part of the campaign to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the organizations concerned jointly signed an appeal to increase the threshold for family cash transfers. The appeal was guided by the situation analysis of child poverty and also pointed to the fiscal space needed to make the change happen.
3. As a result of the appeal, which was sent to over 20 high-level decision makers including the President and the Prime Minister, combined with targeted advocacy activities to the Parliament, the increase of the eligibility criteria was endorsed for the annual budget of 2015 by two statutory committees on Budget and Finance.
4. In addition to advocacy to change eligibility criteria, the stakeholders also considered it important that the level of benefit is fixed for all families. They engaged in two open public government-parliament hearings in March and May in 2015, and also launched a social movement and campaign entitled 'Survive on 18 Kyrgyz Soms a day'. Eighteen Kyrgyz Som is the daily amount of the monthly average amount of poverty-targeted benefits, and NGO partners and young activists recorded what having 18 Kyrgyz Soms per day afforded and posted their findings on Facebook.
5. Additional advocacy materials were prepared, with simple messages and illustrative infographics.
6. The advocacy and policy engagement have been effective in raising awareness among politicians. Experience showed that many government officials and parliamentarians knew little about the level of the benefit until the campaign, and when informed, quickly became supporters.
7. All the efforts resulted in making the social protection programme more pro-poor, by raising the eligibility criteria and by introducing fixed amount of benefits. The legal amendment was adopted by Parliament by the end of June, 2015 and then signed by the President.
8. After the adoption, the social protection programme is being monitored under an inter-ministerial Coordination Council on Social Protection, chaired by the Vice Prime Minister to ensure that the new benefits are reaching poor and vulnerable families. Civil society groups and development partners are also part of the Council, providing support to the implementation and monitoring of the social protection programmes and policies.



# IRELAND

Launch of the regional Report Card on child well-being to promote a stronger collaboration among civil society organizations

During the Irish EU Presidency, civil societies co-hosted an event in Dublin, inviting CSOs from different countries to launch regional reports on child well-being in the EU, to build stronger connections and enhance mutual learning and exchange.

## TIMELINE

- Three months from initiation to launch.

## DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- Report Card on child well-being.
- Advocacy skills and experience.
- Network with regional CSOs working on child poverty.

## STAKEHOLDERS

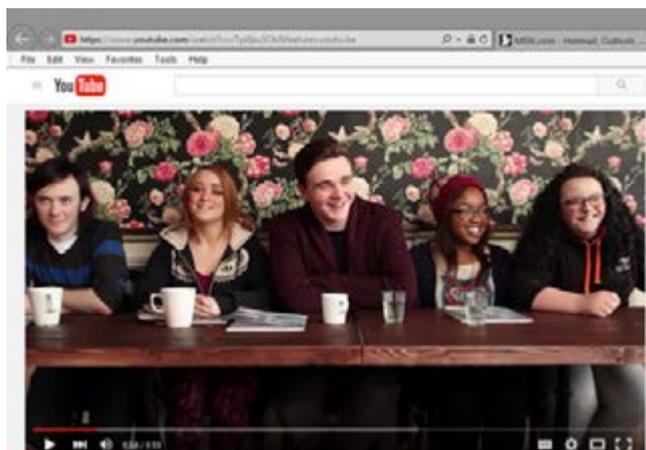
- Government (Minister for Children and Youth Affairs).
- CSOs, including Eurochild, European Anti-Poverty Network (EAPN) and Children's Rights Alliance.
- UNICEF.
- European Commission.
- Academics and researchers.

### Resources:

- Event report by Children's Rights Alliance, EAPN-Ireland and UNICEF. (2013) *Taking Action to Fight Child Poverty and To Promote Child Well-being* provides detailed agenda and outcomes from the event
- UNICEF (2013) Report Card 11 compares child wellbeing in developed countries and ranks them by indicators.
- Young people in Ireland discuss in a short video clip on YouTube <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTpi6jiu3Ok>

## THE APPROACH

1. **The UNICEF Office of Research, launched the eleventh Report Card (RC11) on child well-being in rich countries including a child-friendly version.** It measures development according to five dimensions of children's lives: material well-being, health and safety, education, behaviour and risks, and housing and environment.
2. **UNICEF Ireland created a short film from a panel discussion of Irish youth,** discussing what it's like to grow up in Ireland in the twenty-first century and commenting on the findings of the report.



3. **When Ireland was the President of the EU in 2013, Eurochild, EAPN and UNICEF coordinated the launch of the RC11 and the Eurochild/EAPN Explainer on Child Poverty in Dublin with the Minister for Children and Youth Affairs.** The event was designated as an 'Associated Presidency Event', attended by more than 60 people from over nine countries representing a wide variety of CSOs.
4. **The Director of the Office of Research presented the results of the report at a high-level seminar** attended by officials from the EU Commission, NGO partners and networks, leading academics, and media.
5. **This was accompanied by a training seminar** to equip NGOs to use the EU Recommendation on Investing in Children in their advocacy on child poverty. Partners from nine EU Member States were in attendance.



# MOROCCO

## Initiating a public debate on child poverty approaches and solutions

Prior to the launch of the first child poverty and disparities study in Morocco, child poverty was not understood, nor was it distinctively measured from adult poverty. Undertaking a child poverty study, followed by UNICEF's Situation Analysis, combined with several strategic national and international events, has initiated a well-informed debate among politicians, ministries, academics, children and other key stakeholders on child poverty and its impacts.

### TIMELINE

- *Three years for government commitment to develop the child poverty monitoring system.*
- *Two years of south-south exchanges to enhance technical capacities.*

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- *Knowledge of global approaches to measuring child poverty.*
- *Qualitative methods to integrate children's voices.*

### STAKEHOLDERS

- *ONDH, HCP, National child rights' Observatory.*
- *High-level government stakeholders.*
- *Ministry of Health, Education, Ministry of Solidarity, Family, Women and Social Development.*
- *NGOs, academia.*
- *Political Parties & parliamentarians.*
- *Children and Youth.*
- *UNICEF.*

### Further Resources:

UNICEF (2011) Knowledge for Action: Emerging experiences in child-focused Social and Economic Policy – July issue  
 UNICEF's Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities  
 UNICEF MENA's regional conference: <http://unicefmenapolicy.blogspot.com/p/conference-on-equity-in-mena-rabat-may.html>

### THE APPROACH

1. **The first child poverty and disparities analysis** was conducted in 2009, bringing attention to child poverty. UNICEF in collaboration with the High Commission for Planning (HCP) and the National Observatory for Children's Rights (ONDE) produced the first child poverty and disparities study. The study introduced new concepts and measures to identify children living in the most vulnerable communities.
2. **The first Social Policy and Child Rights Forum** held in 2012 marked a shift in approach and led to the commitment by the government to use a multidimensional approach to inform policies and to measure poverty.
3. **A memorandum of understanding was signed** between multiple partners to produce and promote child poverty and disparities analysis and establish an information system to better monitor child poverty.
4. **A south-south agreement promoting technical exchanges** was also signed between the National Observatory of Human Development (ONDH), ONDE, Mexico's CONEVAL and UNICEF to facilitate a partnership to move towards a system that effectively monitors and evaluates social policies on child outcomes. This agreement was extended to Centre de Recherches et d'Etudes Sociales (CRES) from Tunisia, and two others international events were organized in 2014 and 2015 to promote multidimensional poverty measurement and social policy evaluation with focus on children.
5. **In 2015, Morocco's Situation Analysis of Children**, with an equity focus, incorporated the voices of children throughout the process. This analysis demonstrated important achievements in various areas but showed remaining inequities and deficits such as neonatal mortality, stunting, preschool attendance, violence against children, juvenile justice and participation. This report was presented at the Social, Economic and Environmental National Council with over one hundred children present.
6. **The report was shared with all political parties** before the last electoral process in Morocco asking them to consider the interest of children in their respective political programmes. UNICEF plans to continue advocacy work with the parliament, and also expand outreach at decentralized level.
7. **The Minister of Solidarity, Women, Family and Social Development**, called for the opening of an objective national dialogue on child reality in Morocco and the means to promote this situation. The Minister emphasized the constant desire to improve the situation through public policies and programmes under the King's guidance, as well as renewed commitment for the promotion and support of child rights.
8. **In the continuation of this work, UNICEF supports ONDH** to develop a profile for children in Morocco using the National-MODA approach based on a panel survey of households. It is also scheduled to conduct a regular measure of child poverty in the next five years.



# SPAIN

An alliance of a broad range of organizations join to make child poverty a national priority

Following the publication of alarming figures showing the rising number of children affected by poverty in Spain during the economic crises, a broad range of partners joined efforts as part of a coalition to set up a new nation-wide strategy and budget to fight child poverty.

## TIMELINE

2013–2015

## DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- Report Card on child well-being.
- Advocacy skills and experience.
- Network with regional CSOs working on child poverty.

## STAKEHOLDERS

- Child poverty coalition
- Political parties
- Parliamentarians
- Ministry of Health and Social Services
- Regional governments
- Media
- Civil society

## THE APPROACH

1. Following the increasing numbers of children affected by poverty in Spain in 2013, a broad range of organizations joined efforts to make child poverty a national priority and ensure that it was reflected in key policies and budgets.
2. A broad range of partners, including child-focused as well as broader civil society organizations, joined to create a national advocacy platform. These included international organizations based in Spain, such as SOS Spain, Red Cross Spain, EAPN Spain, Save The Children Spain, and UNICEF Spain, as well as national civil society, including CERMI and Fundación Secretariado Gitano, representing different groups.
3. The group started as an informal workgroup formed of representatives of the different partners, and then formalized their status as part of the Spanish Alliance for Investing in Children, coordinated by the regional alliance Eurochild and led by UNICEF Spain.
4. Together, they hosted a range of discussions during a workshop session, during which they drafted a common Advocacy Strategy to raise the visibility of child poverty as a priority issue and reinforce the role of public policies fighting child poverty and implementing the European Commission recommendations on investing in children. As a result of the child participation process, three children from Spain participated in the European Platform against Poverty Convention in Brussels in 2014.
5. In order to raise the visibility of child poverty within national debates, UNICEF and Save the Children engaged with the leaders of political parties to mention in a national speech the demand for a nation-wide strategy for children and social inclusion, including the need to address child poverty.
6. Before the national elections, the Alliance also met with the government and different parliamentary groups and political parties, which resulted in child poverty being an explicit commitment included in the political manifestos before the national elections. Specifically, increase in the benefit amount and coverage of social security for children were included in the proposal.
7. As a result of the joint work, child poverty was included as a priority in the National Plan for Children and National Plan for Social Inclusion (2013) and Families Support Plan (2014), including budget allocations of €48 million for 2016 (€32 million in 2015) to mitigate the impacts of severe poverty on children. The Alliance continues to advocate on child poverty and investment in children.

### Resources:

- 'Spanish Alliance for Investing in Children holds interactive workshop' and 'Spanish Children's Rights Coalition joins the Spanish Alliance for Investing in Children' both from EU Alliance for investing in children: <http://www.alliance4investinginchildren.eu/tag/spain/>



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1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

**3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy**

4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

## Conclusion

Milestone 3 has focused on the key elements of placing child poverty high on the national agenda, through creating and sustaining the interest of key audiences, through high level decision makers. Milestone 4 presented in the next chapter, focuses on more specific, technical analyses presenting policy options for decision-makers to reform and/or design policies and programmes to achieve the SDGs by 2030.

### MILESTONE 3 CHECKLIST: INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

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- ✓ Child poverty appears regularly in media/social media.
- ✓ Child poverty becomes part of engagement with actors such as Ministries of Finance and World Bank.
- ✓ Stakeholders other than core child poverty advocates are stressing the importance of child poverty.
- ✓ Child poverty measures and concepts become part of discourse in major policy discussions (such as budget framework papers and the State of the Nation).



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A world  
free  
from child  
poverty

## Milestone 4 Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change



END CHILD  
POVERTY  
GLOBAL COALITION

unicef 



# Milestone 4

## Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change



### KEY MESSAGES

- There is a proven set of policies and programmes that can address child poverty. Responses to monetary and multidimensional child poverty may differ considerably.
- What makes sense to focus on in a country will depend on the situation of children, what is driving their poverty and where there is opportunity to make progress.
- Changing policies and programmes to reduce child poverty takes advocacy (Milestone 3) as well as technical analysis to answer the questions of policy makers.
- There are a series of well-proven tools that can answer key questions and support decision makers to reduce child poverty.

Milestones 1, 2 and 3 have focused on, respectively, building an understanding of child poverty amongst key stakeholders, officially and routinely measuring child poverty, and putting the issue on the map through concerted advocacy.

All of these steps can contribute to making a concrete difference in the lives of children living in poverty: stakeholders can take their knowledge of the issues into their spheres of influence, available data can be incorporated in analysis that guides programmes and policies, and as public support grows so child poverty can become a political issue that influences the discussions and decisions of government and non-government actors.

Milestone 4 moves from these more general approaches, to the specific: identifying the policies and programmes to address child poverty, and how can child poverty analysis support and influence them.

## KEY STEPS TO ACHIEVING MILESTONE 4:

- A** AN OVERVIEW OF THE PACKAGE OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES THAT CAN REDUCE CHILD POVERTY.
- B** WHAT TO FOCUS ON: PICKING THE RIGHT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES TO ADVOCATE FOR.
- C** MAKING POLICY CHANGE HAPPEN: KEY POLICY QUESTIONS AND ANALYTICAL APPROACHES TO ANSWERING THEM.

## A. An overview of the package of policies and programmes that can reduce child poverty

A central question towards ending child poverty is whether there a basic package of policies and programmes that will address child poverty.

While this milestone will show there are many important nuances in answering this question, including the areas to focus on and the policy details that can make a difference, there are also common threads that apply universally. At their core, the policies and programmes to address child poverty will:

- i) **Provide quality and accessible services particularly for the most deprived children – including in areas such as nutrition, education and health which represent their multidimensional poverty – and drive whether children will be able to fulfil their potential and end the cycle of poverty; and**
- (ii) **Support families and households to have a minimum income and ensure financial barriers don't prevent children from reaching their potential.**

This simple mix is the basis for a global platform of action to address child poverty, and countries that have succeeded in addressing child poverty have succeeded in these areas. But few, if any, would say the work is complete.

In some countries, this broad platform for action, together with the situation of children living in poverty and its devastating impacts, may be sufficient to spur action, with policy makers and other experts filling in the policy and programme details to achieve success (Box 4.1).

However, in other contexts, supporting policy and programme change requires analysing, understanding and advocating for more specific actions that are needed. Here the details become more complex: why are children not accessing services – are they lacking or too expensive – and what is the response? How to ensure families have the income to be above the poverty line – cash transfers, employment support or provision of child care?

As has been stressed from the beginning of this guide, child poverty can be understood and measured both in terms of multidimensional child poverty, as well as monetary child poverty. Regardless of particular measurement approaches, in understanding the policy and programmatic responses it can bring clarity to consider the monetary and multidimensional (non-monetary) aspects of child poverty separately as the responses can differ considerably.

It is also important to emphasize that effective approaches to overall poverty reduction – such as poverty reduction strategies, employment policies or plans for economic growth – can be hugely beneficial to children. Including children where possible, through linking monitoring frameworks to the SDGs and child poverty rates, or assessing progress in particular policy and programme areas in terms of their impacts on children, as outlined in the rest of this milestone, can help ensure they are as effective as possible for children.

## BOX 4.1

## Policy or programme – or both?

Throughout this milestone ‘policies and programmes’ are used together to capture the idea of large scale actions that have a significant impact on child poverty. In reality policies and programmes are connected but different, both in theory and in how they relate to each other in practice, especially country contexts.

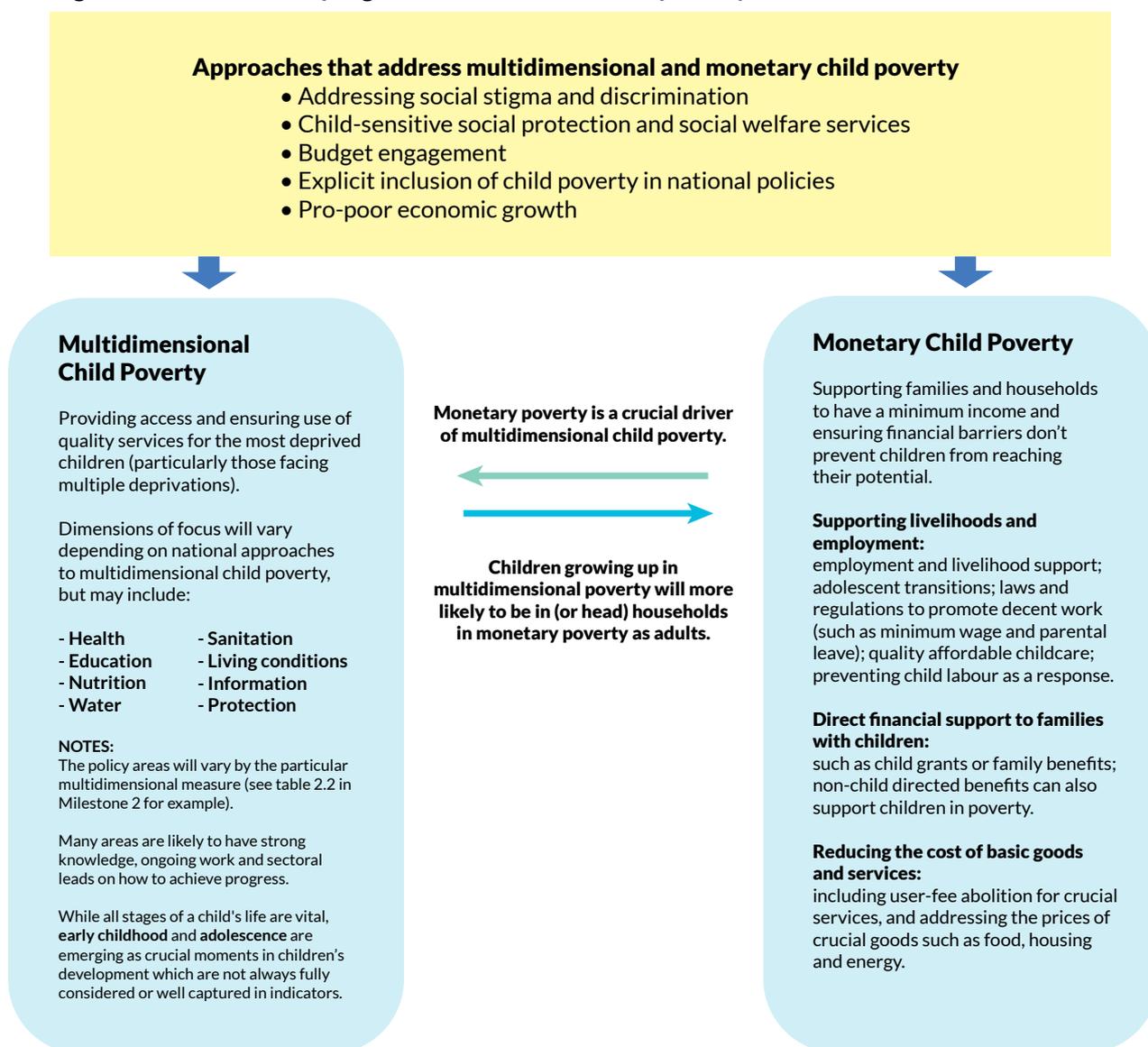
A definition of a policy is “a course of action adopted and pursued by a government”. As such, changing a policy in favour of children in poverty can have large-scale impacts. In some countries, however, having policies on the books may be more aspirational than implying immediate action on the ground. A programme speaks more directly to action and implementation and can be defined as “a set of related measures or activities with a particular long-term aim”. While government programmes are often those that operate at the largest scale, independent programmes by non-governmental organizations can also make a huge difference. They can be particularly important in contexts where governments may not be able to reach the most marginalized.

There are many context-specific considerations in determining which area to focus on. Engaging in policy change can be a very long-term process, and in a number of areas existing policies may be able to provide the framing for expansion and improvement of programmes on the ground. In others that may be emerging, social protection in some contexts for example, establishing a policy framework can be essential to moving programmes forward sustainably. As focus narrows to particular concerns of children in poverty – be it expanding early childhood education or cash transfers – the logic of where to focus in particular contexts becomes clearer.

The rest of this section looks in turn at the package of policies to address child poverty (outlined in summary in Figure 4.1). While this guide cannot do justice to the wealth of information in each area, it aims to highlight some key considerations and point to existing literature and guidance across the following areas:

- **Overarching approaches that can address both multidimensional and monetary child poverty.**
- **Approaches to address multidimensional child poverty.**
- **Approaches to address monetary child poverty.**

**Figure 4.1: Policies and programmes to address child poverty**



## Overarching approaches to address child poverty (both multidimensional and monetary)

While there are a range of specific interventions to address monetary or multidimensional poverty, there are number of key areas that can address both. These include:

### **Social stigma and discrimination:**

Social stigma and discrimination is a common root cause for both monetary and multidimensional poverty that affects a household's participation in the labour market and civic engagement as well as children's access and experience across areas. Accordingly, addressing social stigma and discrimination can be essential to reduce both monetary and multidimensional child poverty in many contexts (see Box 4.2 for more details).

### **Child-sensitive social protection or social welfare systems:**

While social protection is often associated with cash transfers which address monetary poverty, social protection systems or social welfare systems create a comprehensive and coordinated network of programmes for children and are able to identify children experiencing a range of deprivations (monetary or otherwise) and connect them to appropriate programming.

### **Budget engagement:**

Across any programme or policy package, securing necessary funding and monitoring its use is essential for plans to be implemented and improve children's lives. Engaging on the budget and public finance for children more generally can be essential across all areas of child poverty. There is a growing practice in this area across countries, and the second half of this chapter and Milestone 5 look at this in more detail.

### **Inclusion in national policies:**

Countries typically have an overall poverty reduction strategy or national development plan that lays out critical interventions to achieve national goals, including for poverty reduction. These can have significant impacts on child poverty even where it is not explicitly targeted. Engaging in these plans to include child poverty where possible, both as a key target to assess progress as well as in the selection and implementation of particular policies and programmes, can make them more effective channeling national attention and resources in addressing child poverty.

### **Pro-poor economic growth:**

Pro-poor economic growth can be a fundamental driver of child poverty reduction: as economies grow with quality employment reaching poorer families and increased tax receipts helping to strengthening services, children will be lifted out of both monetary and multidimensional poverty. Economic growth, however, can be elusive. The policy and programme approaches outlined in this milestone aim to ensure where economies are growing benefits are reaching the poorest families and addressing child poverty, but also provide proven approaches to addressing child poverty even where economic growth may not be strong. Finally, and fundamentally, addressing child poverty is of course itself a long-term and sustainable approach to strengthening economies.

BOX 4.2

## Tackling social stigma and discrimination

Social stigma and discrimination is one of the most fundamental and often deeply-rooted causes of child poverty. While forms of discrimination vary by country, examples of widely prevalent forms of discrimination that children experience are based on caste, ethnicity, gender and sexual orientation, HIV status, disability, refugee and migrant status, among many other context-specific factors.

Social exclusion can drive both monetary and multidimensional child poverty in different ways:

- Some children and families may be rejected from receiving goods or services. Depending on the context this treatment may be legally sanctioned, or the result of prevailing norms.
- Even where not directly excluded, children or families may choose to not attend schools or public spaces as a result of how they are treated, including cultural or linguistic differences reducing the benefits of education or other services.
- Some groups may face discrimination as a result of the location in which they live, particularly in remote areas where options for economic activity or education/health may be limited, or in slums where poverty is concentrated.
- Parents from low caste groups may have limited or no job options.
- Stigma can also affect the ability of some groups to participate in the labour market as well as how they will be treated within a working environment. For instance, there is extensive evidence that some groups are less likely to be employed in some professions and where employed may receive lower remuneration for similar tasks.
- Minorities can be excluded from the democratic engagement process that establishes the rule of the society and so are disempowered in addressing these structural imbalances.

It is also important to note that poverty driven by social inequity further reinforces discrimination. Lack of clean clothes, school materials, or recipient status of social welfare could all further marginalize already vulnerable children and family.

Tackling society's stigma and behaviours can be a long, complex and politically challenging process. But without tackling stigma and discrimination, marginalized children will continue to face deprivation and injustice and they will continue to grow up in poverty.

**Some policies and programmes to address social stigma and discrimination include:**

- **Anti-discriminatory laws and regulations** can protect the rights of marginalized groups by forcing actors in society to treat minorities fairly and hold them accountable for violations. Examples of such legislation could include equal pay legislation and employment non-discrimination laws. These can be linked to international rights conventions and standards.
- **Affirmative action** is a sets of actions to provide more opportunities for disadvantaged groups, typically in employment and education. Such actions can be taken by using a quota system to reserve vacancies for the specific groups or by giving special consideration in the selection process.

- **Social mobilization** can play a major role in pushing both decision makers and individuals to act. Specific activities may vary across different contexts and objectives, from individual outreach, social media campaigns to mass media outreach.
- **Trainings or workshops to change social norms and behaviours.** Field experiments on the psychology of stigma suggest three approaches, broadly categorized as: education (replacing the misunderstandings with facts), contact (personal interaction with members of stigmatized groups) and protest (highlighting the injustice of stigma and chastising offenders for their stereotypes and discrimination).

#### **In implementing policies and programmes some important considerations include:**

- Introduction of laws and policies may need to be complemented by compliance mechanisms or implementation support to ensure changes in behaviours and norms in reality.
- Programmes should be delivered in a manner that does not stigmatize the recipients. One example of such delivery is to provide free or reduced school meals to all students instead of targeting poor students or creating a different line for them.
- Likewise, some targeted support such as affirmative action can trigger further stigmatization against the minority by the peers.

#### **For further guidance:**

**Social Norms, Social Change** is a massive open online course (MOOC), developed and delivered by UNICEF with the University of Pennsylvania on Coursera. Although not exclusively focused on stigma and discrimination, it gives an overview of social norms and the importance of policy in sustaining or breaking up harmful practices.

**Lessons from social psychology on discrediting psychiatric stigma** is a review of studies from social psychology about interventions to cope with social stigma.

**Stigma: A guidebook for Action** is a practitioner's guide that introduces a wide range of tools to address stigma through actions at different levels. While the guide has extensive focus on stigma against people with mental illness, the tools and framework could be useful for any other issues

**Transformative Social Protection** discusses the role of social protection protecting socially vulnerable groups from discrimination and abuse.

BOX 4.3

## Taking a systems approach to coordinate multisectoral responses to child poverty

For children living in poverty or vulnerable to it, it is unlikely that a single programme will be all they need. Multidimensional poverty analyses around the world has shown that many children suffer from more than one deprivation and thus require multi-sectoral responses.

However, in reality, the programmes and policies are often fragmented, provided by different sectoral ministries or agencies with different application processes, eligibility criteria, or methods of delivery. This has led the governments and development partners to take a systems approach in planning and delivering programmes. A systems approach not only helps the eligible households to easily access multiple programmes but also helps the government and other service providers to increase efficiency in delivering the services by establishing a common approach to identify and reach out to disadvantaged families.

While the name and detailed structure of a system may vary by context, typically a system is coordinated at the following three levels.

- The **policy level** is responsible for overall policy coherence as well as institutional arrangements to provide strategic guidance and oversee implementation.
- At **programme level**, having appropriately designed programmes and maximizing synergies and coordination between them can help ensure that eligible families can have knowledge and access to a wide range of appropriate programmes. Social workers may play a critical role in identifying the need of the families and connecting them with various services.
- **At administrative level** coordination is supported by the development of tools that can be used across programmes, including beneficiary identification system or management information system (MIS), grievance and redress mechanisms, payment arrangements, monitoring and evaluation, and provider contracting.

A systems approach is not only relevant to increase coherence within a sector (for example social protection or health) but should also be applied to coordinate across different sectors to respond to a broader range of interventions. Further guidance on systems approach can be found in the documents below:

**Core Diagnostic Instrument (CODI)** is an inter-agency tool that was developed to assess social protection systems. The guidance includes a questionnaire, assessment matrix, guideline for country reports and implementation guidelines, all to be applied at country level. The instrument helps to map the elements of system, analyse the performance, identify areas of improvement and promote exchange dialogue between partners.

**Common Ground: UNICEF and World Bank Approaches to Building Social Protection Systems** outlines the commitment of two organizations in developing and strengthening social protection systems, with country examples.

**Integrated Social Protection Systems: Enhancing equity for children** is UNICEF's Social Protection Framework that introduces the systems approach, the role of vulnerability assessments, institutional frameworks, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, with emphasis on the importance of participation and accountability.

## Addressing multidimensional child poverty

As multidimensional child poverty covers a wide range of deprivations, a policy and programme agenda to address it could (and indeed maybe should) include a very broad range of interventions. This will include both areas directly covered by multidimensional poverty measures (such as basic and secondary education, health care and housing) as well as areas crucial to children's development which may not be fully captured in a child poverty measure (such as early childhood development).

Table 4.1 summarizes the key dimensions for some of the most common multidimensional poverty approaches. Not only are the range of dimensions of multidimensional child poverty broad, so are the possible points of intervention. The table highlights ten areas of possible intervention based on UNICEF Monitoring of Results for Equity Systems (MoRES), such as addressing social norms, supporting physical access to services and ensuring quality.

**Table 4.1: Approaches to addressing multidimensional child poverty**

Common dimensions of multidimensional child poverty	Areas of possible policy and programme intervention
<b>Health</b> <b>Nutrition</b> <b>Education</b> <b>Water</b> <b>Sanitation</b> <b>Shelter</b> <b>Information</b> <b>Protection</b>	<b>Social norms</b> <i>Widely followed rules of behaviour</i>
	<b>Legislation/policy</b> <i>Adequacy of laws and policies</i>
	<b>Budget/expenditure</b> <i>Allocation and disbursement of required resources</i>
	<b>Management/coordination</b> <i>Roles and accountability</i>
	<b>Availability of inputs</b> <i>Essential commodities/inputs requires to deliver a service or adopt a practice</i>
	<b>Access to services and information</b> <i>Physical access (services/facilities/information)</i>
	<b>Financial access</b> <i>Direct and indirect costs for services/practices</i>
	<b>Social and cultural practices and beliefs</b> <i>Individual/community beliefs, awareness, behaviours, practices, attitudes</i>
	<b>Timing and continuity of use</b> <i>Completion/continuity in service, practice</i>
	<b>Quality of care</b> <i>Adherence to required quality standards</i>

The dimensions outlined here build on approaches to multidimensional poverty most commonly used in lower- and middle-income countries. As outlined in Milestone 2, multidimensional poverty in higher income countries may include different indicators. Many are directly linked to monetary child poverty such as lack of parental employment and lack of material possessions.

For more information on UNICEF's MoRES methodology, see *Monitoring Results for Equity Systems (MoRES) Access and Quality in Early Learning*.

It cannot be stressed enough that across most, if not all, of the sectoral areas outlined that can address multidimensional child poverty, there is likely to be extensive thinking, knowledge, and programming which will have carefully considered how to make progress. This will be led by sectoral ministries, donor groups (in some contexts), research experts and think tanks and civil society groups.

Given this very broad possible agenda of action, it is important to have clarity on how multidimensional child poverty measurement and analysis, and those working to support it, can collaborate, support and add value to those working across sectors. This is covered throughout this guidance, and summarized in Box 4.4.



## BOX 4.4

## Role of multidimensional poverty analysis and advocacy to policy and programme change in sectors

Experience suggests that work on multidimensional poverty can directly support programme and policy change in sectors to reduce child poverty through two channels: identifying key areas of focus and supporting implementation:

### IDENTIFYING WHERE TO FOCUS

**Key deprivations of the most deprived children:** The focus of multidimensional poverty is to consider deprivations across many aspects of a child's life focusing on children experiencing multiple deprivations simultaneously. This focus on the most deprived children can point to particular deprivations, say education or health, that may be driving multidimensional poverty, or if there are some deprivations that frequently overlap, leading to a focus on particular areas and cross-sectoral collaboration. This question is considered in Section B of this milestone.

**Underlying drivers of poverty:** While analysis in one sector may identify what is driving child deprivation (for example, undernutrition may be caused by lack of income or limited information on nutrition), analysing multidimensional poverty can identify cross-cutting factors that are driving the poverty of children deprived in multiple areas. For example, discrimination based on ethnicity or geography may be the driving factor, or monetary child poverty may be preventing families from accessing services for children. Once identified these drivers can inform policy and programme choices. This analysis is considered later in Section B of this milestone.

### SUPPORTING IMPLEMENTATION

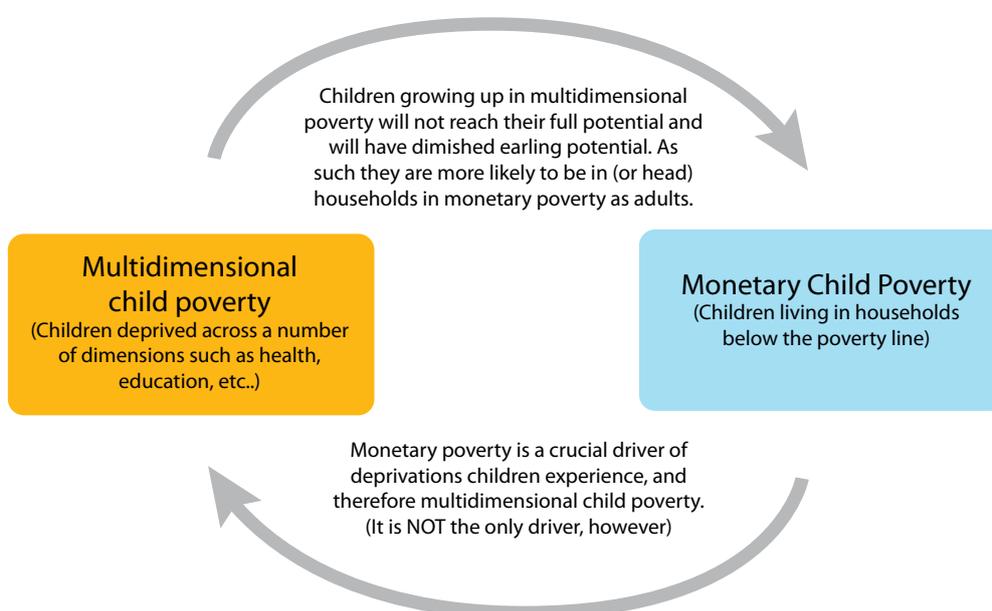
**Providing support to specific identified goals:** Even where deep sectoral expertise sits outside the team working on multidimensional child poverty, significant support to specific goals can still often be provided. This includes technical support to analysis in sectors to unlock progress for the most deprived children (covered in depth in Section C of this milestone) as well as advocacy and engagement (as outlined in Milestone 3). Relatedly, it is important to note that the relationships of those working on multidimensional poverty might extend beyond those of sectoral colleagues, such as Ministries of Finance and Planning.

**Building a supportive enabling environment:** A major contribution that multidimensional poverty concepts and measurement can make is building political support and commitment to strengthening services for the most deprived children. For example a child-rights policy or a National Development Plan that uses multidimensional poverty as part of its framing, including the monitoring and evaluation framework, can provide a strong foundation for action can both drive agendas as well as frame the monitoring of progress. Multidimensional poverty can also be an effective chapeau for child-rights advocacy and engagement on public finance for children. This is considered in Milestone 5.

## Addressing monetary child poverty

Monetary and multidimensional child poverty are closely related. One of the most fundamental ways to address monetary child poverty in the longer term is to address multidimensional child poverty. As children grow up free from deprivations in health, education and nutrition they can reach their full potential as adults, making it less likely that they – and their children – will be in poverty in the future. At the same time, monetary child poverty is a critical driver of multidimensional poverty (Figure 4.2).

**Figure 4.2: Relationship between monetary and multidimensional child poverty**



In the policy and programme sphere, monetary child poverty can be distinguished from multidimensional child poverty in two important ways. Firstly, whereas multidimensional child poverty is broad ranging, monetary child poverty is more focused – in some ways more like a sector such as health or education.

Secondly, whereas multidimensional poverty covers areas where there are often strong sectoral actors and advocates, monetary child poverty may not have this focus. So while there is likely to be a strong focus on monetary poverty overall, focusing on how general poverty reduction can consider children or child-specific measures may not have a sector or group focusing on it.

As such, it is both possible and necessary to outline a possible package that can be considered to address monetary child poverty. Overall the programme agenda to address monetary poverty can be categorized into three areas:

- **Increasing income through livelihood and employment.**
- **Direct financial support to families with children, such as through transfers or tax credits.**
- **Addressing the cost of important goods and services to reduce the economic burden on household budget.**

These are looked at in turn in the rest of the section, with later sections considering where child advocates might be best placed to engage, and the technical analysis that can support decision makers.

## Supporting livelihoods and employment

### ROLE IN REDUCING MONETARY CHILD POVERTY

With unemployment a major driver of child poverty, policies and programmes that increase employment and provide livelihood opportunities can have a very large impact. It is also a key area where economic growth can directly translate into child poverty reduction, through creation of jobs and increase in wages. However, while hugely important, they are not a panacea for all families. First, many households with children may be labour-constrained, with adults unable to work for a range of reasons. For these households, direct income support is essential. Secondly, while employment is important, so are working conditions. The families of many children living in poverty in lower income countries work in agriculture where jobs are most often informal and precarious and prone to shocks such as drought. In formal employment in both richer and poorer countries, parents and caregivers having to work multiple jobs, or working without paid family leave, can be detrimental to children. Finally, for large families or families with children with special needs, the income from work and livelihoods may not be sufficient to cover basic costs.

### EXAMPLES OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

A range of interventions from the beginning of life – such as nutrition, early childhood development, education and health – are all vital supports towards productive adulthood. Here, however, we focus on approaches that can support adults and young people, recognizing there are no simple solutions:

- **Livelihood support**, including support with initial assets, training, savings accounts, life skill training and temporary cash support.
- **Employment support** including skill training, job search support and supporting connections with employers.
- **Supporting adolescents** in their transitions to adulthood, particularly for young people who may be disadvantaged due to a lack of educational background or work experience.

- **Laws and regulations** to promote decent work, such as minimum wage law, parental leave policies.
- **Provision of affordable and quality childcare services** to facilitate the caregivers' ability to work.
- **Preventing child labour** being a response to monetary poverty.

## FURTHER RESOURCES:

### *On livelihoods:*

***The PROPEL Toolkit*** is an implementation guide to the ultra-poor graduation approach, which provides a step-by-step guide to help any organization implement a graduation programme based on BRAC's experience in Asia and Africa. Similar programmes have been evaluated in six countries (JPAL article: A Livelihood Programme That Works for India's Ultra-Poor: New study in Science), producing positive returns in five of six countries, ranging from 133 per cent in Ghana to 433 per cent in India, that were sustained one year after the end of the programme.

***Policy Guidance Notes on the Promotion of Decent Work in the Rural Economy*** offers guidance to policymakers and development practitioners on ways to effectively address employment- and labour-related issues in the rural context.

***Livelihoods Toolkit*** by The Cash Learning Partnership (CaLP) brings together research, training, tools and guidance on livelihoods with strong focus on humanitarian and fragile contexts.

***Generating employment in poor and fragile states: Evidence from labour market and entrepreneurship programs*** is an evidence review that finds that skills training and microfinance have shown little impact on poverty, while injections of capital—cash, capital goods, or livestock—seem to stimulate self-employment and raise long-term earning potential, often when partnered with low-cost complementary interventions.

### *On employment and jobs:*

***Transforming jobs to end poverty - World Employment and Social Outlook 2016*** analyses the trend of global poverty situation and jobs. Policy recommendations include promotion of sustainable enterprises, compliance of international labour standards, employment and social policies, and increased funding for job growth strategies.

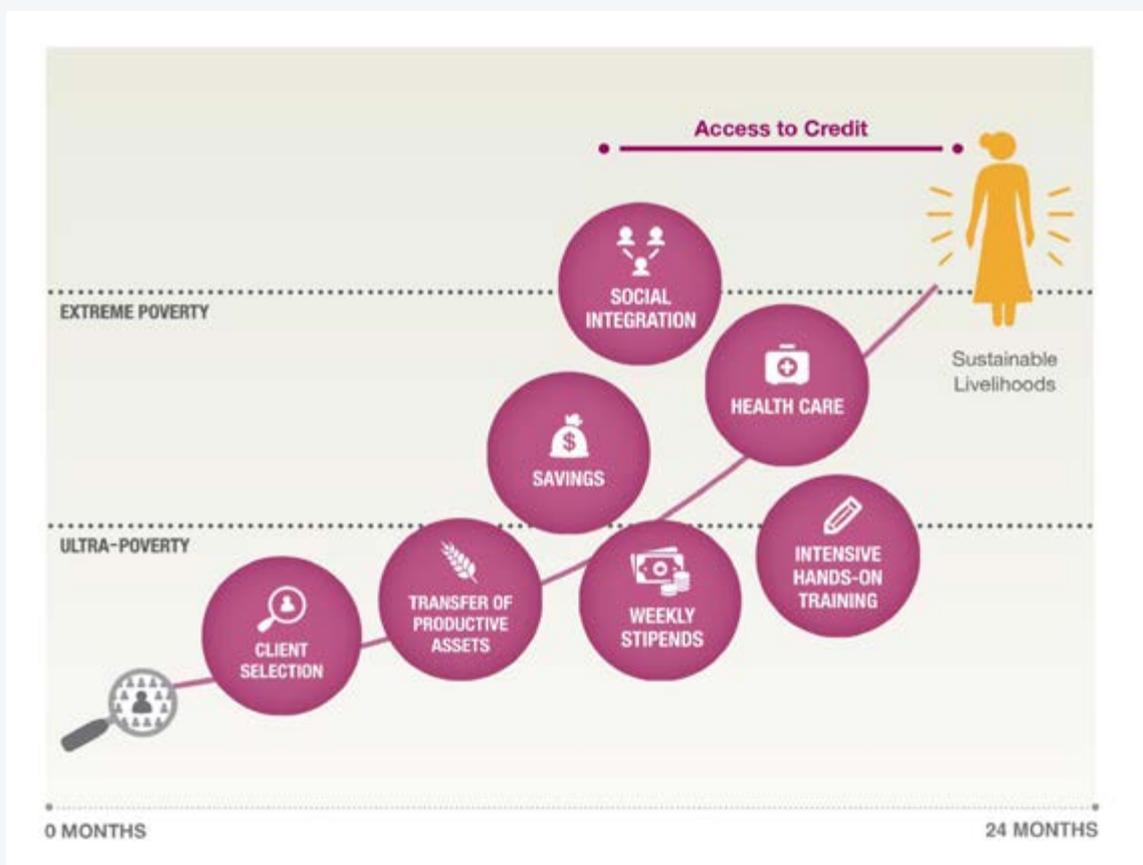
***The ILO's Toolkit for Mainstreaming Employment and Decent Work*** - Country Level Application (2008) provides a checklist at country level to support employment creation and enterprise development, social protection, standards and right at work and governance and social dialogue.



## Bangladesh

### Bangladesh: BRAC's Ultra-Poor Graduation Programme

BRAC's graduation programme combines immediate and long-term support to households living in extreme poverty towards sustainable livelihoods. The set of interventions addresses multiple dimensions of poverty, ranging from asset transfer to life skills training and community mobilization.



As the name indicates, participants graduate from the programme when they achieve certain economic and social criteria which assess if a household has established food security, income, savings and if positive behavior changes such as on schooling and family planning are observed. As many households remain vulnerable even after graduation, they will continue to be aided by various programmes to be protected from shocks.

The programme reached over 53,000 ultra-poor households in 2014 and 88,000 members from the 2014 cohort have graduated out of extreme poverty.

SOURCE: BRAC (2015)



## Chile

### Chile: Ethical Family Income (Ingreso Ético Familiar - IEF)

The Ethical Family Income programme was introduced in 2011 as a set of policies and programmes to eradicate poverty and promote equity in the labour market. The first component consists of a combination of unconditional and conditional cash transfers. Among the conditionalities is formal employment of women, aimed to encourage female participation in the labour market.

IEF also puts emphasis on income-generating capacity in the household, which consists of the following elements:

- i) training sessions oriented to overcome barriers to beneficiaries entering the labour market;
- ii) training sessions to develop their soft skills;
- iii) training sessions to reinforce and create technical competencies; and
- iv) labour intermediation to match labour supply and demand.

The job training component, combined with psychosocial support to instil self-esteem, aims to improve skills and encourage engaging in the labour market to promote the incomes of vulnerable adults as they enter the workplace.

SOURCE: MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT, 2012; VARGAS, 2012

#### *On adolescent transitions and youth employment:*

**Global Employment Trends for Youth 2015** - Scaling up investments in decent jobs for youth by the ILO provides an update on youth labour market around the world focusing both on the continuing labour market instability and on structural issues in youth labour markets. The report also discusses the trend in youth and labour market transitions and policies to support youth employment.

**The Adolescent Toolkit for Participation and Innovation** by UNICEF aims to promote positive outcomes for adolescents' psychosocial wellbeing, learning life skills, and positive active engagement in their communities through cross-sectoral, adaptable, developmentally-appropriate approaches.

**Advocacy tools and arguments for social investment in adolescents** produced by UNICEF Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean lays out the rationale for investing in adolescents, key intervention areas and mobilization and advocacy strategy to promote the agenda.

**Youth in Action** is a programme by Save the Children and the Mastercard Foundation to support 40,000 out-of-school youth in five countries through a combination of non-formal educational and practice-oriented learning experiences.

#### *On childcare:*

**Investing in Young Children: An Early Childhood Development Guide for Policy**

***Dialogue and Project Preparation*** is a detailed guide that starts from how to convince the policymakers to invest more in ECD, develop a policy framework, to possible interventions and costing and financing.

***Women's work: mothers, children and the global childcare crisis*** is a global report that analyses the 'global care crises' in which 35 million children under the age of five are left alone, or with other young children to look after themselves. The report then discusses potential solutions through expanded childcare provision, economic support to carers, improvement of working environment and better data collection.

***Childcare and Early Childhood Development Programmes and Policies: Their relationship to eradicating child poverty*** is a review of evidence from both developed and developing countries that examines relationship between childcare programmes and poverty reduction.

***E-learning course on ECD*** is hosted by the World Bank. In the two-day session, design and implementation of successful Early Childhood Development (ECD) policies and programmes in low- and middle-income countries are discussed.

***On legislation and policies:***

The ***Maternity Protection Resource Package*** provides guidance and tools for researchers and practitioners to strengthen and extend maternity protection to all women in all types of economic activity.

***The minimum wage policy guide*** draws on international experience in establishing minimum wage, and takes the reader through eight steps to achieve minimum wage – from defining the wage, enforcement, and monitoring.

***On child labour:***

***ILO's website on child labour*** provides facts and figures, definitions, and good practices to eradicate child labour.

FAO's ***Handbook for monitoring and evaluation of child labour in agriculture*** is a practical guide to include child labour topics in the monitoring and evaluation framework of agricultural programme with some good practices for addressing child labour.

***Modern policy and legislative response to child labour*** (2007) by ILO examines various approaches taken to address child labour around the world with specific possible actions to be undertaken.



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## Egypt

### Egypt: A pilot programme to reduce child labour

In a pilot programme in Egypt, 1423 eligible children in 116 villages who were aged 6–11 and not enrolled in school and either working or at risk of working in inappropriate forms of child labour were provided with a package of interventions. The package consisted of:

- Transitional education.
- Take-home rations (a package of basic food and cash, adding up to \$105 per month).
- Awareness-raising targeting parents, children, formal and informal leaders, and employers through messaging on the value of education and child rights.
- Income-generating activities for parents (small business loans and training).

The results showed positive school outcomes and significant reduction on the allocation of time for economic activities for boys and unpaid household services for girls. No impact, however, was found on overall participation in economic activities, exposure to workplace hazards, or occurrence of work-related injuries.

SOURCE: ICF INTERNATIONAL (2015)

## Direct financial support to families with children

### ROLE IN REDUCING MONETARY CHILD POVERTY:

Providing financial support to families can directly increase household income and thus reduce the share of households (and children) living in poverty. Even where direct financial support does not lift a family out of poverty, it can reduce the depth of poverty, and such approaches can also protect vulnerable families falling below the poverty line. Further, evidence shows that increased household income can allow households to invest in productive assets – including health and education towards sustainable incomes of families over the longer term.

### EXAMPLES OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES:

While the principles of programmes aimed at providing direct financial support are the same, practical approaches vary by context. In many countries, including lower-income countries, cash transfers or child benefits are being widely used. In middle- and higher-income countries with more comprehensive tax systems, tax credits may also be part of the approach.

Examples of policies and programmes include:

- Child grants or family benefit are regular cash transfers for eligible families. Child tax credit can provide tax relief to families with children, mostly in higher-income settings.
- Other cash transfers can also support children living in poverty such as unemployment benefits, disability grants and maternity grants.
- In cash for work schemes, families earn cash in compensation for providing labour.

**FURTHER RESOURCES:**

For resources on child-sensitive social protection, see the joint statement on [\*\*Advancing Child-sensitive Social Protection\*\*](#), and UNICEF's [\*\*Social Protection Framework\*\*](#).

[\*\*World Social Protection Report 2014-2015\*\*](#) provides recent statistics of social protection programmes globally. Chapter 2 of the report exclusively focuses on social protection for children and families, laying out the role of social protection in ensuring children's well-being, accompanied by an analysis of the legal coverage and public expenditure.

[\*\*Social Cash Transfer and Children's Outcomes: A Review of Evidence from Africa\*\*](#) reviews the evidence of the multisectoral outcomes and operational lessons.

[\*\*Cash Transfers: what does the evidence say? A rigorous review of impacts and the role of design and implementation features\*\*](#) reviews evidence on cash transfers from 2000 to 2015, covering 165 studies in 30 countries. The review pays particular attention to the design features of the programmes on the outcomes.

[\*\*Designing and Implementing Social Transfer Programmes: a policy manual\*\*](#) is another comprehensive guidebook for practitioners, with detailed guidance on designing, implementing and managing social transfer programmes.

[\*\*Socialprotection.org\*\*](#) is an online platform that provides a document library, online webinars, and a discussion forum hosted by International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth.

Development Pathways has an extensive [\*\*recommended reading list on their website\*\*](#).

Guidance and evidence on tax credits is more limited, but a few policy briefs can be found for some countries that have introduced the policy. See [\*\*Policy Basics: The Child Tax Credit for the US\*\*](#) or the [\*\*Welfare Benefits and Tax Credit Handbook for the UK\*\*](#) to learn more about the details of the tax scheme.



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## Brazil

### Brazil: Bolsa Familia (Family Allowance)

Brazil's Bolsa Familia (family allowance) is the world's largest conditional cash transfer programme, reaching 14 million families in 2015, about one in four Brazilian families. Introduced in 2003, it aims to address poverty in the short-term by providing monthly cash payment to families living in poverty, and build human capital in the long-run by including conditions on sending children to school and receiving vaccinations. The size of transfer varies by household income, number of children and whether there is a pregnant woman or nursing mother in the household.

The government manages a single registry system, Cadastro Único, where the characteristics of families living in poverty are registered, including information such as the address, members of the household, educational background, and occupational status. This database not only helps identify the eligible people for Bolsa Familia but for other social programmes.

Since 2002, Brazil lifted 36 million people out of poverty, and the Bolsa Familia is considered to have played a leading role in this achievement. It is also the key component of the government's plan to eradicate poverty 'Brasil Sem Miséria'.

For more information, *Bolsa Familia Program: a decade of social inclusion in Brazil* documents the progress of the programme over ten years, providing rich lessons learnt that can be applied to other contexts.

## Reducing the costs of basic goods and services

### ROLE IN REDUCING MONETARY CHILD POVERTY

High costs of basic goods and services can greatly reduce the disposable income of families to sustain minimum living standards and drag them into poverty. Interventions to reduce the costs and fees of basic goods and services will not only help free up the limited household budget of those living in poverty, but can also address the consequences of monetary poverty for children by lifting the financial barriers they face in accessing basic services.

### EXAMPLES OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

While there is a range of goods and services that affect the household budget, only a limited number of areas both make up a significant percentage of the household budgets of poorer families (and as such are costs that cannot be avoided) and are part of government intervention with some frequency. These include:

- Families living in poverty often spend a large proportion of their income on essential survival goods such as food, housing, electricity or energy. In many countries these goods may be subject to subsidies

or taxes which affect their price. The impacts of subsidies and taxes need to be carefully analysed to understand if they are reaching the poorest, or if richer parts of the population are benefiting more. Benefit incidence, impact evaluations and simulations as well as macro-level simulations to estimate economy-wide impacts are some tools to analyse the impacts (considered later in this milestone).

- Reducing the costs of key basic services, such as health and education, not only reduces financial barriers to access but can ease financial burdens on households. Health events in particular can have a devastating impact on family finances – both in immediate costs and lost income – and can be a key factor in driving family poverty.

### FURTHER RESOURCES

Global Subsidies Initiative compiled a list of [\*introduction to non-experts on subsidies\*](#) – to make understandable an area where information has been fragmented and highly technical.

[\*School Fee Abolition Initiative Six steps to abolishing primary education fees – operational guide\*](#) is an output of the School Fee Abolition Initiative (SFAI), based on its experience and discussion from different countries in achieving universal access to primary education.

[\*The abolition of user fees for health services in Africa – Lessons from the literature\*](#) is a systematic review of health fee abolition in five African countries. The paper compares how user fee abolition policies emerged, formulated, implemented and made impacts across different countries.

**Financial Protection** is at the core of achieving universal health coverage and is considered achieved when direct payments made to obtain health services do not expose people to financial hardship and do not threaten living standards. [\*WHO's website on financial protection\*](#) gives links to video, training course and documents to enhance financial protection.



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## Ghana

### Ghana: Fuel subsidy reform

In early 2013, the Government of Ghana introduced the removal of fuel subsidies, leading to increases in the price of petrol, kerosene, diesel and liquid propane gas. UNICEF and PEP undertook a study to assess the impact of the reform on poor children and to ensure a mitigating response in the form of a social safety net.

The analysis confirmed that government aid has disproportionately benefited the country's wealthiest group - with 80% of fuel subsidies going to the country's wealthiest, while Ghana's poor received only 3% of the revenues generated. The findings also showed that removing fuel subsidies would increase poverty by 1.5%. On the other hand, the researchers demonstrated how doubling the national cash transfer programme (LEAP) to 150,000 households in 2014 would reverse the national increase in poverty and reduce inequality. In response to these findings, the Ghanaian government committed to doubling LEAP, increased the budget from 8m GHS in 2012 to 38m GHS in 2015, and further plans to expand the coverage to the poorest children and families.

For the original study, see Cooke et al. (2016) Estimating the impact on poverty of Ghana's fuel subsidy reform and a mitigating response. *Journal of Development Effectiveness*.

## B. What to focus on: picking the right policies or programmes to advocate for

With a broad range of possible areas to address child poverty, what are the right ones to focus on? In some contexts, advocating broadly for a common core of policies and programmes to address child poverty may be sufficient to spur policy makers into identifying specific responses and taking action. In other situations, however, narrowing focus to particular policy and programme areas and providing focused advice and advocacy may be more effective.

Picking the right policy or programme to advocate for is a real world challenge faced by child advocates working on the ground. There are many considerations on where to focus, ranging from the particular situation of children in a country and factors driving their poverty; the current status and gaps of programmes for the poorest children; where political interest lies; and, finally, the strengths of the team working on child poverty.

While there is no simple algorithm to tackle these complexities, experience on the ground does suggest some practical pointers to how child advocates are making these decisions. These are outlined below and in Exercise 4.1. Subsequent sections of this milestone then look at each of the elements in the table in more detail.

It is important to note that in practice many of the aspects outlined in Exercise 4.1 (with the exception of child poverty profiling) are often carried out without extensive processes – indeed sometimes almost subconsciously – by those working closely on the issues as with in-depth knowledge of a country, its children and the policy environment, the answers can be clear. In other circumstances, undertaking processes with national experts and stakeholders may strengthen and clarify conclusions as well as build ownership.

**Exercise 4.1: Approaches for choosing the policies and programmes to advocate for**



Steps	Gathering information
<p><b>1. Know the child poverty profile in the country, to help understand if policies and programmes will reach children living in poverty (page 148–164).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build a child poverty profile looking which children are in poverty, where, in what dimensions and understanding drivers. Builds on the measurement from Milestone 2.</li> <li>- Process: Requires statistical analysis and expertise. If measurement has already been undertaken, this may take up to one month.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Understand the current status of policies and programmes in the country: what is on the books, what is at scale, where political appetite lies (page 164–168).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Expert knowledge of practitioners or core team.</li> <li>- Expert knowledge of government and external partners.</li> <li>- Desk review and interviews.</li> <li>- Process: could be done through a workshop or more quickly based on existing knowledge.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Understand strengths and weaknesses of the team working on child poverty to understand which areas can be meaningfully engaged in (page 169).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Identification of technical expertise, resources, existing relationships and ongoing work by core team.</li> <li>- Can be a simple and quick process.</li> </ul>



**4. Conclusions. There is no simple algorithm to move from these considerations to a 'correct' answer.** But this knowledge provides a solid basis for discussion and decision making. While this could be done through national workshops to bring in more expertise and ownership, it is more commonly done by a small group or even individuals.

Finally, it is ultimately a package of interventions that will sustainably reduce child poverty, so selecting a number of policies or programmes to move forward is a common strategy.

## Understanding the child poverty profile in the country and what is driving it

Understanding the situation of child poverty and the key factors driving it is a crucial step in narrowing down the policy or programme area to focus on. The following three tools can help build this picture.

- A. **Child poverty profiling** – understanding who and where are the poorest children. This approach uses the same household survey that produced poverty measurement and disaggregates the poverty rate by different factors to capture the characteristics of children living in poverty. Multidimensional poverty measures can also show the leading dimensions of deprivation, overlap between different deprivations and between monetary poverty. Monetary poverty can further be analysed to understand the sources of income (both from employment and social assistance) and expenditure patterns.
- B. **Regression analysis to understand statistically some of the underlying drivers of child poverty.** These statistical techniques can take into account multiple possible drivers and isolate the role of one factor in relation to others. For example, the low level of a household head’s education may appear to be a driver of child poverty, but it might actually be a proxy of living in a remote area. Results from regression analysis show how each factor is correlated with child poverty when other variables are controlled.
- C. **A problem tree analysis to bring in qualitative information to understand underlying drivers.** This is a participatory tool to map out all the potential drivers of child poverty, incorporating different perspectives on the problem. It can complement poverty profiling by identifying factors that cannot be captured in household surveys, such as the attitudes or behaviour of people and other structural causes such as institutional discrimination. Workshops to develop a problem tree can be a great way to incorporate wide range of perspectives from policymakers to children living in poverty.

### A. CHILD POVERTY PROFILING

#### *Who and where are the poorest children*

Without a clear understanding of the children living in poverty it is difficult, if not impossible, to assess whether policies and programmes will make a difference in their lives. It helps identify groups of children that should be prioritized by their age, geographical location, household structure, or any other factors that can put them at higher risk (such as ethnicity, disability or gender). Identifying the poorest children can also reveal some basic information about what might be driving them into poverty. For example,

if it turns out that children under 5 in the northern part of the country are the poorest, it will allow us to look further into particular factors that are associated with the age group and location, using a causal tree analysis.

There are specific factors for both multidimensional and monetary poverty that can help identify the policy/programme area of priority – they are summarized in same Table 4.2, and outlined in more detail below.



Table 4.2: Using a child poverty profile to identify priority policy and programme areas.

	Policy implications
<b>Child poverty profile: who and where are the poorest children?</b>	
<b>Age disaggregation of child poverty</b>	Policies and programmes can be targeted to reach children of ages with a higher likelihood of poverty. For multiple dimensional indicators this will point to specific dimensions of poverty which cover particular ages.
<b>Regional, linguistic or ethnic differences in child poverty rates</b>	Where particular groups of children are more likely to be in poverty, particular policy and programme attention to those groups or areas is needed. Results may imply structural inequity that need strong political commitment to address. Approaches could range from regional prioritization to the sensitization of programmes to particular groups such as language.
<b>Gender</b>	In most contexts, girls' experience of poverty will differ to that of boys. Traditional child poverty measures, however, often don't effectively identify these differentiated experiences and impacts. Bringing in other analysis, listening to children, and specific indicators and indices (for example the Adolescent Girls Index in Uganda) can help identify specific gendered vulnerabilities and policy responses.
<b>Children not included or not well captured in household surveys</b>	In many contexts there are children who are not well accounted for in the household surveys that drive child poverty analysis. They may be children living on the streets, in care or in institutions (See Box 2.4 in Milestone 2). Children with disabilities are also often not well captured and yet among the most vulnerable. Given the specific needs of these groups of children, tailored policies and programmes may be needed.
<b>Multidimensional child poverty</b>	
<b>Deprivation rates by Dimension/Indicator and overlapping dimensions</b>	In multidimensional poverty, some particular dimensions can stand out as leading or driving multiple deprivations, and as such imply the need for an increased focus to particular areas. A strength of multidimensional poverty analysis is identifying areas of overlap, often using venn diagrams, between areas of deprivation. Highly overlapping areas make a strong case for coordinated, multisectoral interventions. MODA in particular focuses on these overlaps.
<b>Role of monetary child poverty in driving multidimensional child poverty</b>	This analysis can give important insights into the situation of children with policy implications. Where there is an overlap, further analysis can highlight where financial barriers may be driving deprivation, and therefore a cash transfer or supporting maternal employment could be effective. Where children are in multidimensional poverty, but not monetary poverty, the problem could be the quality and availability of services, or knowledge or empowerment within the household. It's important to stress as the monetary poverty line represents a certain level of financial deprivation, analysis of financial barriers can require using more than the monetary poverty rate alone.
<b>Monetary child poverty</b>	
<b>Employment Status of parents</b>	Most directly, lack of stable or decent income is the direct cause of monetary poverty and thus the information regarding employment such as work status (full-time, part-time, self-employed or unemployed), sector of employment, work hours, wages, social security from the employer, could provide important implications for labour market policies.
<b>Financial Assistance received by households</b>	For vulnerable families, social assistance, ranging from child grants to employment benefit, can be essential to addressing child poverty. Some household surveys also allow to analysis of how much support poor families receive from the government and other organizations.
<b>Spending on basic goods and services</b>	Expenditure surveys provide details about what the household spend money on. If the spending on basic services and education is also high among the poor that could have direct implication for policies to abolish or reduce service fees.

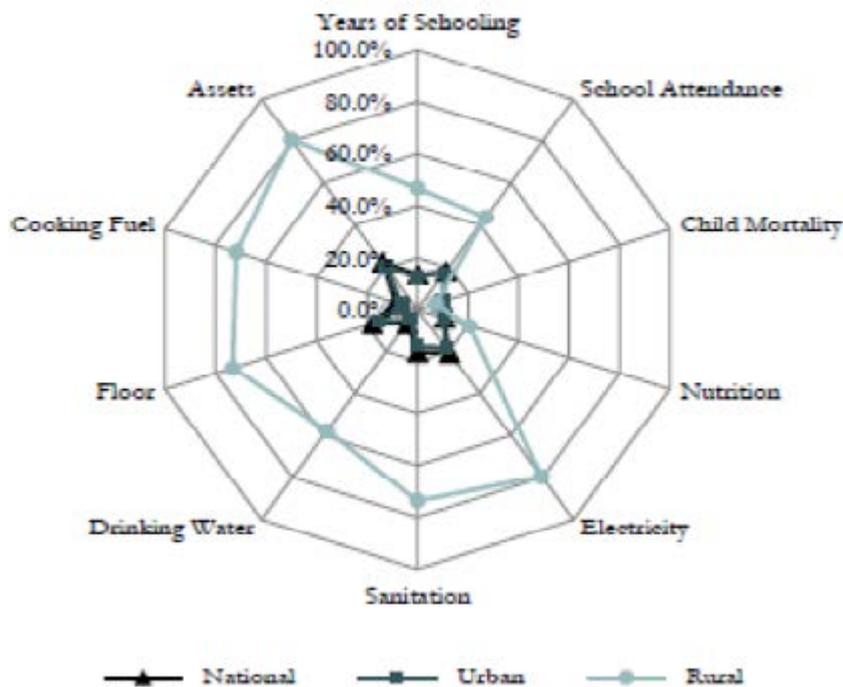
## MULTIDIMENSIONAL CHILD POVERTY PROFILING TO GUIDE POLICY AND PROGRAMME FOCUS

### *Identifying the leading dimensions of multidimensional poverty and key overlaps*

For multidimensional poverty, looking at which dimensions are driving child poverty can have important policy implications. This includes both looking at the leading dimensions of multidimensional child poverty and key areas where deprivations overlap, and analysing monetary and multidimensional child poverty together where both are available.

Leading dimensions of multidimensional child poverty can give direct information on which outcome area is lagging behind. The results are effectively shown in a radar chart, as in the country briefing of MPI for Djibouti. In the case of Djibouti, the chart shows that child mortality, nutrition or school attendance are less prevalent compared to the high deprivation rate in assets or electricity. By also disaggregating into urban and rural, it also shows the striking gap between the two areas.

**Figure 4.3: percentage of the population who are MPI poor and deprived.**



SOURCE: OPHI COUNTRY BRIEFING, DJIBOUTI (2015)

However, there are some important considerations in interpreting these types of analysis.

- Should focus just be on the area where children are most deprived? Even where one area of deprivation is highest, there will be a variety of combinations in which children are experiencing

multidimensional poverty (for example, they could be deprived in education and water; or information and housing). While this will vary slightly across methodologies, focusing on different dimensions – not just the highest – can reduce the child poverty rate; it need not be a zero sum game.

- How do different dimensions overlap? MODA analysis in particular is focused on identifying areas where there are key overlaps between dimensions. This can help both identify the key deprivations that are driving multidimensional poverty, as well as encourage multisectoral responses to address deprivation overall.
- Are some deprivations ‘easier’ to address than others? The ability to address each dimension may not be equal. For example, even where many children are deprived in terms of their housing conditions, transforming roofing materials may not be as affordable or realistic to address as deprivations in education.
- In reality, are all deprivations equally important? This is a complex and potentially controversial issue, but when considering policies and programmes in practice it must be addressed. Multidimensional poverty indices generally choose ‘neutral’ weighting. That is to say in the MODA and Bristol approaches, for example, a lack of information (often defined as a family having a mobile phone) is considered equally important to a child as a lack of education. In any particular country context there may be national considerations that, as child rights are progressively realized, should be prioritized. While these prioritizations are often not built into poverty measures themselves, these considerations can come to the fore in policy discussions.

#### *Role of monetary child poverty in driving multidimensional child poverty*

A major advantage of using both monetary and multidimensional approaches to measure child poverty is that analysis can help identify the role of financial barriers in driving deprivations that children experience.

The relationship between monetary and multidimensional poverty can reveal both where money matters and where money alone is not enough. Where there is not a strong relationship between the two it can highlight where the solutions to children’s deprivations must go beyond monetary poverty to factors such as service delivery and quality (Table 4.1).

In other cases, monetary poverty can be a key driver highlighting the importance of focusing on monetary poverty to address children’s deprivations. The policy implications can range from cash transfers, to user fee abolition to employment generation.

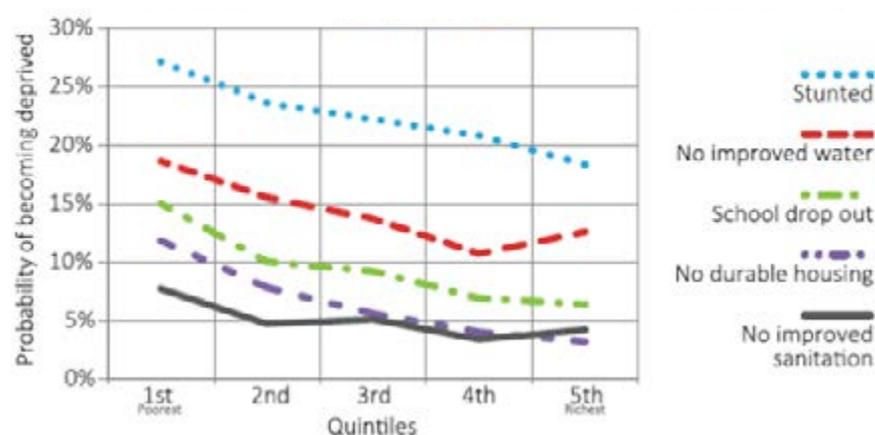
The child poverty study based on MODA in Iraq, for example, shows how the probability of child deprivation decreases as households have higher per

capita expenditure (Figure 4.4). Using this approach allows the overlap analysis between the two not to be constrained by a specific poverty line but shows how a gradual increase in income/expenditure is associated with changing deprivations.

Many indicators have correlation with the consumption level, such as stunting, access to water, school dropout and durable housing, while the relationship is weaker on sanitation. This suggests that interventions to address monetary poverty may need to be combined with other activities (such as communication for development or service provision) to improve the sanitation rate.

To further identify financial barriers to goods and services, analysing the formal and informal cost of services as part of the policy and programme review (page 164) or average expenditure on goods and services among the poor (page 156) can also be helpful.

**Figure 4.4: Probability of children becoming deprived by the level of household PCE**



Source: UNICEF AND GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ (UNDATED)



## MONETARY CHILD POVERTY PROFILING TO GUIDE POLICY AND PROGRAMME FOCUS

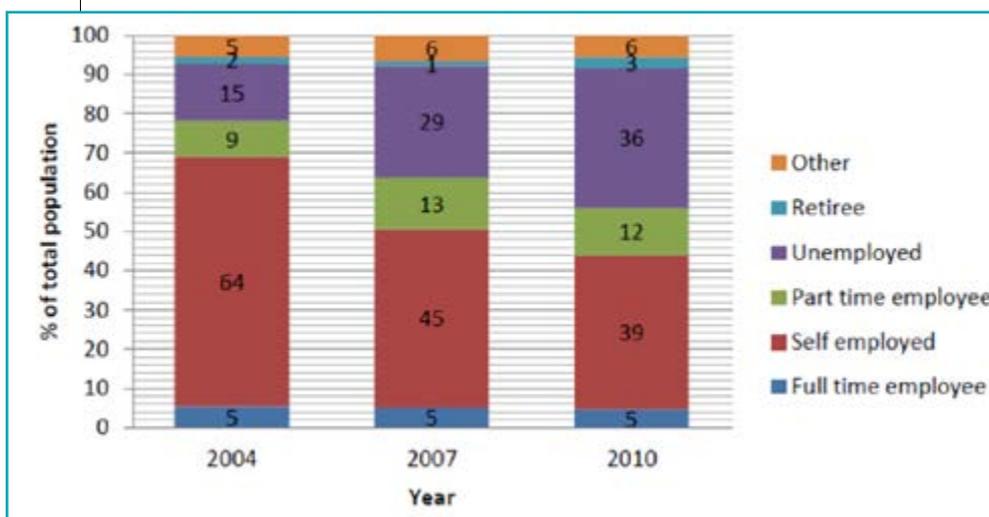
### *The situation of employment*

Unemployment, unequal pay or informal work without social security can all be factors that affects household's economic security. Profiling the employment status of a household can include looking at:

- Type of employment (full-time, part-time, self-employed or unemployed);
- Who in the household works, and the labour capacity of the household;
- Hours of working and wage rates;
- The sector of employment which can highlight key areas where policy change is needed.

Figure 4.5 looks at the employment status among children living in poverty and its trends in Denmark. It is striking that only five per cent of the parent(s) of children living in poverty work full-time. The results imply the importance of public support to reach households without full-time employment, the need to understand the challenges of parents seeking full-time employment, and the role of direct transfers to households where employment approaches cannot address child poverty.

**Figure 4.5: Poor children by employment status of the parent(s)**



SOURCE: BOSJENT ET AL.(2013)

### Direct financial support to families with children

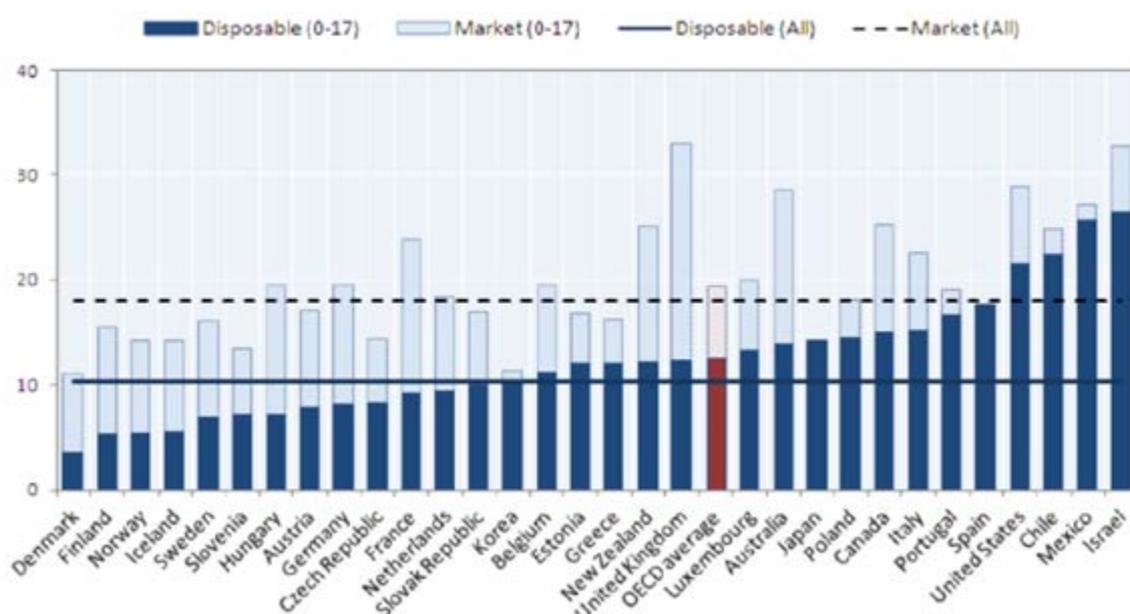
Cash transfers and other forms of direct support are essential for families who are unable to work or earn enough income. Many income and expenditure surveys allow to analyse the availability and amount of social assistance to poorer households, and in higher income settings this can include the net impacts of taxes and transfers and the impact on poverty.

These types of data allow building a profile of child poverty that can include understanding:

- The net impact of social assistance on child poverty rates;
- The average share of public assistance among the total amount of expenditure/income;
- Which groups do and do not benefit from social assistance;
- The trend in the amount or share of public assistance.

Figure 4.6 below shows the share of taxes and transfers on child poverty across OECD countries by comparing the child poverty rate before and after the tax and transfers. It shows a clearly positive impact, with the average child poverty rate in OECD dropping from around 20 per cent to 12 per cent after taxes and transfers.

**Figure 4.6: Child poverty rates based on market (before taxes and transfers) and disposable (after taxes and transfers) income, mid to late 2000s**



SOURCE: OECD INCOME DISTRIBUTION DATABASE

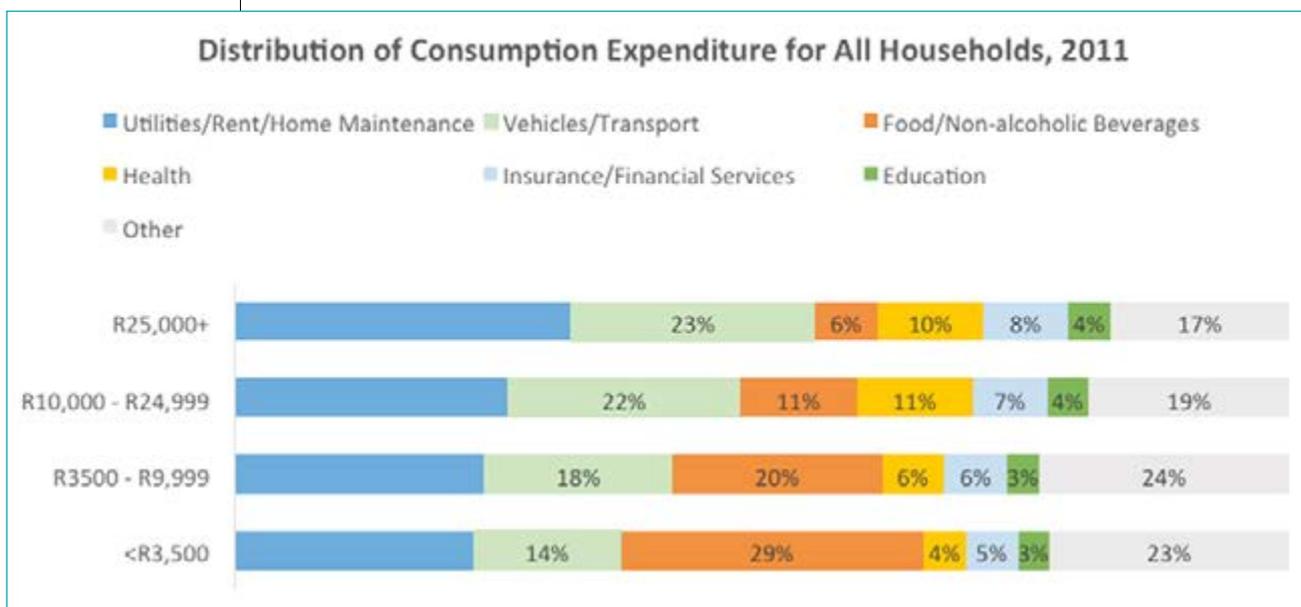
*The costs of basic goods and services*

The spending patterns of poorer households can help understand where public policies and assistance can be more effective to release the burden of families who are financially constrained. Analytical questions to include in a child poverty profile could include:

- What are the dominant factors of household expenditure among poor households with children?
- How does it compare with the expenditure pattern of non-poor households?
- Are there official/unofficial payments for education and health services?
- What are the difference across groups such as different regions or household structure?

Figure 4.7 breaks down the spending pattern of South Africans by average expenditure. The share of expenditure on health and education is relatively small among the poorest group – and further investigations could reveal if this is because of low usage or the affordability of services. On the other hand, further analysis may be needed to understand the high share of food-related expenditures, including impacts on nutritional content of food and approaches to address the burden.

**Figure 4.7: Breakdown of the expenditure of South African households by income quintile**



SOURCE: IES 2010/11

## B. REGRESSION ANALYSIS TO UNDERSTAND THE DRIVERS OF CHILD POVERTY

The approaches to child poverty profiling outlined above can give vital descriptive information on child poverty but may not identify underlying drivers which are crucial to poverty responses. Statistical (regression) techniques can be used to tease out the contribution of different factors in driving poverty and quantify how each factor increases/decreases the likelihood of a child being in poverty.

There are two main advantages of adopting these types of regression techniques. First, it can show how each factor is associated with child poverty in isolation of all the other factors included in the analysis. In many cases the characteristics of poor household are interlinked – families in rural areas, for example are also likely to live in larger households and have lower levels of education. The regression analysis allows the complex situation to be broken down to understand the correlations controlling for other factors. Second, it can quantify the degree of correlation and the direction of relationship which can help understand key drivers of child poverty.

Table 4.3 shows the results from a determinants analysis in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Looking at ten factors simultaneously, ranging from the district to household structure, the regression results presented in the table show how the ten factors correlate with a child in multidimensional poverty (defined here as deprived in four or more dimensions). There are three factors that the table identifies:



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1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy

4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

**(1) Statistical significance:** If the difference between one group and the other(s) is statistically significant, it implies that the difference observed in the sample survey is likely to hold for the whole population. If not, the difference observed in the sample is not consistent or strong enough to conclude that the same is true for the whole population. For more on this, read, for example <http://www.measuringu.com/blog/statistically-significant.php>.

Where statistically significant, the coefficient is marked with asterisks. Out of the ten indicators, five factors (child is under 3 years old, rural, head of HH is female, mother has primary/no education, dependency ratio higher than median) were statistically significant. The number of asterisks imply the level of statistical significance – the more asterisks, the more likely that the relationship holds for the overall population. The correlation with other factors was not strong enough in this sample to generalize for the whole population.

**(2) The direction of correlation:** A positive coefficient implies positive correlation between the factor and poverty, and a negative relationship for a negative coefficient. For example, the coefficient of the ‘child is under 3 years old’ coefficient is negative. This means that the younger children were less likely to be deprived in four or more dimensions. Likewise, the positive coefficient for ‘*mother has primary/no education*’ means that when children’s mothers were less educated they were more likely to become deprived in four or more dimensions.

**(3) Size of the effect:** The value of coefficient or odds ratio show the degree of correlation. The mother’s education has the largest odds ratio (2.42) and the interpretation is that when a child’s mother has primary or no education, the ratio of becoming deprived in four or more deprivations is 2.42 times higher than children whose mother has a higher level of education.

Clearly, identifying the determinants is not an easy task, and even with regression techniques there are certain limitations. First, the regression analysis can only identify the correlation and not causation. For example, a girl could be deprived because of early marriage, but it could also be true that she married early because she was in poverty. Thus careful examination and interpretation of the relationship is critical. Second, some of the deeper causes of poverty rooted in history or socioeconomic context will not be captured by regression analysis. These can be addressed using qualitative research methodologies.

Finally, there are potential biases to the results caused by wrong selection of variables or lack of available information. As such, regression analysis should be conducted with caution and carried out by skilled experts to avoid misleading results.

Table 4.3: Logistic regression: deprivation in four or more dimensions

	Coefficient	Odds ratio	P-value
Republika Srpska	0.04	1.04	0.80
Brcko Distrikt	-0.56	0.57	0.16
Girl	-0.29	0.75	0.06
Child is under 3 years old	-1.35***	0.26***	0.00
Rural	0.69***	1.99***	0.00
Head of HH is female	-0.61*	0.54*	0.01
Mother has primary/no education	0.88***	2.42***	0.00
Lower educated head	0.30	1.34	0.13
3 or more children	-0.05	0.95	0.79
Dependency ratio higher than median	0.32*	1.38*	0.03
Constant	-0.76***	0.47***	0.00

SOURCE: FERRONE AND CHZHEN (2015)



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**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Prepare for the analysis.	What information does the household survey contain?  How can the analysis fit into a larger analysis of the problem?
<b>Step 2</b>	Review existing literatures about drivers of poverty and child poverty.	What does the existing literature say about the underlying and root causes?  Are there results from participatory discussions on the drivers?
<b>Step 3</b>	Conduct regression analysis to identify the immediate drivers.	Which factors were statistically significant?  What are the degree and direction of the correlations?  What are the limitations of the regression analysis?
<b>Step 4</b>	Publication and dissemination.	What are the main findings? Where is there need for further research?  Was the existing literature or results from profiling consistent with the results from the interviews?

**TIMELINE:**

- The analytical process itself should take two to six weeks. However, ideally, the quantitative analysis should be part of a larger causality analysis (outlined below), which can take two to six months.

**SKILLS AND DATA:**

- Statistical skills to understand the theory and practice in running these types of regressions as well as interpreting the results.
- Ability and experience in combining multiple sources of information.

**RESOURCES**

The Chapter 8 and 14 of the World Bank's guide [The Handbook on Poverty and Inequality](#) (Haughton and Khandker, 2009) provides detailed instruction in conducting determinants analysis using regression techniques.

## C. PROBLEM TREE ANALYSIS

While child poverty profiling and regression analysis can give vital information, they are inevitably limited by the availability of data and available statistical approaches. Very significant knowledge and expertise cannot be included, and, as such, a very effective complement is to carry out a 'qualitative causality analysis' which brings together knowledge and experts to explore key drivers.

There are several approaches to identify root causes such as 'problem tree analysis', 'causal analysis', or 'fish born diagram'. The basic idea in all of them is to keep asking 'why' to reach the root cause that can then be addressed by a policy or programme intervention.

Problem trees analysis is one of the most common formats to map out key problems and causal relationships. The process is recommended to be carried out in a small focus group led by an experienced facilitator, using flipcharts, post-it notes or cards so that the factors can be re-arranged throughout the discussion.

The problem becomes the trunk of the tree, the consequences form the branches and the causes become the roots. Identification of the problem can be more effective when not looking generally at overall monetary or multidimensional child poverty, but rather more specific areas (such as unemployment among parents of children under 5 years of age; or deprivations in education) which may have been identified by previous profiling (Figure 4.8).

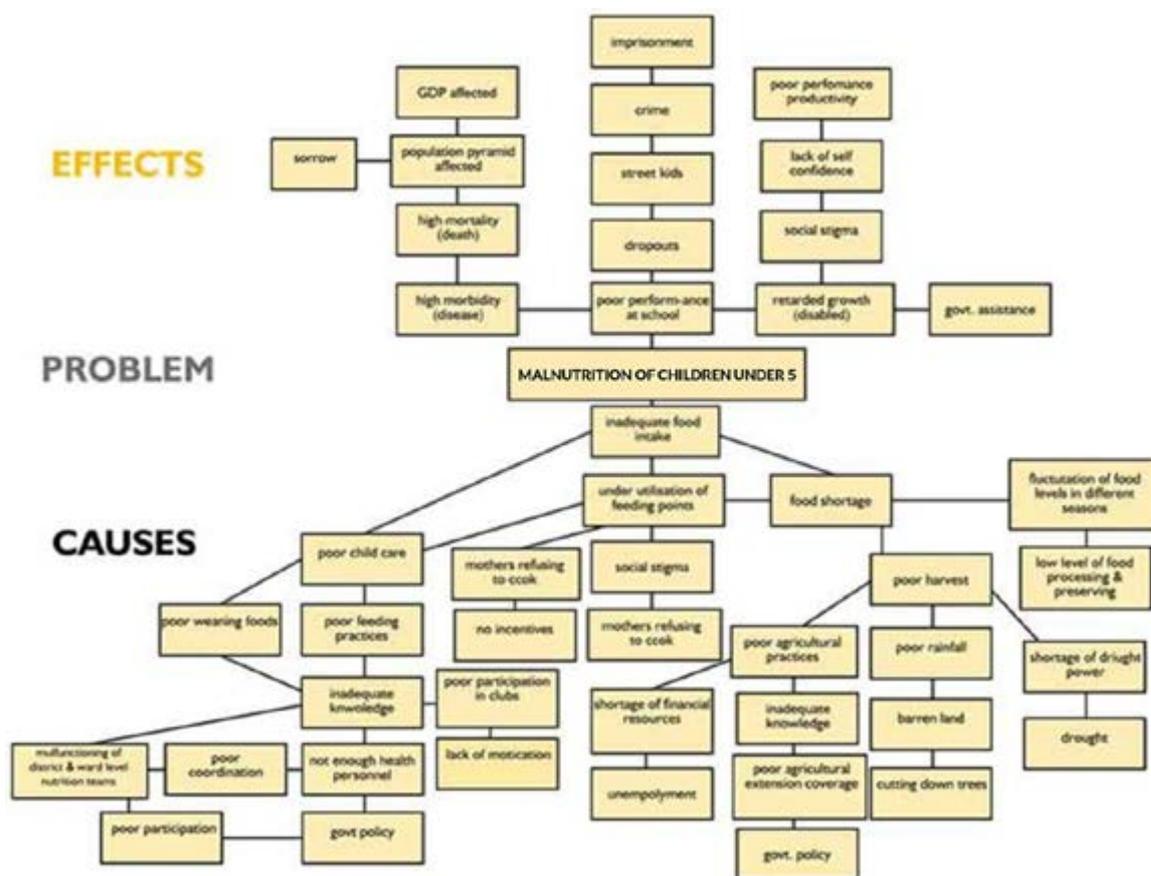
### During the discussion it is important to:

- Check if the causality analysis is comprehensive and considering economic, political or social causes. At this stage it is better to identify as many options as possible.
- Identify areas where further information or research may be needed.
- Organize the causes or effects by immediate and direct factors as well as deeper or root causes. The analysis is concluded when the members can agree that essential elements and causal relationships are captured.

The involvement of policymakers in the process to integrate their expertise as well as build their understanding of the issues can be important. Indeed one of the advantages of a collective causality analysis is the bond it creates among the participants through joint activities.

Problem tree analysis can be conducted in combination with regression analysis (see Section B of this milestone), to inform the choice of the model in the regression analysis or to examine the results from the analysis.

Figure 4.8: Problem tree analysis of malnutrition in children under 5



(SOURCE: ANYAEGBUNAM, 2004)

In developing a comprehensive analysis, one needs multiple sources of information to complete the exercise. Some information will come from the poverty profiling or from the same household surveys, but they may be complemented by information about the services from administrative data, or about the social and cultural practices from existing studies, focus group interviews with advocacy groups or with local citizens.

Focus group interviews are typically conducted with 8-12 participants to gain a deeper understanding of the causes, needs or reactions to any proposed activities. A moderator will prepare a set of open-ended questions to start and facilitate the discussion in a relaxed, safe and comfortable setting.

Directly reaching out to the most vulnerable population could be an effective way to understand the social discrimination or barriers that they face, cultural norms and practices, or other structural barriers that may not be collected in a household survey. For more detailed guidance, see the DFID social development toolkit (2003).

**STEPS (DRAWN FROM DFID'S SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT):**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Prepare for the analysis.	<p>What does the profiling tell you about the characteristics of children in poverty?</p> <p>Who should be involved in the process? Who can facilitate?</p> <p>What do existing literature say about the underlying and root causes?</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	Formulate the problem.	<p>Are we focusing on monetary or multidimensional poverty?</p> <p>Which dimensions or aspects should be the focus?</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	Develop the problem tree.	<p>What are the immediate causes and effects of child poverty?</p> <p>What are deeper causes and how do they relate?</p> <p>What are the information gaps that should be filled by stakeholder interviews in step 4?</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	Fill the knowledge gaps with statistical analysis or focus group interviews.	<p>How do children, families and authorities perceive the underlying causes of poverty?</p> <p>What do statistical analysis and macro data say about the relationship and causes?</p>
<b>Step 5</b>	Complete the analysis.	<p>Have all participants agreed on the essential causes and the relationships?</p> <p>Which causes should be addressed with priority?</p> <p>What are the policies and programmes to address the causes?</p>

**TIMELINE:**

- In the simplest format it will be a one-day workshop, but the preparatory work and follow-up work will take a few weeks.
- Ideally, the process should go back and forth between developing a tree and finding evidence from interviews and statistical analysis, in which case the whole process can take two to five months.

**STAKEHOLDERS:**

- Local researchers could lead the literature review process and conceptualize the underlying causes of poverty.
- Civil society partners may have extensive knowledge and expertise in causal factors that should be included.
- Children and families themselves living in poverty could offer direct experience and insights on the causes.
- Involvement of policymakers in the process will raise awareness of the underlying inequities which could be very important in triggering policy responses.

**SKILLS AND DATA:**

- Local knowledge of the social norms, inequities and barriers in the society that cause structural poverty.
- Knowledge and ability to facilitate participatory workshops and qualitative interviews.
- Ability and experience in combining multiple sources of information.

## RESOURCES

### *On Causality analysis*

***DFID social development toolkit*** is a practical guide that gives detailed instructions for conducting situation analysis, problem tree analysis and focus groups.

***UNICEF's 16 Tools for Programming for Policy Results*** feature two tools that are directly relevant to causality analysis. Tool 3, on problem-focused causality analysis and Tool 4, entitled 10-determinant framework of causality: a checklist.

Chapter 3 of ***Child Poverty: What drives it and what it means to children across the world***, discusses the drivers of child poverty in different contexts, from fragile states to high-income countries.

***Voices of the Poor*** is an extensive project by the World Bank to interview 60,000 from 60 countries in an attempt to understand poverty from their own viewpoint.

## Understanding the current policies and programmes in the country

When developing policy or programme recommendations to alleviate child poverty it is likely that government efforts already exist across many areas. It is crucial to be aware of these to identify key policy programme and policy gaps or weaknesses where progress could make a difference.

Policy and programme mapping is a way to identify policy and programme strengths and weaknesses for child poverty. It links closely with child poverty profiling and understanding the drivers of child poverty to help focus on priority areas. Exercise 4.2 shows one approach to a mapping, building on the child profiling and the policies and programmes that can make a difference.



## Exercise



## Exercise 4.2 Mapping Policies and Programmes to Address Child Poverty

### CATEGORIES TO ASSESS CURRENT POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

### QUESTIONS TO UNDERSTAND POLICY CONTEXT

(1) Overall situation of child poverty and how it integrates with the overall poverty reduction approach.

- What are the key national strategies to address poverty? Are children explicitly mentioned or focused on?
- Does the country have a plan to achieve SDG goals? Is child poverty explicitly included?
- What are some macroeconomic policies to promote growth? Do they have elements of pro-poor growth which will benefit the poorest children?

(2) Assessment by key aspects of the child poverty profile (including regional, linguistic or ethnic differences and children who can be forgotten).

- Are there special policies/programmes for disadvantaged groups identified in the profiling such as approaches to prioritise particular geographic areas?
- What are the policies/programmes for each age group? Are they prioritizing age groups where poverty is highest?
- If any structural discrimination or inequity was identified, does the country plan to eliminate them by policies or laws such as anti-discrimination laws?
- What is the balance between rural development policies, urban development policies and the child poverty profile?
- Are there policies or programmes for groups of children who need special attention – such as children with disabilities, children in institutions or children living on the street?

Cross cutting questions:

- What is the scale of programme implementation?
- Are there significant gaps between policy and implementation?
- Is policy change necessary, or is the policy framework sufficient for increased programme focus?

(3) Review of particular policy and programme areas.

#### Multidimensional child poverty

- What are the sectoral plans or strategies key dimensions of deprivation (as outlined in the child poverty profile)?
- Is the sectoral budget sufficient to address the deprivation? Is there more attention or investment to the lagging sector(s)?
- Are there multisectoral collaborations to address overlapping deprivations?

#### Monetary child poverty

- Are there job creation and productivity policies and programmes with a focus on the poorest families? Are there particular focus on adolescent's skill development?
- Is there a social protection policy and established approach for child grants and benefits?
- Are there taxation or subsidy policies that could benefit or harm children in poverty?
- Are there policies on user fees in key areas?
- Are there clear and enforced approaches to address child labour?

#### Cross cutting approaches

- Are there approaches to address discrimination and stigma, if relevant in the national context?
- Is there a social protection or social welfare system that can effectively address children's multiple vulnerabilities?
- Are their approaches to monitor public expenditure for children? Are issues of child poverty considered in the budget cycle?
- Is child poverty explicitly included in national strategy documents or sectoral plans?

The scope of this exercise will depend on the child poverty situation, data availability and resources available. If there is an outstanding subgroup or sector from profiling, the mapping could focus on these areas. The simplest approach is to review policy documents that are publicly available, although more in-depth analysis or views of experts may be needed to understand the scope of implementation.

Having budget information, evaluation reports, and bringing together key stakeholders in the area will provide insights into the practice, but may be too much information to collect and analyse if time or resources are limited.

### KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Deciding the scope of analysis.	Do the results from child poverty profiling point to key areas where more interventions may be needed?  What are the resources you have? If limited, does it make sense to focus on areas where the deprivation rates are high?
<b>Step 2</b>	Review documents and data.	What is the de jure information from external evaluation, budget information or from key informant interviews?  What is the de facto policy information from government laws or policy documents?
<b>Step 3</b>	Putting them together.	Do existing tools, such as policy template of the global study or child poverty profiling, give structure?  Is there any gap between what's on paper and what is actually implemented?
<b>Step 4</b>	Deriving policy recommendations.	Compared with child poverty profiling, what are the policy gap to be filled?  What are effective ways to share the information and also make it publicly available?

### TIMELINE:

For a quick and focused exercise may take one to three weeks. An in-depth exercise with budget information, stakeholder analysis, interviews may take two to three months.

### STAKEHOLDERS:

- Ministry of Planning, National Planning Committee or equivalent as well as relevant sectoral ministries.
- Local experts on existing policies and programmes including researchers, think tanks and civil society organizations.
- Where relevant, international organizations working on overall policy coordination, such as UNDP or the World Bank.
- Analysts of child poverty profiling to compare the results with policy gaps.

**SKILLS:**

- Knowledge of the key policy documents and how to access them.
- Ability to work effectively with national stakeholders.
- Ability to summarize large amount of information.
- Deep understanding of child poverty situation.

**RESOURCES:**

National resources may include:

- National development strategies, poverty reduction strategy papers.
- Reports to UN treaty bodies, especially the CRC committee.
- Sectoral strategy documents.
- National budget documents.
- Evaluation or monitoring reports in relevant areas.

Global resources include:

**Global Study Guideline** and policy template a comprehensive and detailed step-by-step guide on how to conduct policy mapping analysis, link with Bristol measurement, and derive policy recommendations. This resource is available in English, French and Spanish.

Chapter 21 of 'A multidimensional response to tackling child poverty and disparities: reflections from the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities' in **Global Child Poverty and Well-Being** puts together a few country examples of the global study's impact on national policies.

**Mapping Political Context: A Toolkit for Civil Society Organisations** gives an overview of nine toolkits that civil society organizations can use to map and understand political context, covering a wide range of political dimensions such as governance, institutions, process, players and resources.

**Country Policy and Institutional Assessment**, a framework used by the World Bank, assesses a set of 16 criteria grouped in four clusters: economic management, structural policies, policies for social inclusion and equity, and public sector management and institutions. The criteria has references to data that can be used for assessment. The assessment can be downloaded from their website.



## Tanzania

### Tanzania – A policy review as part of the Global Study

As part of the Global Study on Child Poverty and Disparities, the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS), Research on Poverty Alleviation (REPOA) and UNICEF Tanzania conducted a review of the macro-economic situation and six areas of child well-being (health, nutrition, HIV/AIDS, education, child protection and social protection).

The macroeconomic overview indicated that economic growth has not been pro-poor, with one third of the population living under \$1 per day. The sectors leading economic growth, such as mining and construction, had limited linkages with local economies with high child poverty rates. On the other hand, growth in the agricultural sector, the main source of income in rural areas, was stagnant.

In each of the six areas, national laws, policies and programmes were examined to identify building blocks for a comprehensive strategy to improve child outcomes. For example, on social protection, the review found that the coverage among the most vulnerable children is low, evidence of their impact was limited, and the existing interventions are uncoordinated and financed largely by external resources.

The Tanzania study emphasised the need to develop legislation on children's rights that deliberately focuses on closing the gaps and disparities that leave some children behind. Consequently, the Law of the Child Act was adopted by the Tanzanian government. It provided the legislative framework to address study recommendations and identified gaps.

UNICEF and NBS are now undertaking a MODA study to update the child poverty figures, using both monetary and multidimensional poverty measurement, with an aim to provide inputs to the SDG implementation, national development plan for 2016-2021, and to improve programmes, particularly in the area of social protection. The initial findings, which found 74 per cent of children experiencing multidimensional poverty and 29 per cent of children living in households below the national poverty line, have been disseminated to key government stakeholders and further related capacity building will be undertaken with government officials both in mainland Tanzania and Zanzibar with a view to institutionalising the measurement and reporting of child poverty.

SOURCE: NBS, UNICEF AND REPOA (2009) CHILDHOOD POVERTY IN TANZANIA: DEPRIVATIONS AND DISPARITIES IN CHILD WELL-BEING.

## Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the team working on child poverty

Finally, having a realistic understanding of the capacities of the core team working on child poverty is crucial to determining whether engaging in a particular policy or programme area makes sense. For example, even where changing tax policy will have large implications for child poverty, if a team doesn't have the relationships to engage or the technical knowledge (or the resources to bring them in) focusing on the issue may not be fruitful.

This is innate knowledge the team itself holds, and so there is no need for complex processes. The exact skills needed will also depend on particular policy areas. But as a rough general guide, some areas it may be useful to consider include:

**Technical knowledge.** As will be outlined in the next section some areas of policy engagement require significant technical expertise. Often this expertise can be brought in from the outside, but even in these cases some 'in-house' expertise is important to effectively oversee work. The areas of technical knowledge will of course vary depending by policy area.

**Relationships.** A team's existing relationships are key when working on policy or programme change. These relationships may be to particular people who could be influential or to institutions that could be supportive, including helping provide technical expertise. The areas of policy and programme that can reduce child poverty are broad, and strong relationships can allow progress to be supported on multiple fronts. For example, perhaps partnerships with colleagues working on early childhood development or education can help address child poverty without overstressing the core team.

**Financial resources.** Even while engagement on policy analysis and advocacy can give incredible value for money in terms of lives changed, it still requires financial resources to hire staff or expert consultants or have stakeholder workshops or advocacy events. Having clarity on available resources and costing out different approaches can identify areas that might give the best returns.

**Time.** In talking to colleagues working on child poverty around the world, perhaps the most underappreciated and overstretched resource is time. Engaging on policy or programme change is time heavy, from interpersonal engagements across policy actors to research and analysis. Accordingly, assessing if there is time to engage on a particular policy process is essential.

## Conclusions: which area or areas to focus on

With an understanding of the child poverty situation, the policy context and environment, and the strengths and weaknesses of the team advocating for child poverty reduction, all the ingredients are in place to make an informed decision on where to focus.

While there is no simple formula to determine the final decision, Exercise 4.3 brings together the various elements of the process in one place, with a few general considerations, which may serve as a useful tool in thinking this through. For those with great experience in a country, such a tool may be unnecessary as the decision may be made subconsciously or make itself. In other situations a more detailed process to share expertise and come to shared conclusions may be helpful.



### Exercise 4.3 Putting on paper what is often in the head: a rough approach to drawing conclusions on policy and programme areas to reduce child poverty.

Policy Area	Narrowing down: Would progress significantly address the drivers of child poverty? Do any particular aspects or sectors (or multisector approaches) stand out?	Opportunities for progress: What is the current status of policy or programme? Where does it sit on a range of no policy or implementation to complete scale up? Where does it fall on a range of no current national interest to significant national interest and momentum?
<b>Overarching approaches to address child poverty (both multidimensional and monetary)</b>		
Social stigma and discrimination		
Child sensitive social protection or social welfare systems		
Budget engagement		
Policy environment		
<b>Multidimensional child poverty: provide quality and accessed services for the most deprived children</b>		
Reaching children in poverty with quality services focusing on sectors identified in multidimensional child poverty profiling		
<b>Monetary child poverty: ensure families/households with children don't fall below a minimum income which reduces</b>		
Supporting livelihoods and employment (include adolescent transitions and addressing child labour)		
Direct financial support to families with children (including cash transfers, child benefits and tax credits).		
Reducing the costs of crucial goods and services (including subsidy reform and fee abolition).		
<b>What's missing? The above categories try and cover a broad range of relevant areas, but important policy and program</b>		



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5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

<p><b>Can we make a difference?</b> Does the team have the technical capacity, relationships, financing and time? What is the value added of the team with respect to others working in the area?</p>	<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>
	<p>Reviewing these areas can help identify:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Which areas to focus on (or perhaps multiple areas with different forms of engagement).</li> <li>- An initial sense of how to focus (for example, building awareness vs. technical policy advice).</li> <li>- Which areas to ignore (for now).</li> </ul>
	<p>Next steps are covered in the following section (Section C) which discusses how to engage and provide technical support.</p>
<p><b>children's opportunities.</b></p>	
<p><b>comes to a particular context may not be included.</b></p>	

## C. Making the change happen: key policy questions and analytical approaches to answering them

With an area(s) in mind that could significantly reduce child poverty, the next step is to make change happen. This can be a complex process as changing policies and programmes is a tough arena with many competing needs and priorities.

This section is focused on the technical analysis that can support policy makers in identifying and enacting change. However it is becoming increasingly recognized – for reasons that range from the emotional to the political – that decision makers do not simply respond to technical analysis and reasoning. The advocacy tools from Milestone 3 provide approaches to organize policy advocacy, and Box 4.5 highlights some of the latest thinking on ‘the science of persuasion which may also help reach decision makers more effectively (Box 4.5).

### BOX 4.5

#### The science of persuasion – what psychology tells us about changing people’s minds

The techniques to persuade others and influence decision making has been a common inter-disciplinary research interest for psychologists and marketers. Below are some insights from this work on the ‘science of persuasion’, with some implications for child poverty advocacy.

- 1: Don’t threaten core beliefs, or do so thoughtfully.** When there’s no immediate threat to our understanding of the world, we are more likely to change our minds. It’s when that change contradicts something we’ve long held as important that we resist. If you can understand why solutions to child poverty may threaten these beliefs it is more likely they can be addressed.
- 2: Take a walk in someone else’s shoes.** Changing our beliefs is not a simple task, but an experiment shows that taking the perspective of others can markedly reduce prejudice and change opinions. Doing so may be no easy task, but a field visit, hearing from children or people they respect who grew up in poverty may offer opportunities for decision makers to think in these ways.
- 3: Find the feeling.** Similarly, knowing something often isn’t always enough to make us change or act; we need to feel something. Hearing from children directly, relating directly to personal experiences of decision makers or their families of visiting children living in poverty can move policy change from the head to the heart.

**4: Establish a sense of urgency.** There is a big difference between needing to act, and needing to act NOW. Child poverty is an innately urgent issue, but connecting to a real moment – perhaps a story of a child in poverty which is capturing media attention – can encourage decision makers feel the need for action.

**5: The power of peers.** We are all interested in what our comparators or peers are doing. Sharing what neighbouring countries are doing to reduce child poverty, could awaken decision makers to possibilities, and in face-to-face meetings with counterparts may be particularly effective.

**6: Put decision makers and authorities together.** People respect authority and expertise, and want to follow the lead of real experts. Research shows that business titles, impressive clothing, and even driving an expensive, high-performing automobile have been proven factors in lending credibility to individuals. At critical moments, bringing in international or national authorities on child poverty may help (but maybe don't pay for the car).

**7: Encourage a decision maker to say it out loud.** We're more likely to do something after we've spoken it out loud. This may reflect wanting to meet our commitments, or the speaking process creating an internal commitment or shift in mind-set. Creating speaking opportunities could help encourage these shifts.

**8: Script the critical moves.** Sometimes the big picture won't be effective to encourage a specific change. Where we have specific steps we are more likely to start on the path of change. The SDGs are big goals that can be overwhelming; breaking them up into milestones, and the milestones into smaller activities can make things move.

**9: Generate and celebrate short-term wins.** Likewise, decreasing the distance to a goal and showing and celebrating progress has been made can increase commitment. Do not wait five years for the completion of a big evaluation – visit where great things are happening and celebrate them.

#### FURTHER READING:

- ***Switch: How to Change Things When Change Is Hard*** brings research in psychology, sociology and other fields to shed new light on how we can effect transformational changes.
- ***Leading Change*** by is one of the most read books on change management by Professor Kotter of Harvard Business School.
- ***Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*** gives six universal principals that make people say 'yes' – another international business bestseller.
- ***What Does It Take to Change a Mind? A Phase Transition*** is a blog article about transformative experiences that change people's mind.

Underpinning thoughtful advocacy engagement, however, quality and relevant technical analysis is an essential element in supporting policy and programme change. Table 4.4 outlines the key policy questions that can support decision makers, with the rest of the section focusing on the analytical approaches and tools that can answer them by three categories.

**Table 4.4 Key questions to support policy and programme change**

CATEGORIES	POLICY QUESTIONS
Challenging the status quo	<b>Question 1.</b> Are the policies and programmes reaching the poorest children? <i>Tool: Benefit Incidence Analysis</i>
	<b>Question 2.</b> Do the existing programmes/policies have an impact on child poverty? <i>Tool: Impact Evaluation</i>
	<b>Question 3.</b> Are the poorest households bearing the cost of the services? <i>Tool: Financing Incidence Analysis</i>
Projecting the potential impacts	<b>Question 4.</b> How much impact will a new programme/policy have on the child poverty rate? <i>Tool: Microsimulation or Macro-micro simulation</i>
	<b>Question 5.</b> What are the macroeconomic impacts of a major policy change on child poverty? <i>Tool: Macro-micro simulation</i>
Financing the future	<b>Question 6.</b> What are the costs of creating a new programme or scaling-up the existing one? <i>Tool: Costing Analysis</i>
	<b>Question 7.</b> Is the programme/policy cost effective? <i>Tool: Cost-effectiveness analysis</i>
	<b>Question 8.</b> How can the government finance the cost? <i>Tool: Fiscal Space Analysis</i>

The section aims to give an outline of how each question can be, and has been, answered. Detailed and technical explanation of analytical tools are referenced in each section. It is important to note three points about these questions and associated tools:

- **In almost all cases, not all questions need to be answered, indeed maybe only one does.** Depending on where decision makers are on a particular policy, perhaps only one specific question will be relevant to moving things forward (even where earlier questions are unanswered). For example, perhaps the bottleneck is the government focusing on economic growth without seeing the macro benefits to investing in children. Or maybe there is a belief a cash transfer could make a difference without knowing where to get the money. It is important to start from the questions the targeted decision maker would like answered.

- **The need to be flexible in developing real world policy questions.** The exact questions asked and the way tools are applied may need flexibility and interpretation. For example, the question could be about the impact of different amounts of cash transfers on poverty or child poverty (a variation on Question 4), or whether particular groups of children identified in child poverty analysis (say girls in the north) are going to benefit from eliminating school fees (a combination of questions 1 and 4).
- **Any tool can be used for good or bad.** While the tools introduced here generally have helped making pro-poor interventions, they could also be used to argue to cut spending for poverty reduction programmes and policies. For instance, benefit incidence can be used to show coverage gap of services among the poor but also to argue to cut the programme for the middle-class, which may place them at risk of poverty. Thus, the selection of tools and how they are used requires careful attention to the implication of the potential benefits as well as the harm.

## Challenging the status quo:

### QUESTION 1: ARE THE POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES REACHING THE POOREST CHILDREN?

Many programmes and services are in place with an objective to address poverty and inequality. In reality, how much those in poverty benefit from programmes compared to the richest is an open question. For example, public health services may not be accessed by the poorest due to the cost. Or, inaccurate targeting of social protection programmes may actually end up excluding the ones who need them the most. This could be particularly true if your child poverty analysis showed high deprivation rates in dimensions where there is already a significant amount of investment.

**Benefit Incidence Analysis (BIA)** can quantitatively demonstrate how much benefit the poorest households and children are receiving from a particular programme, compared to other groups. It can be used for certain sectors – most commonly in health and education – or for a specific programme, such as the benefit incidence of a child grant. The analysis will be simpler when it picks a specific policy and there is already a survey that captures who received what and for how much. In this case, the use of services are aggregated by group, and then compared across different socio-economic groups.

In some areas, there are global databases of benefit incidence, such as the ASPIRE database on social protection. For example, in Fiji, the ASPIRE indicators show that the poorest quintile received 13.7 per cent of the whole benefit while the richest quintile received 33.4 per cent, suggesting that the social assistances are not pro-poor and rather are benefiting the rich.

If the focus is expanded to a sector with multiple services, the analysis will become more complicated as it requires aggregating usage of different services based on the unit cost of each service, before looking at the distribution. For example, if benefit incidence within the health sector is the focus, different types of health services (such as preventative services or in-patient or out-patient care) and their unit costs need to be aggregated.

The results are typically visualized in a bar graph to demonstrate how much of the services are being used by each socio-economic group and where the inequities are. Policy recommendations will build on the results and suggest what actions could be taken to make the distribution more pro-poor. This could include interventions to remove economic and social barriers to access to services, such as user fee abolition, or interventions to strengthen service supplies by building infrastructure for groups where service coverages are low.

Quantitative analysis can be complimented by qualitative methods, such as semi-structured interviews or focus group discussions. Such information could help identify why some of the poorest households were excluded from the programmes or policies, and how an intervention can remove the social or political barriers in accessing the services.



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**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Clarify the scope of the analysis – which programme or sector should be the focus?	<p>What does the policy environment tell you?</p> <p>What information does the child poverty profiling provide?</p> <p>Which sector has little coverage among the poor?</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	Aggregating the service usage by socio-economic group.	<p>What socio-economic groups can be used for the analysis?</p> <p>(If aggregating several different programmes or services within the sector) what is the unit cost of each type of service and how much did each socio-economic group use?</p> <p>Can the analysis build on any global databases for social protection such as ATLAS?</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	Comparing the benefits across different socioeconomic group and analyse equity	<p>What does the bar graph look like? Does it show that the benefits are mostly used by the poor or by the non-poor?</p> <p>Can you compare the results with any political commitment document that tells us about the ideal scenario? Is there a gap between the vision and reality?</p> <p>If you are analysing several programmes within the sector, are there differences across different interventions?</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	Derive policy recommendations to ensure that the services reach the poorest households.	<p>Are there improvements to be made in terms of the distribution?</p> <p>If so, what could be the reasons for poor households not receiving the benefits? Is this by design or by practical reasons related to implementation?</p> <p>What are the roles of supply side (in providing enough quality services) and the demand side interventions (in making sure that there is no barriers to access for the poor)?</p>

**TIMELINE:**

- Can be as little as a few days if you already have an organized dataset that captures service usages and socio-economic status together. Even shorter if you decide to use a global database.
- One to three months if the analysis looks at a sector with multiple interventions and the unit costs and service use has to be collected for aggregation.
- The timeline may expand as stakeholder involvement and engagement is undertaken, or the recruitment of an external consultant is needed.

**DATA:**

- Socioeconomic characteristics of the population and information about service usage. For example, in education, this could be the school participation rate. For analysis of a child grant, this will be the annual amount received. For health, this is more likely to be a combination of usage

of different medical services. When combining different services the analysis also requires unit cost of services in order to allow comparability.

- Data sources are likely to include household surveys and administrative data.

**KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:**

- Understanding of the child poverty profile in the country.
- A deep understanding of the services and programmes provided in the sector of focus and available data.
- Ability to conduct basic tabulations on household-level micro data.
- Experience in conducting BIA is not necessary but certainly an advantage, especially for more complicated analysis in the health or education sector.

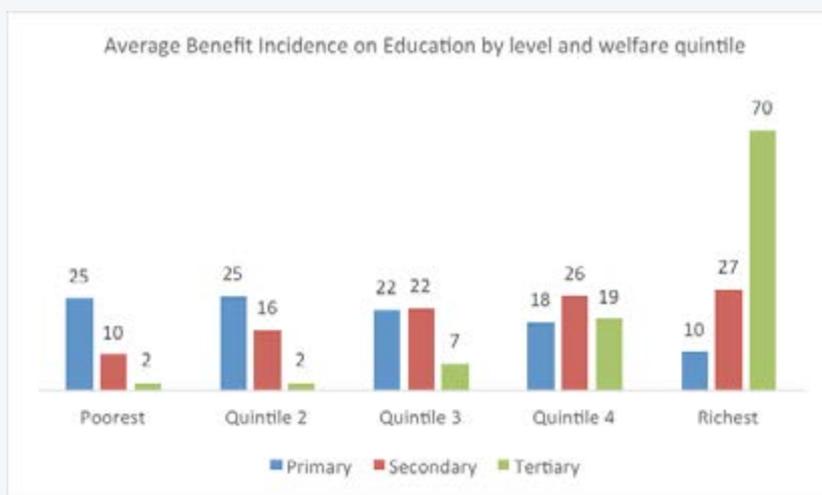


**KENYA**

**Kenya: Benefit Incidence Analysis of access to education**

A study in Kenya used BIA to estimate who gains from education services at primary, secondary and tertiary levels. First, the unit cost of education services was derived by dividing government spending on education by the number of enrolled students. Then, in each quintile, the unit cost was multiplied by the number of enrolled children within each quintile to compute how much each quintile benefited from the government budget on education. Finally, the share of spending across quintiles was computed and compared for policy recommendations.

Results revealed that the spending on primary education is benefiting the bottom two quintiles, as there are more children in these two quintiles and the net enrolment rate is high. However, it also shows that the poorest quintile receives very little spending on secondary and less than 2 per cent for tertiary education, due to low enrolment rate. Thus, the analysis advocated for raising secondary enrolments, especially among the poor.



SOURCE: DEMERY, L. & GADDIS, I. (2009) SOCIAL SPENDING, POVERTY AND GENDER EQUALITY IN KENYA: A BENEFIT INCIDENCE ANALYSIS.

***Benefit Incidence: a practitioner's guide*** by the World Bank gives detailed step-by-step instructions to conduct BIA with country examples, covering both the health and education sector.

***How Useful are Benefit Incidence Analyses of Public Education and Health Spending?*** by IMF synthesizes finding from 56 developing countries on BIA in areas education and health.

***ASPIRE*** (The Atlas of Social Protection Indicators of Resilience and Equity) calculates social protection benefit incidence for over 100 countries using household surveys. The indicator on benefit incidence is calculated as (sum of all transfers received by all individuals in the quintile)/(sum of all transfers received by all individuals in the population). The results are available on their website.

***How to do, or not to do, benefit incidence analysis in Health Policy and Planning*** is a comprehensive guide for conducting BIA within the health sector.

***DASP software*** of PEP includes a module to facilitate robust benefit incidence analysis.

## QUESTION 2: DOES AN EXISTING PROGRAMME OR POLICY HAVE AN IMPACT ON CHILD POVERTY?

This question complements the previous question but goes deeper. Rather than considering if the poorest children are receiving a service, it asks if **the policy or programme is having an impact on child poverty**. Unlike the case of BIA where a household survey may be enough to conduct a simple analysis, answering this question in most cases requires an independent impact evaluation study with at least baseline and endline surveys, which can be time-consuming and expensive.

Impact evaluations aim to identify causal effect of the programme or policies by comparing the actual outcomes with the counterfactual; in other words, what would have been the result if an intervention hadn't taken place? The main methodological challenge is that in the real world, we cannot observe the counterfactual.

A simple comparison of the outcomes across two groups (the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries) usually leads to significant biases, since it is very likely that there are existing differences between groups or different events or shocks during the programme that could lead to different outcomes.

Various evaluation designs and econometric approaches have been developed to establish causality in a more rigorous way. These can be broken broadly into two:

- 1) Experimental designs, such as randomized control trials (RCTs), are considered as the most rigorous design to establish causality, by randomly assigning who receives the intervention or programme and who does not.

It has been particularly effective in producing credible evidence to scale up innovative pilot projects (See Box 4.6). However, RCTs are not always feasible as some policies or programmes such as macroeconomic policy may not be able to assign the beneficiaries randomly, it may not be ethically acceptable to assign the beneficiaries randomly, or the programme implementation has already started without random assignment of beneficiaries.

2) Quasi-experimental designs can be used where experimental designs are not feasible. Three approaches are:

a) Regression Discontinuity Design (RDD) can be ideal for programmes that use a continuous eligibility index and a clear defined cutoff score to determine who is eligible or not. RDD compares the group that is just eligible for the programme with the group who just fell below the criteria to be eligible. As the two groups are likely to have little ex-ante difference in characteristics before the intervention, comparing them can produce information on the impact of the programme.

When neither RCT nor RDD would work, the following two methodologies are commonly used, often in conjunction with other impact evaluation methods.

b) Difference-in-difference uses the information from the baseline and endline survey for both the beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. It first looks at the change in outcome over time among beneficiaries and then compares it to the change in outcome over time among the non-beneficiaries. This allows the changes that can be attributed to the programmes to be distinguished from other changes that have happened over time. However, the estimates will lead to biases if the two groups have structurally experienced different shocks and changes over the time.

c) Matching (including propensity score matching) is the baseline survey and a statistical technique to create the 'best possible' hypothetical comparison group for a given group of beneficiary, so that the two groups have almost the same characteristics at the baseline (at least for observable characteristics). However, if there are non-observable characteristics that can affect the outcome, the results will be subject to biases.

While the use of rigorous quantitative methods are becoming more widespread, their limitations have also been recognized. For instance, a few quantifiable indicators may not capture the full picture of the influence of a programme in a complex local context. Or, quantitative measures may not be able to explain the whole logic chain of how the change happened.

These caveats can be complemented by qualitative approaches such as focus groups, interviews or observations. Such participatory tools are not only used to evaluate the impact, but can also be used at various stages of the project and evaluation to make the project work in various local contexts (see the resources on page 183 for more guidance on this).

**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Specify intervention, outcomes and methodologies	<p>What are the major programmes that are expected to have positive results on child poverty?</p> <p>Where are the doubts on its effects?</p> <p>What does the child poverty profiling tell you, regarding the deprivation area of focus?</p> <p>Are you looking at outcomes in monetary poverty or multidimensionally? How does the official poverty rate define child poverty?</p> <p>Should you use quantitative, qualitative or mix method? Do budget and time allow you to conduct the most rigorous forms of impact evaluation?</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	Identify the eligible population to the policies and comparison groups	If the policies have not been scaled up fully to cover all children, who should be the policy target for the evaluation and who should not be covered so that they can be compared?
<b>Step 3</b>	Conduct baseline survey and prepare baseline report	What is the situation of child poverty among both treatment and control groups? Are there significant differences already before the intervention takes place?
<b>Step 4</b>	Implementation of the programme	Make sure that only the target group receives the benefit from the programme. Record any unexpected events in implementing the policies for final reports. Consider doing a midline report and survey if the timeline allows.
<b>Step 5</b>	Conduct endline survey, compare the results with baseline survey	<p>Ideally using the same questionnaire as in the baseline survey to capture changes among both groups. What has changed for both groups, and were there any significant changes for the treatment group?</p> <p>If qualitative survey is also included, what have been the opinions from the beneficiaries? How do you explain the result chain, who (amongst the beneficiaries) benefited the most/least and why?</p>
<b>Step 6</b>	Calculate the impact and prepare final reports with policy recommendations	<p>Did the programme achieve the intended results in poverty reduction? What changes have taken place in the causal chain?</p> <p>If this was a pilot programme, is there a reason to believe that similar results could be obtained elsewhere or not?</p> <p>If the impact was weak, what are the lessons learned and recommendation for the future?</p>

**TIMELINE:**

- Varies greatly depending on methodology. If no additional surveys are required, it could be done in one to two months, while in typical rigorous evaluation, it could take anywhere from one to five years to complete the whole process.
- For any of the methodologies, it is worth stressing that the results and the use of the results can be further enhanced if the methodology is selected prior to the implementation of the programme and in close collaboration with programme administrators and researchers.

**DATA:**

- Data requirements depends on the methodology used, but in general having a baseline data and endline data of both beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries on child outcomes is critical in conducting rigorous evaluation. Qualitative interviews are used to further understand the mechanisms in which an intervention worked to achieve outcomes.
- In almost all cases, there is a requirement to undertake additional surveys.

BOX 4.6

## From evidence to action – the role of impact evaluation in influencing the design and implementation of social cash transfers

The Transfer Project, an innovative multi-country research initiative on the impacts of social cash transfers, was set up with an objective to contribute to the improvement of programme design and implementation. Led by UNICEF, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Save the Children UK, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and national governments, the project has conducted impact evaluations in nine African countries, as of 2015.

In the evaluations, the national governments and local research organizations were involved in all stages to ensure that research was utilized to inform the design and scale-up of national social cash transfers (SCTs). While other existing evaluations were conducted outside of government or in small-scale experimental interventions, the transfer project only evaluated the national programmes from the onset. The most rigorous methods were utilized, including randomized controlled trial designs, within the constraints of programme operations. The methodology also incorporates a mixed method approach, integrating quantitative, qualitative, and simulation models in evaluation designs and analyses.

The project has seen the important role of impact evaluation and the process of engagement with national governments in shaping policy and programme developments across different countries. For example, in Zambia, the rigorous, timely and accessible evidence played an important role in changing the narrative around social protection and contributed to a tripling in the size of the social cash transfer programme and an eightfold increase in government budget to the programme. In Lesotho, a combination of relationship building, results of the evaluation on programme implementation and favourable political environment led to the expansion of Child Grant Programme from a relatively small-scale, donor-funded pilot into a nationally-owned programme with an expansion of coverage, greater institutional capacity and increased domestic finance.

Recent publication on the project's experience points to a number of factors that played important role in influencing policies and programmes, such as:

- Embedding the impact evaluations in national policy processes, involving international experts and researchers, government counterparts and national research institutes.
- Trust and relationship-building between the researchers and government counterparts.
- Accessibility, packaging and messaging of findings and accompanying presentations through the production of briefs, presentations, media engagement or national events.
- The creation of a regional learning agenda, including the establishment of a regional community of practice.

For more information about the overall project as well as findings from each programme, visit the website of The Transfer Project.

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:**

- Impact evaluation is usually conducted by a group of technical experts, with expertise and experience on survey design, data collection, analysis and publication.
- Having a multidisciplinary team is also critical, for example an expert on health on an impact evaluation related to health.
- For quantitative methodologies, in order to select the best method for your context, it is necessary to have an understanding of a range of options as well as experience in applying the methodology of choice. A typical background in economics, statistics or other relevant field is useful.
- Similarly, for qualitative methodologies, it is ideal to have experts (typically with background in sociology, anthropology or similar) who can advise what the best options would be in this situation, and for each method, what the procedures and consideration would be.
- Regardless of the method, having an understanding of the local context is critical in developing hypotheses, managing the survey team, conducting the interviews and interpreting the results.

**RESOURCES:**

**Impact Evaluation in Practice** by Paul Gertler is a practical introductory handbook for practitioners and policymakers with real-world examples. The book is available in English, French and Spanish, and the PDF is downloadable from the website. There are presentations and videos available on the website as well.

**Impact Evaluation Series by UNICEF Office of Research** is a series of methodological briefs and short videos covering a wide range of topics, ranging from theory of change, participatory approaches, data collection and analysis methods.

**Abdul Latif Jameel Poverty Action Lab (J-PAL) and Innovation for Poverty Action (IPA)** are global networks of researchers who use randomized evaluations to answer critical policy questions in the fight against poverty. On their website, you can find methodological overview of RCTs as well as results and policy lessons from different approaches.

The chapter **Integrating Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches in Program Evaluation** in the impact of economic policies on poverty and income distribution by the World Bank describes how to use mix-methods in conducting research and impact evaluation with case studies.

More information and resources are also available at **Policy Impact Evaluation Research Initiative (PIERI)** of PEP.

### QUESTION 3: ARE THE POOREST HOUSEHOLDS BEARING THE COST OF POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES?

Policies and programmes come with a cost. It is often assumed that such policies are financed by higher tax payers or by international donors. However, this is not always the case. If there is a reason to believe that the poor may be financing the programmes through taxes or out-of-pocket expenditure, undertaking an analysis of the financing structure of the policies and programmes could lead to improved ways to finance the interventions.

**Financing Incidence Analysis (FIA)** is a tool to assess the progressivity of the financing of certain sectors by understanding which socio-economic group bears the cost of financing. The structure and process is similar to BIA, with the key difference being the indicator of focus: while BIA focuses on who receives what, FIA analyses who pays for what. Given the similar characteristics of the two analyses, combining the two is an effective approach in comprehensively understanding the equity focus of a particular sector or programme (see example of Uganda on page 186).

As in BIA, the first step is to decide the scope of the analysis – which could be a large sector such as health or education, or a specific programme within one sector, such as an ECD programme. The burden to those living in poverty is more likely to be higher in sectors or programmes where households have to pay personal expenditure for the services in addition to paying taxes. For example, households may not have health insurance to cover certain types of medical services or drug prescription; or there could be informal payments required to go to school even where there is a free provision of basic education.

The analysis reviews the channels through which people living in poverty pay to finance a certain programme or sector, and then compare the total amount of expenditure by socioeconomic groups. The balance of financing across different groups could be visually and simply shown by a bar graph.

The policy recommendations from FIA will suggest ways to finance a programme or sector in more equitable ways. For a detailed analysis of the tax system and tax incidence, this may include certain ways to improve the tax system for those in poverty. Simpler analysis may shed light on the burden to those in poverty, the importance of eliminating personal expenses, and alternative approaches in financing the sector. Fiscal space analysis may be combined in suggesting alternative sources of financing (see Question 8).

**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Identify the scope of the analysis – which programme or sector should be the focus?	<p>What does the child poverty profiling tells us about the dimensions where the deprivations are high?</p> <p>Which sector or programme is likely to be putting financial burden to the poor through taxes or service fees?</p> <p>What is the availability of data? What kind of expenditure do they cover?</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	Aggregate the expenditure by socioeconomic group	<p>What are the socio-economic group that can be used for the analysis? Can we look at quintiles based on income/expenditure, or assets? If the services are directly related to children, can you compare children in poverty vs non-poor children?</p> <p>What are the formal tax payment (both direct and indirect), the informal personal payment and any contribution to social/private insurance?</p> <p>(If aggregating several different programmes or services within the sector) what are the unit cost of each type of services and how much did each socio-economic group use?</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	Compare the benefits across different socioeconomic group and analyse equity	<p>What does the bar graph look like? Does it show that the costs are borne by the poor?</p> <p>Can you compare the results with any political commitment document that tells us about the ideal scenario? Is there a gap between the vision and reality?</p> <p>If you are analysing several programmes within the sector, are there differences across different interventions?</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	Derive policy recommendations to ensure that the poor households are not bearing the financial burden to finance the programmes/policies	<p>Are there improvements to be made in terms of the financing distribution?</p> <p>If so, what are the channels in which poor households are required to pay? Should it require tax reform or reform of other personal expenses?</p>

**DATA:**

Most often, expenditures are calculated from household surveys that include the following information:

- Income or expenditure (to compute direct and indirect taxation) from household surveys.
- Out-of-pocket payments.
- Socio-economic status of households.
- The country's macroeconomic data on taxation and expenditure is also helpful in complementing household survey data.

### KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS:

- Knowledge of the public and individual expenditure on services in the sector of focus.
- Basic understanding of the country's taxation system.
- For in-depth analysis on the taxation system, advanced knowledge of different tax schemes, current status, best practices and international evidence.
- Ability to organize micro datasets.

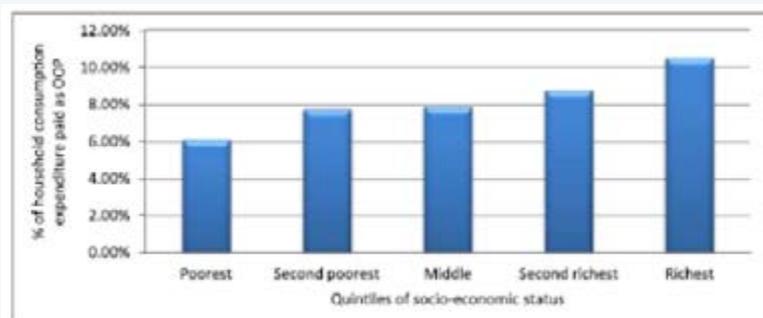


## UGAN-

A study by Kwesig et al (2015) assessed equity in the financing and distribution of health care benefits in Uganda using a national household survey.

### Financing Incidence Analysis

The FIA considered the equity in taxes and direct out-of-pocket payments. Insurance was not considered given its low contribution to health financing in Uganda. The amount of direct taxes were computed from reported gross income only for those working in the formal sector having income above the taxable threshold. Indirect taxes were calculated based on household



Distribution of the out-of-pocket payments across socio-economic quintiles

consumption of goods. The out-of-pocket payments were estimated based on the reported value in the survey. The health financing was marginally progressive. Although the taxes were more progressive than out-of-pockets expenditure, they only had a small share of the total financing compared to individual spending.

### Benefit Incidence Analysis

BIA assessed the distribution of health services for both public and non-public providers across consumption quintiles. The data on utilization of the services were derived from the household survey, complemented by the Demographic and Health Survey. The unit cost of the services were obtained from a separate costing study by the Ministry of Health. The benefits were then computed by multiplying service use and unit cost of specific services.

The results showed that the total health sector services benefited pro-rich, as the richest quintile receives 19 per cent of the total benefits while the poorest received only per cent.

In conclusion, the study argues the need for addressing the health needs of the poor in equitable ways while continuing to ensure that the burden is not disproportionately borne by the poor.

SOURCE: KWESIG, B., ET AL (2015) WHO PAYS FOR AND BENEFITS FROM HEALTH CARE SERVICES IN UGANDA? BMC HEALTH SERVICES RESEARCH.

**RESOURCES:**

***Analysing Health Equity Using Household Survey Data*** is a comprehensive and detailed guide in conducting equity analysis (including FIA and BIA) for the health sector.

***Estimating the Incidence of Indirect Taxes in Developing Countries*** is a technical guidance and overview of tools used to analyse tax systems in developing countries.

***Equity in financing and use of health care in Ghana, South Africa and Tanzania: implications for paths to universal coverage*** is a study that compares FIA in three countries, pointing to the need to remove physical and financial barriers to accessing health care services in achieving universal health care.



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1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy

4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

## Projecting the potential impact of policy changes – conducting simulations

Recommendations for policy change may be most persuasive when not only outlining the status quo, but looking into the future and outlining scenarios of what the impacts of change could be. The simulation tools outlined below combine data, micro and macroeconomic theories and models to provide approaches to estimate the potential impact of a policy change on child poverty.

The impact of a policy change can happen at two levels. One is the direct impact of the policies on children in poverty, and the other is indirect impacts as policies have effects across multiple channels. For example, a cash transfer to poor households has direct impact on poverty reduction due to increased transfers. It could also have indirect impacts on the local economy because of increased local consumption by households, more participation in the local labour market or even on macro economy in the long run, through increased productivity in the economy due to improved outcomes on health, nutrition or education. Two different models to capture effects at different levels are (Table 4.5):

- **Microsimulation** uses household surveys to predict direct impacts of a policy change on the monetary child poverty rate, multidimensional outcomes or changes in behaviors. The simplest form will look at the direct change in household income by cash, but more sophisticated and structural models could be built to also understand longer-term impacts on other dimensions of child-related outcomes.
- **Macro simulation** models, and their combination with micro models, have the advantage in accounting for impact on different sectors and agents in the economy. This could be important when analysing policies that could have sector-wide or economy-wide impact, such as fuel subsidy reform. However, the analysis can become very technical, requiring large amount of data, expertise on macroeconomic modelling and software packages. It may take much longer to set up the model and conduct the analysis.



**TABLE 4.5 MICRO VS MACRO (OR MICRO-MACRO)**

	<b>MICROSIMULATION</b>	<b>MACRO SIMULATION (INCLUDING MICRO-MACRO)</b>
<b>Scope</b>	Changes in the child poverty rate directly caused by policy or programmes, without accounting for local economic impact or changes in other sectors. The model is simple to project changes in monetary poverty rate, but more sophisticated models can also make predictions on the multidimensional child poverty rate.	Changes in the child poverty rate and other macroeconomic indicators, such as GDP or unemployment rate, accounting for both direct and indirect impact of policy changes.
<b>Dataset</b>	Range from simple static models to more sophisticated, behavioural partial equilibrium models.	Social Accounting Matrix (SAM) Household Survey.
<b>Models</b>	Simple static model, or partial equilibrium model.	Computable General Equilibrium model, combined with a microsimulation model.
<b>Examples of policies that can be analysed.</b>	Cash transfer Simplified analysis of fuel subsidy reform.	Comprehensive analysis of fuel subsidy reform. Tax reform. Analysis of macroeconomic impact of financial crises.

A simulation could be static or dynamic. Static simulation is a simple form that does not consider changes over time. Dynamic models, in turn, provides estimate on how elements of the model, such as the price, child poverty rate or GDP, change over time. The same trade-offs apply here – the more sophisticated the model becomes, the more assumptions, time and technical expertise they will require.

The rest of this section aims to explain the assumptions, elements and steps of each simulation model, how simulation exercises can contribute to policy changes and if they can, determining the scope of the exercise.

## QUESTION 4: HOW MUCH IMPACT WILL A NEW PROGRAMME OR POLICY HAVE ON THE CHILD POVERTY RATE?

Microsimulation is a tool to understand the direct impact of changes (or the introduction of new policies) on child poverty at the household level using household surveys. It is most simply used to analyse the potential impact of transfers or taxes on the income or consumption of households, which then gives a projected poverty rate or index of inequities for comparison.

For example, to project the poverty impact of a new child grant programme, different grant sizes are hypothetically given to all eligible households, and a new child poverty rate is calculated based on the new distribution of income. This helps select the policy design that could have most effect on child poverty and give an evidence-based answer into some key questions in designing the programme, such as: what the age-group of the beneficiaries should be; the transfer amount; and if the scheme should adopt geographical targeting.

The simulation model has also been widely used for policy making in higher-income countries, to understand the potential impact of social transfers or changes in taxation. For example, EUROMOD is a tax-benefit micro static simulation model used to calculate the effects of taxes and benefits on household incomes and work incentives of all 27 EU countries during 2009-2013 (as of December, 2015). The tool allows users to pre-define tax and benefit policies such as social assistance, family benefits or social contributions, and then simulate changes on household income. Accessing EUROMOD requires having secure permissions to the micro-data (mostly EU-SILC) but country reports and statistics are available on the website.

The simple and intuitive concept of this model is a strong advantage in communicating the results to decision makers or to the public. It also does not require advanced knowledge of economics, and by using EUROMOD, Distributive Analysis Stata Package (DASP) or Automated DEC Poverty Tables (see resources list on page 193) it can be done without learning how to use a statistical package.

On the other hand, the results of microsimulations do face some limitations, including:

- **The simulated impact may differ from the actual impact due to implementation challenges.** The model will often assume that all of the targeted households will receive the full transfer. In reality, there are implementation challenges that can challenge this assumption. For example, due to problems of access or lack of knowledge some households may not receive the transfer. Making an estimation about the recipients becomes more complex as different forms of targeting (such as proxy means testing) are adopted. These challenges should be acknowledged in interpreting results.
- **Micromodels will not capture the impact on local economies and beyond.** The basic model is limited to understanding the direct impact on household income. In reality, direct impacts also foster multiplier

effects in the long-run – for example, a positive impact of cash transfers on the rural local economy through local transactions, which can feed back indirectly into household income. To assess such impacts on local economies, or macro impacts of major policies (such as a fiscal reform), macro-micro simulation would be more appropriate to take the macro impacts into account (more details in the next section).

- **Information on income may not be available and may have to be proxied by consumption.** In lower-income countries, information on income is often unavailable and monetary poverty is measured by consumption expenditure. This can be a challenge as the impacts on cash transfers may be only partially reflected as all of the transfer may not be spent (some may be saved). Accordingly an assumption must be made on the relationship between increase in income and consumption (normally, it is assumed that full amount of transfer is spent on consumption).
- **While not impossible, simulating impacts of policies and programmes on multidimensional child poverty, including particular deprivations, is quite complicated.** Most importantly, it requires understanding and predicting of the behavioural changes of households after a policy change (for example, estimating the increase in household income needed for a household to send children to school). Constructing such behavioural models requires additional modelling and assumptions, which can be challenging when information about behavior change over time, for example from panel data, is not available (see Cambodia case study – under resources below – for a methodological approach and example).



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**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Identify the scenarios and options for the policy changes to be simulated.	What are the policies to be considered (for example eligibility and benefit amounts)? And in considering the policy options, what are the government's interests? Are they on-board?
<b>Step 2</b>	Identify the scope of the analysis.	Should it be kept simple (i.e. static and monetary outcomes) or have a dynamic, multidimensional scope?  What are the resources you have and the interest of policymakers?
<b>Step 3</b>	Run the simulations using the micro dataset.	What indicators, beside the child poverty rate, should be considered?  For multidimensional analysis, two sets of simulations are required. One on how the programme will affect income dimension, and then another set to simulate how the change in income and programme affect other outcomes.
<b>Step 4</b>	Analyse the results and derive policy recommendations.	Which options yield the best impacts on child poverty? Which options have highest impact on the most disadvantaged group?  Should the results be combined with a costing analysis (see Question 6) of each option to make an observation on cost-effectiveness?

**TIMELINE:**

- With an organized dataset or software such as EUROMOD, the analysis could be done in a few days. However, the comprehensive process in agreeing on the scenarios with the government, preparing the dataset and deriving policy recommendations could take a few months.
- If the scope of the simulation is extended to conduct a dynamic model or simulate multidimensional impact, it could also take one to three months for analysis itself.

**DATA:**

- A household survey that contains information about household income or expenditure is the foundation. If a programme is targeted for specific groups of the population the household survey should also contain the same information used for targeting to allow simulation (for example, the dataset must contain information about ages of children in households if simulating a cash transfer to certain age groups).

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:**

- Ability to organize and manage household survey data.
- If looking at dynamic or multidimensional impacts, econometric techniques are also required.
- Full understanding of the scope and limitations of the modelling is also critical in communicating the results.

**RESOURCES:**

**ADePT Social Protection Module** is a free software developed by the World Bank to analyse a range of questions around social protection using data from household survey. It not only helps analysing the benefit incidence of social protection but can also perform static simulations.

**Toolkit on Simulating the Impact of Conditional Cash Transfer Programs on Children's Behaviour** was developed by the World Bank to assess the impact of conditional cash transfers on school choices, poverty and inequity based on a household survey, using STATA. It also offers insights into the potential impact of imposing conditionalities.

**Estimation of Rates of Return of Social Protection Instruments in Cambodia: A Case for Non-contributory Social Transfers** projects multidimensional impacts of social transfers on education, nutrition and labour in a dynamic model.



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1. Building a national pathway to end child poverty

2. Measuring child poverty

3. Putting child poverty on the map: child poverty advocacy

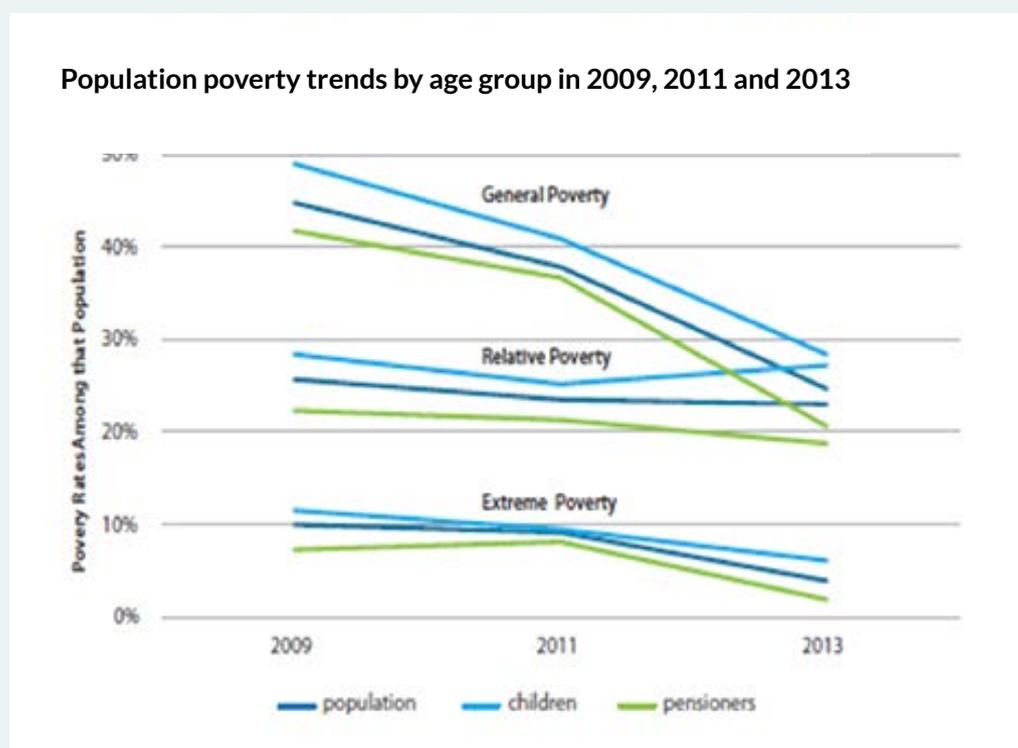
4. Reducing child poverty through policy and programme change

5. Ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions

BOX 4.7

## How did benefit incidence and micro simulations in Georgia contribute to establishing a new child grant?

In May 2015, Georgia introduced a remarkable child benefit scheme to its social security protection system, which aimed to reach approximately 260,000 children from the poorest households nationwide. This new social transfer was a much-awaited change for UNICEF, who had been advocating for a reform of the social security system to make it more focused on children. The advocacy efforts were supported by an analysis of child poverty and simulation of various policy options, both based on a unique panel household survey. Here are some of the outstanding features of the analysis and the process that contributed to the change in the social security system:



**(1) A national panel survey enabled analysis of trends in income poverty by age group, highlighting higher poverty rates among children.**

UNICEF supported the Welfare Monitoring Survey, a panel household survey which captures different dimensions of poverty, including household income, consumption, access to services and goods, health, education and subjective well-being. This data was collected every year from 2009 to 2013, and was used to analyse the trend of poverty by age group, rural-urban difference of child poverty, and poverty rates by number of children in the household.

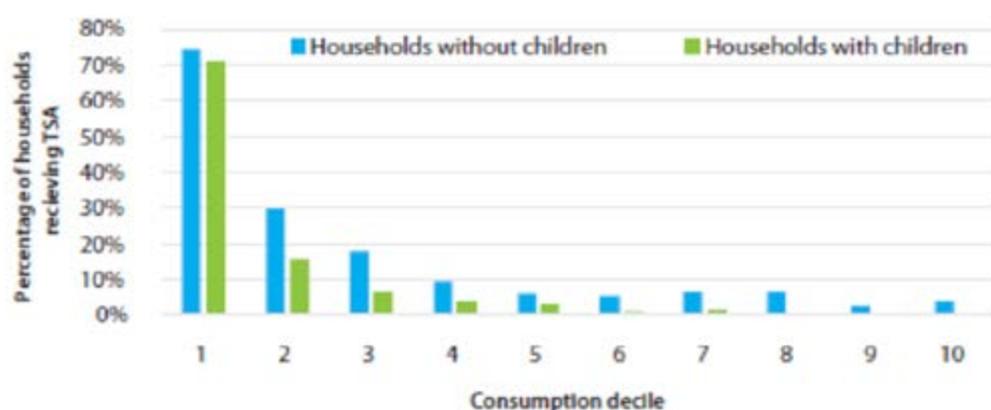
Analysis of the poverty rate by age group showed that child poverty was higher than the population's poverty rate regardless of the poverty thresholds (extreme poverty, general poverty or relative poverty) and highlighted the particularly high extreme poverty rate for children aged 5-14 years old.

## 2) Analysis of the existing social security programmes identified low coverage rate among households with children.

The largest cash transfer programmes, the old age pension and the Targeted Social Assistance (TSA) scheme, were then assessed on coverage and impact. Using the same panel data, it was revealed that the TSA had higher coverage of households without children than the households with children, and the difference was particularly high in lower consumption deciles. For example, households with children had only half of the coverage rate compared to those without children in the second to fourth consumption decile.

With regards to the impact on the poverty rate, the impact of the TSA was limited and spread across different age groups. The old age pension had a much larger impact on poverty reduction, but only among the population over 50 years of age, with limited impacts on children and youth.

**TSA coverage, by pre-TSA consumption decile in 2013**

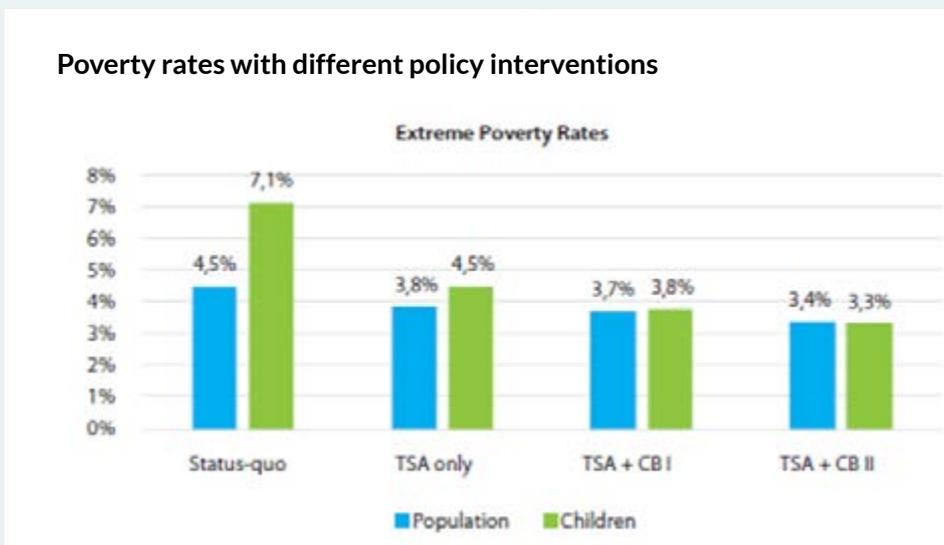


## (3) The study modelled the impact on child poverty if a child benefit was introduced and the existing policies were reformed.

The simulation found significant predicted decrease in child poverty rates with a new child benefit and the also argued that the cost could be financed by reforming TSA.

Finally, the study used three scenarios, with different mixed revisions of TSA and child benefit eligibility. One of the findings from the impact simulation was that without the introduction of a child benefit, the difference between extreme poverty rates of the population and the children would remain unchanged, while child benefits could equalize the poverty rate across age groups.

Further, the costing analysis was conducted for each policy option, which was important in proving that the introduction of a new scheme was a feasible option for policymakers.



**(4) The process and analysis was undertaken in close consultation with the government and in collaboration with other development partners.**

The analysis of child poverty and scenario building were conducted as part of the larger social protection system reform since 2013, carried out by UNICEF in collaboration with the World Bank; the Ministry of Labour; Health and Social Affairs; the Social Service Agency and the Georgian National Statistics office. The scenarios of different policy options were also determined in close consultation with the government, including parliamentarians and the Prime Minister’s Office. Additionally, UNICEF co-hosted a workshop on the social protection system with the World Bank in December 2014, represented by the government, international organizations and research institutes. The collaborative nature of the process was another critical element to bring significant changes in policy over a short time period.

**(5) After the establishment of the grant, support to implementation continues to maximize the impact for the most disadvantaged children.**

The new child grant was initiated to all socially-vulnerable families with children under the age of 16. The identification of each family’s vulnerability through the TSA was revised, and incorporated into the child grant. Furthermore, precautions were made to ensure that the benefit structure did not include any disincentives for families to explore job opportunities. Finally, efforts were made to ensure that coordination between social workers and agents responsible for providing the benefits were strengthened.

SOURCE: BAUM ET AL (2014) REDUCING CHILD POVERTY IN GEORGIA: A WAY FORWARD. UNICEF

## QUESTION 5: WHAT ARE THE MACROECONOMIC IMPACTS OF A MAJOR POLICY CHANGE ON CHILD POVERTY?

With many policy and decision makers focused on the macroeconomy – not least in Ministries of Finance – the ability to show the impacts of a policy change on the macro economy can be crucial in building support. There may be interest in the impact that a social transfer can have on the local economy, the labour supply or economic growth. Major reforms such as fuel subsidy reform or tax reform are likely to have significant impacts on multiple sectors.

Macroeconomic modelling tools are used to understand the impact of policy changes or external shocks that affect the entire economy beyond individual and household impacts. These models include:

- Partial equilibrium models, which are used to model a change of certain factors in a particular sector of the economy.
- Computable general equilibrium models (CGE) models, which are most often used to consider links between all production activities, factors and institutions, including the modelling of markets and predicting how key economic outcomes such as GDP, the fiscal impacts, employment, or poverty, changes over time.
- Macro simulations, which can be combined with micro in a Micro-Macro Framework to project the impact beyond macroeconomic indicators on the situation of households including poverty and child poverty.

Some of the policies or external shocks which have been subject of existing studies using CGE models around child poverty include:

**Fiscal Policy:** How does increased spending in education increase school participation, reduce child poverty and affect wages, economic growth and the fiscal balance of the country in the long-run? See Burkina Faso example which begins on page 201 of this milestone.

**Subsidy Reform:** How do energy subsidy cuts impact household and children through changes in wage rates, employment, income and consumer prices?

**Trade Policy:** How does trade liberalization impact poverty, or how does eliminating tariffs on imported food affect the population in urban and rural areas differently?

**Financial Crises:** What are the impact of global economic crises on the wage rates, employment, food and non-food prices in West and Central Africa (see example under Resources). A similar approach can be taken to understand the potential impact of climate change, global food price increase, or inflation.

**Growth:** What is the impact of different types of growth and how will it affect income distribution and poverty?

While these models have the advantage of analysing the impact of policies across multiple sectors and the overall economy, running the simulation requires understanding of sophisticated simulation techniques, understanding of partial/general equilibrium theory, advanced knowledge of computer programming and managing large data linking different sectors. Accordingly, in deciding to run such models, careful consideration should be given to the nature of the problem, existing CGE models, data, capacities and resources, and the potential impact the analysis could have, such as whether there are clear reasons why impacts on the overall economy and linkage with other sectors particularly matter.

When moving forward it is important to bear in mind some considerations and limitations with the approach. Some experts argue that “CGE simulations are not unconditional predictions but rather thought experiments” (Hertel et. al., 2007). Some of the reasons include:

- The simulation model is built on a specification of the past. However, the real world is always changing, meaning that real results will vary.
- The models are theory-based, and thus cannot be tested against empirical evidence.
- The results often depend on various assumptions and some of them may be controversial.



**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Determining the scope of the simulation.	<p>First of all, what are the reasons that requires macro simulations? What datasets and skills do you have to conduct the analysis?</p> <p>Does the government understand the need to conduct macrosimulation, and are the options agreed?</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	Setting up the modelled economy.	<p>Using combined data of national accounts and survey data, what are the assumptions to be made in the model? Some may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who are the representative agents in the model and how do they interact with each other? For example, an economy could constitute government, households, firms, etc.</li> <li>- How does each agent behave in the model? (for example, the firm may be assumed to seek profit maximization behaviour)</li> <li>- What are the commodities and factor elements and what markets exist for trade? See an example of the interlinkages below.</li> <li>- Which elements are given exogenously to the model, and which are determined endogenously?</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3</b>	Defining what is the shock or policy change and how it can be modelled.	<p>What are the policy options that are being discussed?</p> <p>How can the policy changes be conceptualized and translated into model instruments?</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	Running the simulation and testing the results.	<p>Are the results consistent with your previous hypotheses? How do the results change over time?</p> <p>Should the results from macro model feed into the microsimulation model to analyse the impact on poverty and inequity?</p> <p>What are the policy impacts on both the households and the macroeconomy?</p>

**TIMELINE:**

- Much of the timeline is dependent on building stakeholder engagement around the project and underlying assumptions as well bringing together the data. Often there is an initial stakeholder workshop, then analysis is undertaken, and three to six months later a follow up workshop presents the final report and results.
- In many cases, work on CGE modelling is combined with training and capacity building of civil servants in these techniques, which can also adjust the timeline.

**DATA:**

CGE modelling is data intensive, and requires two sets of comprehensive data:

1. Data that represents the economic system – such as national accounts on production, consumption and trade which are most commonly compiled into Social Accounting Matrices (SAM).
2. Data on behavioural relationships to define how the system responds to changes. Such data include elasticities of demand, production and trade, and separate econometric work is required to derive such data.

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:**

- Deep understanding of general equilibrium theories with extensive experience in modelling CGE models.
- Ability to handle complex macro data such as social accounting matrix.
- Ability to use software such as GAMS or GEMPACK.
- Ability to communicate complex models to policymakers with little background knowledge on CGE modelling.





## Burkina Faso

### Comparing the simulated impacts of increased education spending, school fees subsidy and cash transfer on education outcomes and poverty in Burkina Faso

#### CONTEXT:

Faced with tight fiscal constraints due to growing budget deficit and stronger intervention to achieve the MDG outcomes, UNICEF and Partnership for Economic Policies (PEP) conducted a simulation analysis to understand the potential impact of the following three policy options:

- (i) increase in education spending.
- (ii) school fees subsidy.
- (iii) cash transfer to households with children under the age of 5.

#### OUTCOME VARIABLES:

The main outcomes of interest were:

- Monetary child poverty rate.
- School participation rate.
- Economic growth.

#### DATA USED:

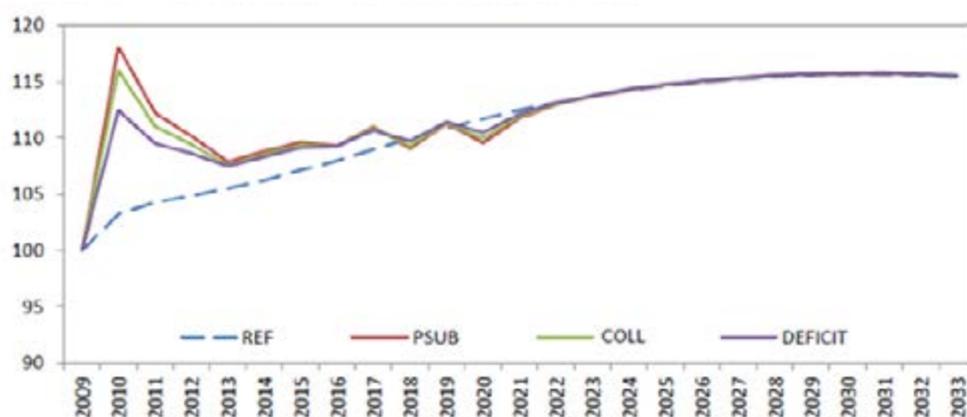
- For macro modelling, SAM for 2009.
- For micro analysis, household living condition survey for 2009.

#### SIMULATION ANALYSIS:

1. The dynamic CGE produced:

- Estimates on the prices (wages, prices, education fees etc) and the quantities (employment, sectoral value added, number of students etc) which were then used for the micro model
- Impact of various factors on education (entry and participation rates, number of students per cycle) and on the economy (such as growth and fiscal situation).

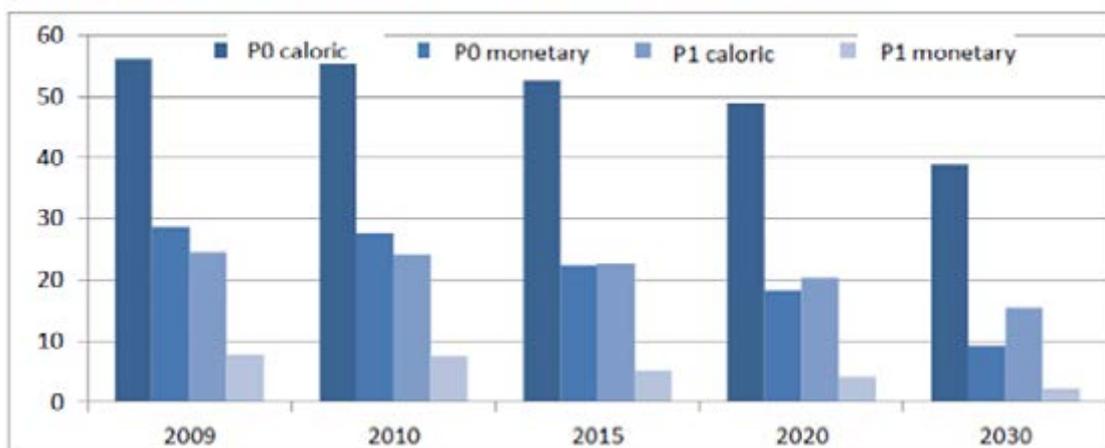
Education quality index, first level of study (2009–2033)



Impact of increased education spending on education quality over time

2. The dynamic micro-simulation model was used to:
- estimate behaviour of households (used in the macro model).
  - estimate the variance in income and consumption for each household.

Evolution of poverty indicators in the reference scenario



### Poverty Impact

#### MAIN RESULTS:

- Increased public education spending would help raise school participation and pass rates, thus increasing the supply and education level of skilled workers, leading to a reduced incidence and depth of monetary poverty.
- School fees subsidies promote children's entry into school to a greater degree, but are less effective at inducing them to pursue their studies. They also have a beneficial impact on poverty, greater than with increased public education spending.
- Cash transfers have a limited impact on educational behaviour, and thus on the supply of skilled workers, but substantially reduce the incidence and depth of poverty.
- Regardless of the interventions considered, the most suitable financing mechanism appears to be a temporary increase in the public deficit, because it is accompanied by a smaller negative effect on the quality of life of the most destitute.

In conclusion, if the objective is to achieve improved education and economic performance, the best intervention appears to be to focus on increased public education spending. However, if reducing child poverty is prioritized, it is cash transfers to families that appear more suitable.

SOURCE: COCKBURN ET AL. (2012) FISCAL SPACE AND PUBLIC SPENDING ON CHILDREN IN BURKINA FASO. PEP AND UNICEF.

**RESOURCES:**

**Introduction to CGE** are slides by John Gilbert from ARTNeT Short Course on CGE Modeling at UN ESCAP provide a quick overview of the basic elements of CGE.

**General equilibrium models for development policies** is an advanced technical guide on how to run general equilibrium models, written for readers to understand the nature of such models and how they link to economic theory.

**Combining microsimulation with CGE and Macro Modelling for Distributional Analysis in Developing and Transition Countries** provides an overview of recent studies that combine microsimulation and CGE models in developing and transition countries.

**Global Trade Analysis Project (GTAP)** is a global network of researchers and policy makers conducting quantitative analysis of international policy issues. GTAP is coordinated by the Center for Global Trade Analysis in Purdue University's Department of Agricultural Economics.

**Computable General Equilibrium (CGE) Modeling Services on Trade and Integration** by IADB provides guidance on how CGE modelling can be used to analyse trade and integration.

PEP supports local CGE researchers by creating a **database of local researchers with expertise in CGE modeling** and also by providing range of training materials on **Modelling and Policy Impact Analysis (MPIA)**.

**Methodologies to analyse the local economy impact of Social Cash Transfers (SCTs)** provides a comprehensive review of analytical framework in analysing the multiplier effect of social cash transfers through changes in labour supply and productive activities.

**SUBSIM project** provides a set of Stata modules for rapid distributional analyses of subsidies and simulations of subsidy reforms. The model estimates the impact of subsidies reforms on household welfare, poverty and inequality and the government budget with or without compensatory cash transfers. The model can estimate direct and indirect effects using household budget survey data and input-output matrixes.

## Financing the future

Even where there is agreement by decision makers on the impact of particular policies on child poverty, change may not happen without a clear understanding the financial implications of a new or scaled up programme. This section looks at tools that can help answer three frequent policy questions in this area: (1) How much will the change cost? (2) Is it cost-effective compared to other choices? (3) And where can the government find resources?

## QUESTION 6: WHAT ARE THE COSTS OF CREATING A NEW PROGRAMME OR SCALING UP AN EXISTING ONE?

Programmes and policies come with a cost. Without having a concrete cost estimate, it is challenging to convince policymakers to adopt a policy change, and impossible to compare the cost-effectiveness with other programmes or to suggest appropriate financing mechanisms. As such, having a cost estimate is often an important starting point in discussing resource mobilization to make change happen.

In calculating the estimated cost it is important to recognize both the direct costs of a programme as well as the indirect (or overhead) costs. For example, in costing a social protection programme, it is important to not only calculate the direct cost (the sum of transfer amount to households/individuals) but also the indirect cost, including the administrative cost to distribute the benefits, targeting and enrolling beneficiaries, monitoring costs and periodic evaluation.

The annual cost for the programme is also likely to change over time, and so having a projection of how costs will change may also be helpful. Some programmes may need fixed investments in the beginning, thus pushing up the cost in the initial years. Or, the programme cost may depend on the number of beneficiaries. The long-term analysis may be particularly useful to relieve any anxiety that costs may increase in the future.

Once the total cost is calculated, it can be a useful exercise to compare the figure with larger macro indicators. For example, how does the cost compare to the total government spending, or the national economy (GDP)? How does it compare with existing programmes in the same area?

It is also important to understand if any of the costs are covered by the beneficiaries. This is more obvious for any contributory scheme where beneficiaries are required to bear some share of the cost. However, even for non-contributory schemes, beneficiaries often bear some of the cost. For example, the beneficiaries may have to spend money on transportation or spend time for registration and trainings. While such costs may not directly affect the programme budget for policymakers, understanding the costs for the beneficiaries is an important component for a programme to succeed and achieve the intended results.

Finally, the actual cost of the programme could be significantly different from the projected cost, due to several risk factors. Such factors may include the change in the fiscal situation of the government, inflation or price changes of materials. While predicting all changes is impossible, accounting for possible future risks and changes helps prepare for sustainable implementation.

**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Decide on policy or programme options to be costed.	What are the policy options that can reduce child poverty and also have buy-in from the government?
<b>Step 2</b>	Collect data sources to conduct cost analysis.	<p>What are the direct costs and the indirect costs? Can we have an estimated number of beneficiaries?</p> <p>What information are available to make a projection over years? Some may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Labour market data for unemployment scheme</li> <li>- Household characteristics for child grants for orphans</li> <li>- GDP, inflation rate, labour productivity growth rate for simulation assumptions</li> <li>- Information about risk factors for future costs</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3</b>	Calculate the cost (for now and for the future).	<p>Are any of the existing tools helpful in calculating the costs? Can the direct and indirect cost be compared to calculate cost efficiency (the ratio of administrative costs to the total amount of output)?</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	Analyse the implications.	<p>How does the cost compare with the government expenditure or with GDP?</p> <p>How does it compare with other international benchmarks?</p> <p>What are the observation on risk factors that may influence the cost in the future?</p>

**TIMELINE:**

- In a simple case, it could be done in one to three weeks, but for larger programmes or more detailed costing, it may take two to three months.
- Time may be increased depending on involvement of stakeholders.

**DATA:**

- Programme information from programme documentation or experts such as number of beneficiaries and how they are projected to change; administrative and material costs.
- Projection of population growth, inflation rate, GDP, government expenditure from government data sets and publications.

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:**

- Good level of skills and experience in basic computation on Excel or similar software.
- Programme and policy expertise in selected area in the elements of direct costs and indirect costs.

**RESOURCES:**

Both of these costing tools help calculate the rough cost of social protection programmes:

- [UNICEF-ILO Social Protection Floor Costing Tool](#)
- [Rapid Assessment Protocol \(RAP\): ILO Social Protection Assessment Based National Dialogue - A good practices guide: Step 2, Module 11: Calculating the cost of benefits using RAP model](#)

For both tools, additional national detailed cost estimate exercise should follow the initial results. Among the two tools, the SPF costing tool has pre-defined format and options based on an Excel spreadsheet, which makes it friendly for users without knowledge on modelling. RAP is intended to be used as part of a national dialogue. While the format allows more flexibility, the requirement of time and previous knowledge of modelling is higher than the SPF costing tool.

***WHO Guide To Cost-effectiveness Analysis*** is a practical guide on how to conduct generalized cost-effectiveness analysis in the health sector.

## QUESTION 7: IS THE PROGRAMME OR POLICY COST EFFECTIVE?

While simulation exercises can give a sense of policy or programme impact, and costing provides an estimate of resources needed, it can be important for policy makers to understand both aspects together. In other words, how cost effective a programme is compared to other programmes.

There are several ways to undertake this analysis:

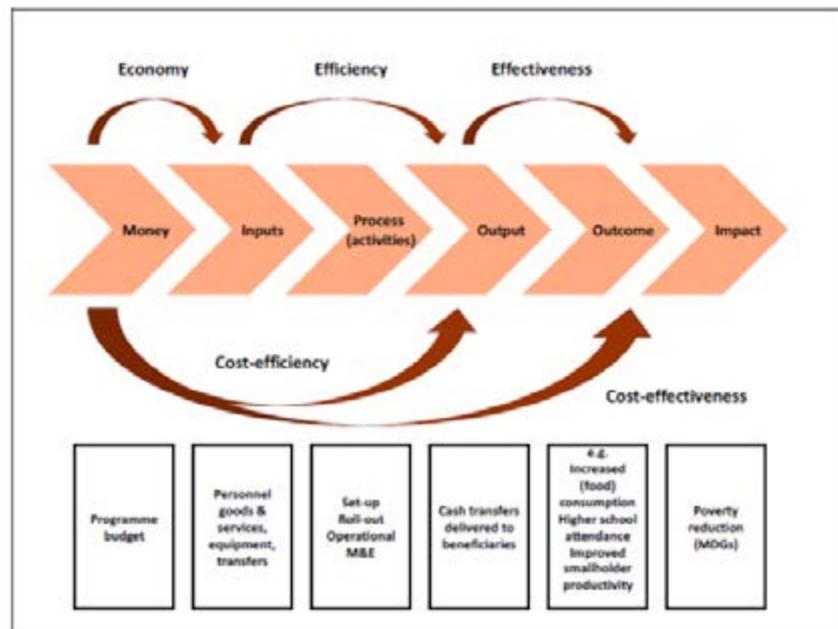
**Cost-efficiency analysis** examines how well the inputs are converted into outputs. This could be measured by cost per unit of output, or the ratio of total programme cost to value of the outputs. For example: how much did it cost to distribute a livelihood support package?

**Cost-effectiveness analysis** asks if the outputs are achieving the outcomes. Here, the analysis reveals how much it costs to achieve defined outcomes, for example: how much investment in a livelihood programme can reduce monetary child poverty rate by 1 per cent?

**Cost-benefit analysis** looks at the total amount of cost as a share of outcome in money terms. It can only be applied when the outcomes can be quantified monetarily. The result will show how much return (in monetary terms) is accrued by spending one dollar on a project.

Combining the cost and impact aspects of programmes and policies is certainly appealing, but the limitations of each approach (as outlined in the sections above) as well as the time and investment required to bring the two together should be recognised. Where such analysis does answer key policy maker questions, some challenges and considerations when undertaking these approaches (building on Hodges et al. 2011) are shown on facing page in Figure 4.9:

Figure 4.9: Applying the 3E framework to analyse VfM in cash transfers



SOURCE: HODGES ET AL. (2011)

**Not all impacts are measurable (even in the short-term).** When some of the costs or resources are shared with other programmes, it is difficult to attribute the costs to a single intervention and this should be made clear in analysis and recommendations. On the impact side, while some outcomes can be measured quantitatively, others are harder to quantify (for example reduction in discrimination).

**Not all mid- and long-term impacts are measurable.** Usually, programmes and policies have long-term impact beyond short-term poverty reduction. Some of the dynamic tools outlined above can help give a sense of longer term impact. For an example see 'Making the investment case for social protection' under resources.

**The analysis is more complicated for systems rather than individual policies or programmes.** There is an increasing focus in supporting system building, including social protection, child protection and health systems. However, the comprehensive nature of the support makes it more difficult to assess the cost-effectiveness or efficiency broad programmes. Some guidance has been developed to adapt existing programme evaluations to systems evaluations – for an example, DFID has published guidance to measure value for money for social transfer programmes and for social protection systems (see Figure 4.9). More details for both are available in resources.

While this combined analysis could effectively be undertaken at the programme design phase, including it as part of regular monitoring and evaluation will allow the updating of the cost effectiveness of programmes over time.

**KEY STEPS AND CONSIDERATIONS:**

STEPS	ACTIVITIES	CONSIDERATIONS
<b>Step 1</b>	Decide the scope of the analysis and policy options.	<p>What are the policy options of interest? Are the policymakers onboard?</p> <p>What is the theory of change?</p> <p>Which analytical approach is feasible and most relevant to your policy context: cost-efficiency, cost-effectiveness or cost-benefit?</p> <p>Can the outcomes be quantified in general, and also in monetary terms?</p>
<b>Step 2</b>	Calculate the impact side.	<p>For cost-efficiency: what is the output in quantitative terms?</p> <p>For cost-effectiveness: what is the impact in quantitative terms?</p> <p>For cost-benefit: what is the impact in monetary terms? How do you evaluate the outcomes in money terms?</p>
<b>Step 3</b>	Calculate the cost side.	<p>To the extent possible, how much does it cost to finance each policy options? (see the section on costing above). Is it possible to calculate the long-term cost?</p>
<b>Step 4</b>	Analyse the results.	<p>Combining the results from step 2 and 3, what are the policy options that are appealing?</p> <p>Are there any elements that could not be included in the analysis?</p> <p>During implementation – how did the assumptions and actual figures change?</p>

**TIMELINE:**

- Assuming that the simulation and costing analysis is already done, combining the two with additional analysis could take one to two weeks. The whole process (including costing and simulation) could take anywhere from a month to one year depending on the scope and the political process.

**DATA:**

- The data will come from the estimation of costs and impacts outlined in earlier questions. In addition to total cost of the programmes, each analysis requires specific information:
  - An analysis of efficiency requires information about outputs (what was provided and to whom?)
  - An analysis of effectiveness requires information about outcomes (what were the impact of the programmes/policies on child poverty reduction?)
  - Measuring benefit requires information about outcomes in monetary terms (how can the impact translate into monetary terms?)

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:**

- Skills and experience in basic computation in Excel or similar software.
- In addition to the skills and data that applied for impact simulation and costing, knowledge and experience of different methodologies for combining the two.

**RESOURCES:**

***DFID's Approach to Value for Money*** explains the essence of the three approaches (cost-efficiency, cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit) in general.

***Measuring and maximising value for money in social transfer programmes*** is a guide to comparing cost and impact on cash transfer programmes. ***Measuring and maximising value for money in social protection systems*** is an accompanying guide to the above for the system.

***Comparative Cost-Effectiveness Analysis to Inform Policy in Developing Countries: A General Framework with Applications for Education*** discusses application of cost-effectiveness analysis using evidence from randomized control trials, with a range of examples from its application in education field.

***Making the Investment Case for Social Protection*** provides an overview of methodologies, findings and challenges in developing evidence for the cost-effectiveness of social transfers.



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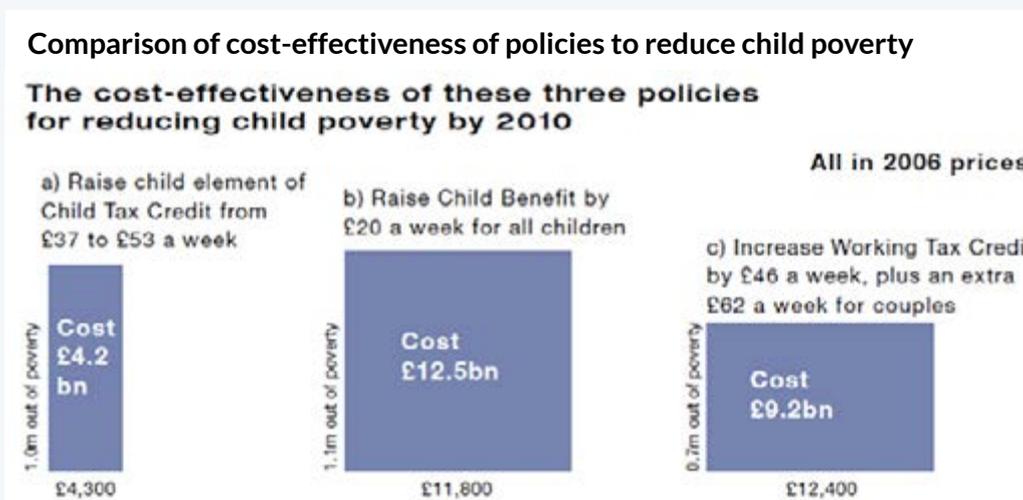


## United Kingdom

### Comparing the simulated impacts and costs of different policies to reduce child poverty

After the UK government announced its vision of ending child poverty in the UK and created a set of child poverty targets, a group of experts gathered to produce a report to analyse the causes of child poverty and various factors to reduce it. The report conducted a modelling exercise to understand what was needed to meet the targets. The study ran a microsimulation model to first project what current policies could do to reduce future levels of child poverty, then examined how different new policies could accelerate progress.

The simulation model projected the distribution of income, and thus the relative poverty rate, based on forecasts of demographic and economic trends and different design of tax and benefit policies. It was limited to modelling policy changes whose impact on income could be reasonably quantified and thus did not include policies where projections would be more complex, such as raising the education level of the next generation of parents. The model also does not account for dynamic moves of individuals, moving in and out of poverty and rather provides a static snapshot at given time.



The findings from the simulation exercise showed that the present policies (including a tax credit, child benefit and welfare to work policies) would only reduce the child poverty rate to 21.4 per cent by 2010, falling short from the target of 13 per cent in 2010. Changes in three individual policies, namely child tax credit, child benefit and working tax credit, were then compared in both the impact size and the cost. The above figure summarizes the findings, where the width of bar shows cost per child taken out of poverty and the height shows the number of children taken out of poverty.

The comparison indicated that improving the child tax credit was the most cost-effective single mechanism, as the modelled change could almost reach the target at the cost of 4.2 billion pounds, while to achieve the same results would cost three times as much if achieved by raising the child benefit. Similarly, an increase in working tax credit would cost more than double the estimate to increase child tax credit while achieving less. The paper then discusses combining different policies into a package to meet the child poverty targets, as further explained in Milestone 5, page 201 onwards.

It is important to note that the child poverty targets have since been replaced by the new UK government, and the recommendations of the analysis have not been taken up.

SOURCE: HIRSH (2006) WHAT WILL IT TAKE TO END CHILD POVERTY? JOSEPH ROWNTREE FOUNDATION

## QUESTION 8: HOW CAN THE GOVERNMENT FINANCE THE COST?

One of the most common reasons why policy changes are difficult, even with solid evidence on impact and cost efficiency, is the argument that there is no fiscal space in the budget. While it is true that many countries are running with scarce resources, cross-country analysis shows that even in the poorest countries, there can be space to fund social programmes and policies.

Fiscal space analysis is useful in examining options to be considered in expanding fiscal space in a national context and can contribute to understanding how policies and programmes can be financed. The results can be applied to any type of intervention and is most effective when combined with costing estimates to concretely show how the projected cost could be budgeted in the fiscal space.

Fiscal space analysis examines the current spending and revenue models to assess if there any space can be transferred or be used more efficiently, as well as exploring external options such as grants or debt.

Existing literature gives a number of recognized indicators in each area to be examined. Some cross-country studies (see resources below) provide a summary of available fiscal space, which could be a good starting point for a country-specific analysis or a cross-country comparison. For a more detailed analysis, it may be necessary to work with and obtain further information from national institutes, such as the Ministry of Finance.

Ideally, the analysis will look into potential options with immediate implications as well as implications for the future, as some options may open up fiscal space for the present but with negative future implications, while others can have the reverse effect.

## Examples of options for fiscal space:

1. **Re-allocating public expenditures** by shifting resources to higher priorities and more effective and productive programmes. Child poverty profiling may help in identifying such areas.
2. **Increasing revenues** either by overall GDP growth or by reforming the tax system and structure by introducing new taxes, increasing tax rates and improving tax administration.
3. **Expanding social security coverage and contributory revenues** has occurred in developed countries as a means to sustainably finance social protection and some developing countries are also following for formal workers.
4. **Increased aid and transfers** in the form of grants or concessional loans. This could face less political pushbacks, but may have challenges in predictability or sustainability.
5. **Eliminating illicit financial flows**, which include illegally-earned, transferred traded goods that are mispriced to avoid tariffs, wealth funnelled to offshore accounts or unreported movements of cash.
6. **Using fiscal and foreign exchange reserves.** The former is accumulated through budget surpluses, profit of state-owned companies or other government income, such as export revenues of oil and can be used by government without incurring debt. The latter is accumulated through foreign exchange market interventions by the central banks.
7. **Borrowing** from external or domestic resource or restructuring existing debt by writing off debt stock. The former will free up current fiscal space but limit future spending space, while the latter can free up the fiscal space that would otherwise be spent on future debt service obligations.
8. **Adopting a more accommodative macroeconomic framework**, which refers to expansion of government expenditure and monetary policy to promote growth and social development

SOURCES: HANDLEY (2009); ORTIZ, CUMMINS AND KARUNANETHY (2015)

To be effective, fiscal space analysis (along with many other policy questions considered in this section) need to be integrated into government process including, crucially, the budget cycle. This is considered in more detail in Milestone 5.

### **TIMELINE:**

- For simple analysis that builds on globally available data, it could take two weeks to one month. For detailed analysis, it could take two to six months, depending on scope and data availability.

- The timeline may be lengthened depending on stakeholder processes. Including experts from the Ministry of Finance in the analysis can help its quality and political support. The timing should be integrated as appropriate with the budget cycle.

**DATA :**

Macroeconomic data including:

- Data on government spending (government expenditure in general to be used in assessments such as expenditure on health, education and the military).
- Data on government revenue (such as total revenue, tax revenue amount and growth and official grants).
- Other macroeconomic indicators (such as overall fiscal balance, external debt stock, debt service, foreign reserves and inflation).

Major global databases that could be useful could include:

- The IMF world economic outlook database, regional economic reports and country analysis.
- The World Bank World Development Indicators and Global Economic Monitor.

**SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:**

- Advanced understanding of macroeconomic theories and concepts.
- Knowledge of fiscal expenditure indicators.
- Understanding of the revenue model of the government.
- Knowledge of data and other information and how to access them.
- Experience of conducting fiscal space analysis in different contexts is an advantage.
- Credibility and support of government and Ministries of Finance is crucial.

**RESOURCES:**

***Fiscal Space in Developing Countries*** is a concept paper commissioned by the Poverty Group of UNDP, assessing internal revenues for fiscal space for actions against poverty.

***Fiscal Space for Social Protection: Options to Expand Social Investments in 187 Countries*** offers a range of options to generate fiscal space for social protection with an annex that provides a list of fiscal space indicators for 187 countries.

***Fiscal Space for Strengthened Social Protection – West and Central Africa*** introduces a basic framework for policy analysis, estimation of fiscal space required for social protection, accompanied with case study in five western and central African countries.



## Additional tools to support policy and programme change

In addition to the tools introduced in this milestone, the following guides may also help in understanding other approaches that are commonly used for policy analysis.

The World Bank's ***Economic and Social Tools for Poverty and Social Impact Analysis*** is an approach to assess the distributional and social impacts of policy reforms with a particular focus on the poor and the vulnerable. The user's guide lays out the conceptual framework and 11 elements of good analysis. The Annex presents summary information of over 25 tools, which can help identifying stakeholders, assessing institutions, analysing impacts, assessing risks, and monitoring and evaluation.

UNICEF & World Bank's ***On Integrating a Child Focus into PSIA*** is a guidance note to understand the potential impacts of policy reforms on children. As such, it discusses potential child well-being outcomes, introduces methods to assess impacts on children and approaches to incorporate children's perspectives. The accompanying Resource Pack provides list of additional resources on a range of issues.

OECD's ***Poverty Impact Assessment*** was developed as a complement to PSIA and is considered as a 'light' version of PSIA given its short time frame and lower level of required resources. Five modules are intended to help ex-ante poverty impact assessment of projects, programmes and policies to reduce poverty.

UNICEF's ***Assessing the Impact of Economic Trends and Policies on Children*** covers analytical tools to identify economic trends and policies and their implications on children, ranging from empirical analysis, micro-macro simulations, social budget tracking and innovative desk reviews.

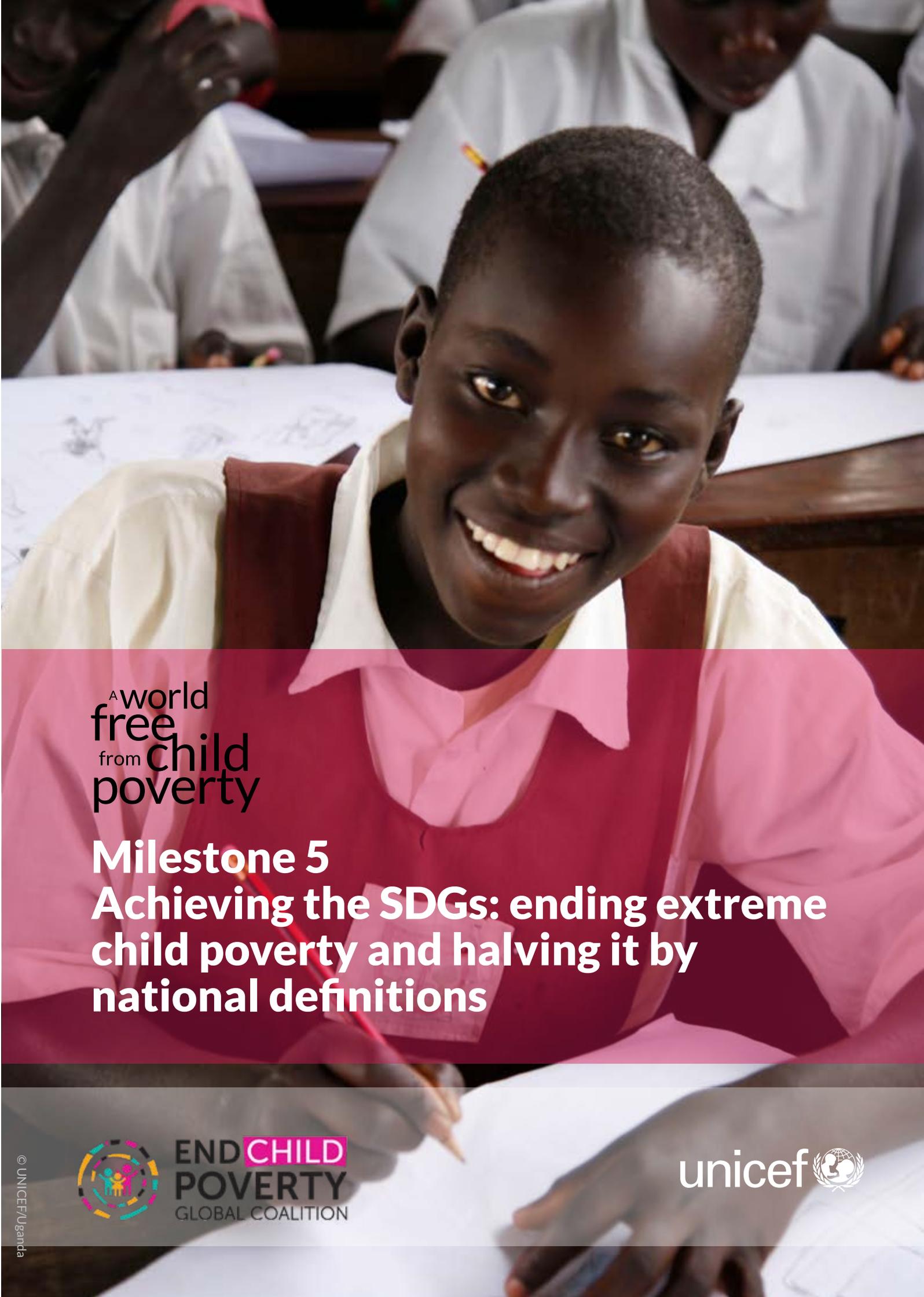
## Conclusion

To achieve the ambitious SDGs on child poverty, measurement and advocacy play a key role, but in many context they may not be enough to expand and strengthen the policies and programmes to reduce child poverty. This milestone outlined a range of policies and programmes, how to decide which one to focus on using child poverty profiling and causality analysis, and introduced eight analytical questions and tools to build evidence that can bring change at policy level. The final milestone will then look at how to bring the policies and programmes together under a comprehensive and budgeted national commitment to accelerate progress towards the SDGs.

#### **MILESTONE 4 CHECKLIST: INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- ✓ Clear understanding of the child poverty profile – which children are living in poverty, where and why.
- ✓ Clear understanding of policy environment and where engaging makes sense.
- ✓ Policy and programme analysis to support and influence policy makers on approaches to reduce child poverty.
- ✓ A change in a programme or policy, and a reduction in child poverty





A world  
free  
from child  
poverty

## Milestone 5

# Achieving the SDGs: ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions



END CHILD  
POVERTY  
GLOBAL COALITION

unicef 



# Milestone 5

## Achieving the SDGs: ending extreme child poverty and halving it by national definitions



### KEY MESSAGES

- Establishing a clear national commitment to end child poverty in key documents can help ensure the SDGs on child poverty are truly committed.
- Implementing an integrated package of policies and programmes is essential to reach the goals. Approaches to building this package will vary greatly by context.
- Engagement in the budget process can be important to make sure that activities in the plans are budgeted and implemented.
- A plan is the start, not the end: monitoring if a country is on track to achieve the goals and feeding back on what changes are needed is crucial.

Through the SDGs, countries around the world have agreed to the goals of ending extreme child poverty and halving the proportion of children living in poverty in all its dimensions by national definitions. Towards achieving this goal this guide has taken a journey from building national support to focus on child poverty; establishing routine measurement; putting child poverty high on the national agenda through advocacy; and then influencing policies and programmes that will see child poverty reduced.

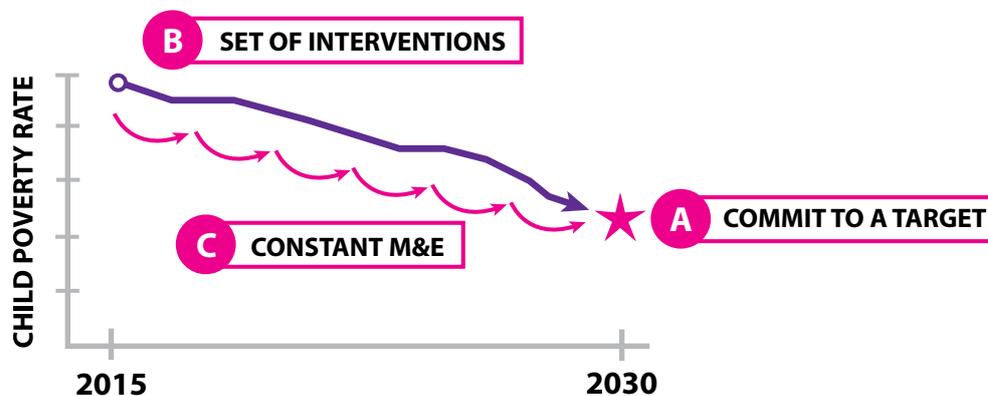
This milestone focuses on bringing this work together into a final series of steps: enshrining the SDGs on child poverty as a strongly nationally owned goal; implementation of a comprehensive package of interventions to reach the goals; and constant monitoring and evaluation to assess whether countries are on track and feedback to policy and programme changes. It pays particular attention to the roles of national plans of action which – while certainly not a panacea – are practical and proven means that can focus action towards ending child poverty. It is important to note that while

there is practice in this area, in many ways this milestone looks at the cutting edge of practice where there is less experience and fewer proven approaches. The SDGs have created new opportunities, and there is still much to learn in establishing child poverty as an integral and acted on part of national planning.

### KEY STEPS TO ACHIEVING MILESTONE 5:

- A** ENSHRINING A NATIONAL COMMITMENT TO END EXTREME CHILD POVERTY AND HALVE IT BY NATIONAL DEFINITIONS.
- B** IMPLEMENTING OF A COMPREHENSIVE PACKAGE OF INTERVENTIONS.
- C** CONSISTENT MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF PROGRESS AGAINST THE GOALS, AND ADVOCACY TO MAKE NECESSARY ADJUSTMENTS.

Figure 5.1: Three key elements of results-focused approach to child poverty reduction



## A. Enshrining a national commitment to end child poverty and halve it by national definitions

*In practice, and appropriately, it is national priorities that drive national action.*

While the SDGs have created a globally agreed mandate to monitor and respond to child poverty, with 169 targets, some targets and indicators may not receive equal attention. In practice, and appropriately, it is national priorities that drive national action. Accordingly, reiterating a national commitment to child poverty targets can help ensure focused and sustained action. This section first considers the importance and form of a national target, and then considers some of the ways targets can be integrated into appropriate national plans.

### NATIONAL TARGETS ON CHILD POVERTY

Including a national commitment to end child poverty in a leading national framework or plan can:

- Help ensure that child poverty is actively acted on, rather than passively reported;
- Create a high level political opportunity to discuss the importance of child poverty and strategies to achieve the targets;
- Form a basis to advocate for increased action and funding; and
- Be the foundation for monitoring of progress towards the goals and reviews of how strategies need to be adjusted.

A pre-requisite for including these measures is agreed national child poverty measures (as outlined in Milestone 2). In circumstances where measurement is not already underway, including a target in a national plan may be a catalyst to establishing routine measurement. Following the SDGs it is important to include a 2015 baseline for the following indicators:

- Reducing to zero the proportion of children living under \$1.90 a day (where relevant).
- Halving the proportion of children living in monetary poverty by the national (monetary) poverty line.
- Halving the proportion of children living in multidimensional poverty by national definitions.

In addition to having the above targets on child poverty, some countries may choose to have more specified sub-targets, building on the child poverty profile. These may include:

- Specific targets for particularly disadvantaged groups (such as by age group, ethnicity, or linguistic groups);
- Sub-regional targets; and
- Targets or a specific focus on groups of children that may not be effectively captured by routine child poverty measures (such as children living in institutions, children living on the streets, migrant children and children with disabilities).



## INTEGRATING CHILD POVERTY TARGETS AND PLANS OF ACTION IN RELEVANT NATIONAL PLANS

A crucial question is where to enshrine child poverty targets (as well as the plans of action that follow in the next section) to ensure traction. The best approach will be very context specific, but will often involve engaging with some form of national development plan. Such plans are certainly no panacea – not only do they require significant work but outcomes are uncertain, and even where including child poverty feels like a job done, there is a risk they will not get real traction.

***Despite their challenges, such plans are a clear articulation of national political will at the highest level, and can offer unique opportunities.***

But if there is a consensus on the role of national plans it is perhaps akin to Winston Churchill's views on democracy: they may be the worst approach to ensure progress, except for all the other ones. Despite their challenges, such plans are a clear articulation of national political will at the highest level, and can offer unique opportunities. National plans can provide a rare opportunity to trigger response to child poverty from different sectors, serve as a basis to justify increased budget allocation and be used to monitor implementation.

There are a variety of ways in which countries outline their national commitments and support them with clear proposed actions. From the perspective of integrating child poverty issues, two broad approaches can be considered: a general national development or poverty reduction plan; or a specific plan for child poverty or child rights.

For some countries where there is enough support and recognition of child poverty, a standalone strategy or plan on child poverty may work effectively. A country may also have a ministry with a focus on children who can lead and develop rights-based frameworks to end child poverty. In countries where the legislature is strong and supportive of child poverty, passing a Child Poverty Act or similar can provide a strong legal commitment.

However, there is a risk with standalone approaches that they are sidelined from processes that are truly driving national development. In other contexts, integrating child poverty targets and plans of action as part of National Development Plans and or Poverty Reduction Plans can more effectively mainstream child poverty as part of overall national planning.

What is feasible and most effective will vary by context. Table 5.1 looks in more detail at some characteristics and processes of the two approaches and Table 5.2 highlights two country examples.

**Table 5.1: Comparison of general and child specific plans**

	General plans for economic development or poverty reduction	Child specific plans, legislation or frameworks
<b>Overview</b>	Broadly defines a country's agenda for economic development or overall reduction in poverty. This could include National Development Plans or Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan.	Documents with specific focus on child-related issues. Some may be strategies and action plans to directly address child poverty, while others may set up a national framework to protect child rights, or pass an Act or law on child rights or child poverty.
<b>Stakeholders</b>	<p>Lead agencies may include Ministry of Planning or Economic Development or Ministry of Finance. Some countries establish a separate Commission. Through the process, the Cabinet, sector ministries, parliament, private sector, civil society and youth are often consulted for both the overall plan and sector specific plans and budgets.</p> <p>A subnational planning and consultation process will involve the Ministry of Local Government, provincial or district administration, other local institutions/societies to develop subnational plans and budgets.</p> <p>Depending on context, UNDP, the World Bank and/or IMF are among the leading development partners throughout the process in many contexts.</p>	<p>The process could be led by the ministry responsible for children's issues, a council on children comprised of experts and representatives of concerned ministries.</p> <p>In some contexts civil society organizations and/or international organizations may also provide financial or technical support. Civil society and youth are also often consulted in their development.</p>
<b>Process</b>	<p>The process – from putting together a task force to the official adoption of the plan – may broadly include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formulation of the taskforce, workplan, and thematic working groups.</li> <li>- Review of the previous plans and current situation.</li> <li>- Drafting of the targets, priority areas and strategy.</li> <li>- Consultation at national and subnational level through workshops.</li> <li>- Approval and dissemination of the plan.</li> </ul>	The plans and frameworks are formulated through a consultative process similar to the national development plans, involving ministries at national and subnational level, NGOs working on child rights, academia and in developing countries, and the development partners. Children and young people should also be involved.
<b>Timeline</b>	Approximately 2-5 years	Approximately 1-3 years
<b>Opportunities</b>	It presents an opportunity to bring sector-wide actions together to approach child poverty in a comprehensive way. Also, as a high-level strategy and document for the overall country, it could have dominant influence on the budget allocation, and many eyes ranging from civil society to development partners.	While approaches and languages may vary, specific plans on child poverty or child rights offer an opportunity to set specific outcome targets, bring cross-sectoral actors together, reflect voices of children and youth directly to policymaking and gain commitment from the government.
<b>Challenges</b>	These are highly political contested processes and mainstreaming child poverty in the crowded field with many actors and agendas can be challenging. Strong political support (see Milestone 3) can be essential, including making the case for the national benefits of investing in children.	Child-specific plans may not have the necessary force to bring all the line ministries together or drive necessary budget changes or on the ground implementation.
<b>Resources</b>	<p><i>Mainstreaming Poverty-Environment Linkages into National Planning Process</i> is a practical handbook that provides guidance on the entry points and potential activities to influence policy process. While the handbook emphasizes link to environment issues, the approaches could still be relevant for child poverty advocates.</p> <p><i>PRSP sourcebook</i> – while Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) are no longer required for concessional loans or debt reduction from IMF or the World Bank, the sourcebook provides great insights on key elements of poverty reduction plans.</p>	European Commission recommendation on <i>Investing in Children: breaking the cycle of disadvantage</i> offers principles of long-term framework to address child poverty (although more relevant for mid- and high-income countries.)

Table 5.2: Country approaches to general and child-specific plans

	A general approach (South Africa)	Child-specific Act (UK)
<b>The plan</b>	National Development Plan 2030 - Our Future – Make it work	Child Poverty Act 2010
<b>Leading Agency</b>	National Planning Commission (NPC) under the Presidency (26 people, majority from outside government, with different expertise).	The Child Poverty Unit of the government supports ministers in meeting their child poverty targets.  The Social Mobility and Child Poverty Commission was set up to independently monitor the progress of government and others.
<b>Background</b>	NPC was appointed by the President in 2010 and published a Diagnostic Report a year after, reviewing the achievements and shortcomings over the last 16 years. The NDP was developed based on a diagnostic after rounds of consultation with parliament, judiciary, provincial governments, unions, business and religious leaders.	The UK Government made a commitment in 1999 to halve child poverty by 2010 and eliminate it by 2020.  During the first decade, the government implemented a wide range of policies, the child poverty agenda moved beyond party politics, and the Child Poverty Act was passed in 2010 with cross-party consensus (CPAG, 2016).
<b>Key Elements</b>	Three identified priorities are: - raising employment through faster economic growth. - improving the quality of education, skills development and innovation. - building the capability of the state to play a developmental transformative role.	The Act consists of three parts: <b>Part 1:</b> National targets, strategies and reports: outline the targets, set up of the Commission, and requires the government to publish regular updates. <b>Part 2:</b> Duties of local authorities and other bodies: specify the responsibilities and activities at local level. <b>Part 3:</b> Miscellaneous and general: general interpretation and financial provisions.
<b>How child poverty is featured</b>	- There is an explicit target to eliminate income poverty from 39% to 0% by 2030. - Under social protection, one of the objectives is for all children to enjoy services and benefits aimed at facilitating access to nutrition, health care, education, social care and safety. The child grants reach approximately 13.5 million children (more than two thirds of the total child population), there are no-fee schools, free health care for pregnant women and children up to 6 years of age, free or subsidized housing as well as free municipal services for poor families. -Promoting greater opportunities for youth is an integrated theme that runs throughout the plan.	The Act imposes a legal duty on current and future governments to move towards four UK-wide targets by 2020 as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relative poverty – for less than 10% of children to live in relative low income families.</li> <li>• Combined low income and material deprivation – for less than 5% of children to live in material deprivation and low income families.</li> <li>• Absolute poverty – for less than 5% of children to live in absolute low income families.</li> <li>• Persistent poverty – for fewer children to live in relative poverty for long periods of time (three years or more).</li> </ul>
<b>Challenges/ Ways Forward</b>	Child poverty is included through actions and policies, but there is no explicit target on child poverty.	Highlighting that even legislation does not ensure sustainable focus, the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 has recently repealed most elements of the Child Poverty Act 2010 and has renamed the latter the Life Chances Act 2010. This includes removing the established targets to eliminate child poverty.  The Secretary of State remains responsible to report to Parliament on new measures, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The number of children in workless households</li> <li>• The Educational attainment of children on free school meals</li> </ul>
<b>Resources</b>	National Development Plan of South Africa	Child Poverty Act 2010 The Child Poverty Unit Consultation on child poverty measures



## HUNGARY

### Child poverty targets in the National Social Inclusion Strategy

Experiencing one of the highest gaps between general poverty rates and child poverty rates in the EU, the Government of Hungary has made a commitment to address extreme poverty, child poverty and poverty among the Roma population by adopting the National Social Inclusion Strategy (2011-2020).

The framework – agreed before the SDGs were adopted – aligned to the targets to The Europe 2020 strategy, included a specific target on the share of children living at risk of poverty, defined by the share of households with children with a disposable income below 60 per cent of national median income.

**Hungarian targets attached to the social inclusion goal of the EU 2020 Strategy**

	Current data	Target	Reduction
At-risk-of-poverty rate of households with children	16% (872,000 persons) (225,000 households)	12.8% (698,000 persons) (180,000 households)	174,000 persons (45,000 households)
Rate of individuals living in households with very low work intensity (aged between 0 and 60)	10.3% (1,018,000 persons)	8.2% (814,000 persons)	204,000 persons
Rate of people living in severe material deprivation	17.9% (1,771,000 persons)	14% (1,417,000 persons)	354,000 persons

Source of data: EUROSTAT, Central Statistical Office

The plan also sets monitoring indicators to ensure progress, such as:

- the poverty rate before and after social transfers;
- proportion of children attending day care;
- number and rate of early school-leavers;
- difference between educational qualifications of parents and children;
- disaggregation of child poverty rate between Roma and non-Roma population, and by jobless households.

While the high priority given to child poverty in the National Strategy has received positive reactions among child poverty advocates, challenges remain in implementation and policy response. The EU Network of Independent Experts on Social Inclusion, for example, are concerned about the relatively short time frame of the projects in the plan and the low level of social benefits related to employment and childcare. Their report thus suggests increased investment and longer time frames, including increases in social transfer amounts and the use of impact assessments to assess the appropriateness of interventions.

## INVOLVING CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING PROCESS

Participation of children and youth in policymaking processes is not only their right as set out in the CRC, but can greatly contribute to improving policy outcomes. The direct experience of children and youth can bring their real experiences to the attention of policy makers, increasing both the focus on child poverty and the quality of responses in final documents.

Children and young people can also play a role in implementation, particularly in community-level projects, or contribute to monitoring and planning by assessing the achievements and remaining challenges. Moreover, various projects have seen benefits to the involved children and young people themselves, through increased confidence, motivation, skills and knowledge.

Save the Children has engaged children and youth in the PRSP processes in Vietnam and Honduras through various large-scale consultations. In Vietnam, more than 400 children and young people participated in three phases – pre-planning, feedback to the draft plan and progress review of the PRSP. Their voices had concrete impact on the outcome document. For example, since some participants raised the issue of unregistered migrant families in the capital who lacked healthcare, education and social welfare services, the procedures around the migrant population were changed. In Honduras, 3,000 children and young people were invited to express their views and experience on child labour, which contributed to child poverty being prioritized in the PRSP and to link child labour policies to poverty reduction strategies.

As in any consultation processes, the environment and the procedures need to be carefully designed for an effective conversation. Experiences suggest the importance of informing the participants fully about the process, goals and the context; giving sufficient time for participants to freely express their views; including the most marginalized children in the discussion; preparing adults to respect children's views; and following up with the participants about the outcomes and next steps.

### Further reading:

O'Malley (2004) *Children and Young People Participating in PRSP Process*. Save the Children

DFID-CSO Youth Working Group (2010) *Youth Participation in Development: A Guide for Development Agencies and Policy Makers*

## B. Implementing a comprehensive package of interventions.

### Building a comprehensive package to address child poverty

Milestone 4 outlined a range of policies and programmes that can address multidimensional and monetary child poverty. While some of the tools outlined can give information on the impact of particular approaches, the next question is: what is the mix of policies and programmes that can see the end of extreme child poverty and child poverty by national definitions halved by 2030?

As outlined in Milestone 4, while there is a strong relationship between multidimensional and monetary poverty, there are also significant differences in the responses that can address them. Accordingly, the package of policies and programmes that can address them will also vary.

There are essentially two approaches to identifying a comprehensive package of policies and programmes in each area. **The first are participatory approaches that bring stakeholders together to discuss and collectively agree on how an appropriate package can be an effective way to make sure expertise and ideas are not missed, as well as build ownership.** The methods of bringing this information together into an overall and agreed package will vary, but could include stakeholder workshops including policy makers as well as experts on children and child poverty (including children and young people).

Milestone 1 and Milestone 4 (as part of the problem tree analysis) outline methodologies for bringing stakeholders together. The tools described in this guidance, particularly in Milestone 4, can provide the analytical inputs to be the foundation of discussions, including:

- **The child poverty profile**, for both monetary and multidimensional poverty, provides a clear sense of the children facing the greatest challenges: if they are part of certain groups, if they live in certain parts of the country, and – in the case of multidimensional child poverty – if there are particular deprivations driving their poverty. (Milestone 4, pages 148-156)
- The **drivers of child poverty** can also identify key policy areas that need to be addressed and included in a comprehensive policy and programme approach – this includes statistical and ‘problem tree’ type approaches. (Milestone 4, pages 157-160)
- **Information on the impacts** of particular policies and programmes, including national and international evidence. (Milestone 4, pages 179-183)

- The **mapping of existing policies and programmes** can provide an overview of what is in place and where there are gaps. (Milestone 4, pages 164-168)

**The second approach is to use an evidence-based statistical exercise to simulate and design a set of interventions that would see extreme child poverty ended and halved by national definitions.**

As **multidimensional child poverty measurement** is a statistical exercise in bringing together key deprivations it is conceptually possible to simulate the changes in particular deprivations, that would see multidimensional child poverty halved. However, there is currently little if any practice in this area and, perhaps more importantly, even where done the simulation would show which deprivations need to be reduced but not how they would be reduced by particular interventions (see Box 5.1).

As **monetary child poverty** focuses on a single aspect of child poverty which can be directly addressed by some interventions, simulating policy responses to addressing it is more feasible and practiced. The example from the United Kingdom outlines a practical approach to this, and the Georgia case study (see Box 4.7 on pages 194-5) outlines another example addressing a similar problem.

It is important to note, however, that simulations tend to focus on policy responses to monetary child poverty that have quantifiable impacts such as cash transfers and tax credits. Longer-term investments, such as investment in the health and education of future parents, could have significant impact, but are much more difficult to model as the impact does not occur immediately. Similarly, social welfare services could also be critical to address some aspects of child poverty, yet predicting their direct impact on income is extremely challenging, if not impossible. Likewise, methodologies to assess the impact of childcare or labour market policies are still not established. These are technical constraints to modelling and thus should not result in exclusion of long-term interventions or social support in the package.

Regardless of the approach in designing a package to address child poverty, there are some common considerations:

- Including the package of policies and programmes in key national documents such as national development plans outlined in the previous section can help establish commitment and action. The level of detail that can be included will depend on the plan.
- While recognising the significant distinctions between the package of interventions to address multidimensional and monetary poverty, they may be best integrated under a holistic national approach to address child poverty.
- Even where an optimal package can be designed, political considerations – as outlined in Milestone 3 – will be crucial in determining what in practice can be most effectively moved forward.
- Monitoring, evaluation and feedback (covered in the last section of this Milestone) is crucial. However thoughtfully a package is created, any set of interventions need to be reviewed and adjusted over time.

BOX 5.1

## Building a package for multidimensional child poverty – to simulate or guesstimate?

Child poverty profiling can point to geographic areas where multidimensional child poverty is high, where progress is stalling, groups of children that are being left behind and deprivations which may be driving multidimensional child poverty. Triangulating this information and assessing whether sectoral responses are responding to this situation of child poverty is a realistic means to create a targeted package of policies to address multidimensional poverty which can be periodically assessed based on progress. In Mexico, for example, the multidimensional poverty indicator is linked directly to progress in sectors and triggers shifts in government focus to see multidimensional poverty reduced.

But is there an approach to simulate the progress different actions would have towards halving multidimensional child poverty by 2030? This is an area where we are not aware of global practice. A way to approach this would be to look forward and simulate options for which deprivations would have to fall, by how much and in what areas to see child poverty halved.

This offers some interesting options, but with some important caveats. Firstly, such an analysis could create potential conflict between its conclusions and other SDGs which specify targets for deprivations included in a multidimensional child poverty analysis. Secondly, while it can identify the reductions that are needed in each deprivation, it doesn't address which interventions would achieve them. As Milestone 4 outlined, these can be complex questions, although in some sectors approaches are well evolved in simulating down to the level of the programmes that could achieve success.

So for achieving the SDG of multidimensional poverty as a whole, the simulation of policy packages remains, for now, more an aspiration than a practised reality. Building a platform of action in concert with other sectors based on the multidimensional child poverty profile may remain the common approach, a new approach to simulation may emerge.

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**Further resources:** approaches to simulating which policies and programmes would achieve success in sectors include:

The Simulations for Equity in Education project, a collaboration between UNICEF and the World Bank, which helps countries identify cost-effective strategies for reaching children who are excluded from or underserved by education systems. The centrepiece of the initiative is the user-friendly Excel model that projects costs of interventions to reach different groups of excluded children and improvements in school outcomes as a result of those interventions. [http://www.unicef.org/education/bege\\_SEE.html](http://www.unicef.org/education/bege_SEE.html)

EQUIST, a web-based strategic planning, modeling and monitoring tool to support health systems strengthening in developing and middle-income countries. It was developed to assist the global health community in determining equity issues affecting maternal, newborn and child health (MNCH) in a more systematic and evidence-based way. The tool guides users to work through options for reducing MNCH disparities, design cost-effective health strategies that will lead to more resilient health systems, and develop equity-focused policies and operational plans for improving the coverage of quality MNCH services. The tool can be used to analyse financial barriers to utilization of health services. <http://www.equist.info/>



## United Kingdom

### Simulation of different policy packages to meet the child poverty target

The child poverty study in the UK examined the cost-effectiveness of several policy options against the child poverty goal, as well as the preferred combination of them as a package (for details about the analysis of individual policy options, see Milestone 4, page 210).

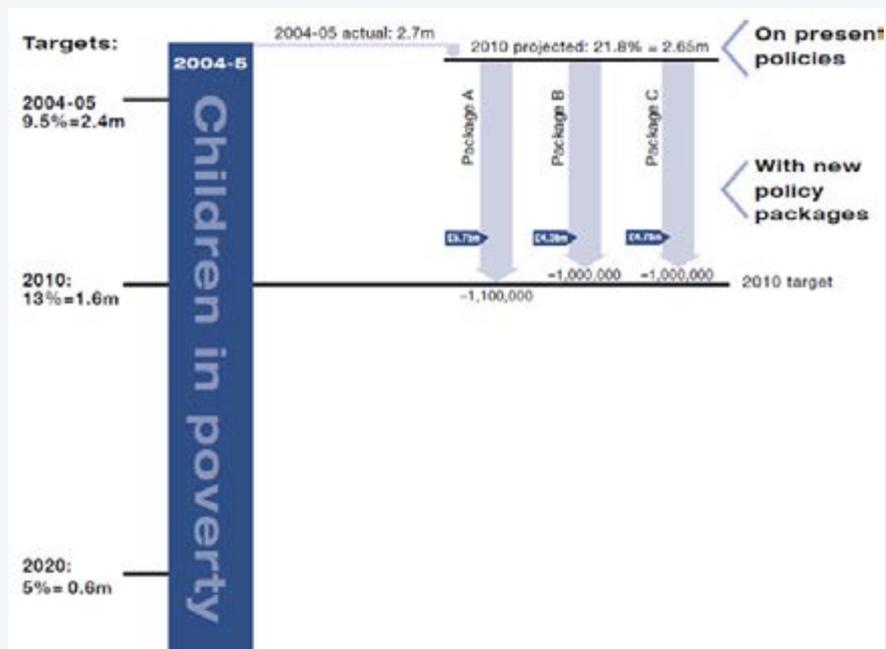
The modelling exercise first projected that the existing policies were clearly insufficient to meet the targets and that raising the child element of Child Tax Credit is the most cost-effective single policy measure to meet the target. Yet, concerned with the distortions that an unbalanced investment in one particular option could create, different policy packages were modelled.

Package A raises the child tax credit, child benefit and working tax credit. Package B raises only the Child Tax Credit but uses two different elements to extend support to large families. Package C combines raises in the Child Tax Credit with increases in the Child Benefit for large families.

The modelling shows that all three packages can achieve the targets under the cost of £ 4-5 billion or 0.3 per cent of GDP, and among them package B might be most cost-effective. The paper thus argues that financing a policy package to halve child poverty rate by 2010 goal is feasible with political commitment.

It is important to note that the child poverty targets have since then been replaced and the recommendations of the analysis have not been taken up.

Projected fall in child poverty 2004-10



## Public finance for children: ensuring plans are budgeted and implemented

To move from developing a package of policies and programmes to address child poverty to seeing them implemented, it is essential they become part of government budgeting. In some circumstances, advocacy and support for reducing child poverty may create sufficient political traction for budgets to change. In other situations, focused and detailed engagement on the budget process may be required.

There are extensive methods, tools and experiencing in public finance for children (PF4C). This section will give an overview of these approaches, address challenges in budgeting long-term plans and frameworks and outlines some key entry points for budget engagement. It draws from the global learning programme under development by UNICEF and Oxford Policy Management (which is not yet publically available) as well as other published guidance referenced throughout the section.

### UNDERSTANDING THE BUDGET PROCESS

Figure 5.2 provides a general overview of the budget process, common across many countries. The preparation of budget follows national strategic planning and underlines the importance of including child poverty in a national development plan.

FIGURE 5.2: The Budget Cycle



SOURCE: PIJUAN AND PICANYOL, 2016, ADAPTED FROM WORLD BANK (1998)

The budget preparation process can then be broken down into three smaller steps.

- First, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) calculates the total amount of resources available for the upcoming budget and then defines expenditure ceilings for the line ministries in consultation with the President or Prime Minister and cabinet.
- Then, the work is handed over to the line ministries to prepare and submit draft estimates, describing how they plan to allocate the funding within the given ceiling, following the guidelines provided by the MoF.

- Finally, in the frequent cases where the requests of the line ministries request exceeds the provided ceiling there are negotiations between the line ministries and MoF. Following the negotiation, the finalized budget is consolidated into the budget law for submission to and approval, which is given by Parliament in most countries.

For more information on the budget process and engagement in the cycle, see *How to engage in Budget Cycles and Processes to Leverage Government Budgets for Children* (Brown 2016).

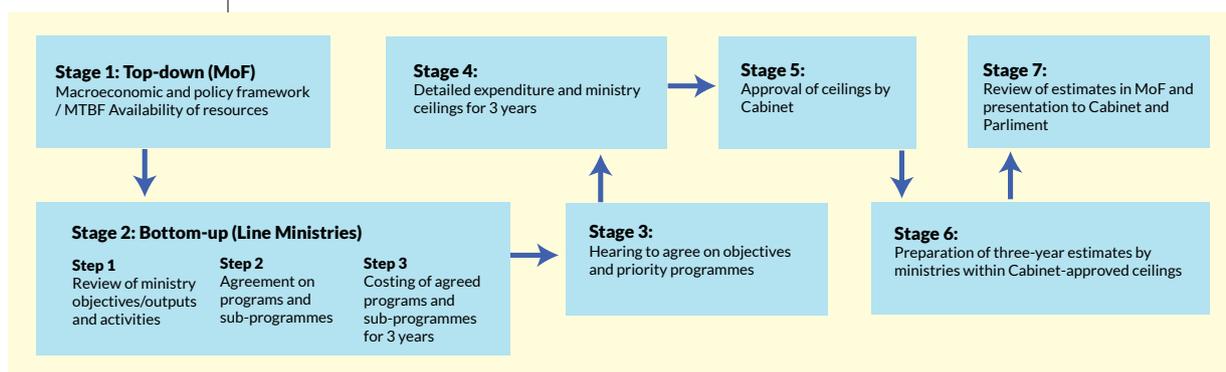
### THE CHALLENGES OF BUDGETING LONG TERM PLANS

In practice, securing the budget to implement a child poverty reduction plan or strategy can be challenging. To start with, the preparation of the budget does not start from scratch. Spending prior to the adoption of a new national plan usually provides a baseline, meaning that additionally financing requirements can be crowded out by ongoing demands and activities.

This challenge is accentuated by the ways plans and budgets are structured. National plans generally set out targets at outcome levels (for example, reducing the child poverty rate) and then specific programmes to achieve the targets. Budgets, however, are very often organized along administrative and input lines such as salaries, fuel and travel (known as output-based budgeting). While output-based budgets can achieve broad programme goals, they may be less amendable to change towards higher level objectives and are not easily aligned to monitoring evaluation and alteration based on if the programme objectives are being met.

There are ways to address these challenges. First, the Medium Term Budgeting Framework (MTBF) is one of the most widely implemented public finance management tools of the last 20 years, designed precisely to balance the bottom-up needs from annual expenditure needs by sectoral ministries with the long term strategies outlined in national development plans. Under the MTBF, the expenditure ceilings, the cost estimates and the reconciliation process are all done for medium-term rather than for annual spending. This makes it easier to finance the multi-year policies and programmes specified in the national plans or strategies. Figure 5.3 outlines the general process of MTBF and a link to more detailed guidance is provided below.

Figure 5.3: An Illustrative Process of MTBF



SOURCE: PIJUAN AND PICANYOL (2016)

Secondly, towards addressing the challenges of output based budgeting there is a growing push towards programme based budgeting. Under this approach, the budget is classified first by the outcomes, then by the outputs or services to achieve the outcomes, finally followed by the necessary inputs to deliver the outputs. An example budget will look like Table 5.3.

**Table 5.3: An example of programme budgeting**

Programme	Basic Education
Outcomes	Universal basic education by 2018
Objectives	98% basic enrolment by 2016 60% teachers skilled in new curriculum
Output	400 classrooms rehabilitated 900 teachers trained in new curriculum
Activity	Organize 10 teachers training
Input	People, equipment, money

Source: Pijuan and Picanyol (2016)

While a number of countries have adopted a MTBF and are making a shift towards programme budgeting, it should be noted that changing the budget management process and system can be a lengthy process and, so far, there is no conclusive evidence that the adoption of such framework immediately improves the spending efficiency or macroeconomic stability. For more details of such reforms, including lessons learnt and systematic reviews, please see:

ODI (2015) *[Linking Policies and Budgets: Implementing Medium Term Expenditure Frameworks In a PRSP Context](#)*

PFM Results Blog, *[Getting Performance Budgeting Right](#)*

## ENTRY POINTS TO INFLUENCING THE BUDGET

The budget preparation process is a crowded stage with many stakeholders, agendas and competing interests, and having strong partners and advocates for programming to address child poverty is crucial. These should include partners in relevant line ministries driving programmes towards their budget submissions, as well as MoF as they work with sectors to reach a final budget.

Depending on the particular national process other actors will also be crucial. Having strong support from parliamentarians in situations where they review and approve the budget – including through particular committees such as the Budget Committee, relevant sector committees and forums or committees particularly focused on children – can lead to positive outcomes. Civil society organizations are also crucial actors in the budget process in many context in terms of monitoring and advocacy.

Building relationships with budget partners in government and outside and engaging in budget negotiations can benefit greatly from being able to provide relevant inputs and analysis. The facing page outlines three key areas where combination of evidence generation and policy advocacy may help increase attention and resource allocation to address child poverty.

1. Measuring the share of budget allocations that focuses on child poverty.
2. Making an investment case for child poverty.
3. Monitoring and tracking if budgeted items to address child poverty were spent as intended.

### 1. Measuring the share of budget allocations that focuses on child poverty

Reviewing and analysing past budget allocations may be useful in demonstrating any funding gaps and making case for increased allocation. While the monitoring and reporting of general spending is in place in many countries, a cross-sectoral analysis to identify how much is spent to improve child outcomes often does not exist. This is a pressing problem as children's issues may receive lower priority and visibility in budget making processes as they lack representation.

Public finance management tools can help identify, measure and routinely report expenditure. For instance, Child-focused Public Expenditure Measurement (C-PEM) looks in detail at budget information, classifies spending by programme area, and tracks the spending through the budget cycle to report:

- (i) The size of child-focused expenditure: for example, the total amount child focused expenditure as per cent of GDP or total government spending or spending per child per year.
- (ii) Composition of child-focused expenditure: for example, percentage of total expenditure by function (such as by child rights or by ministry).
- (iii) Comparisons within and across countries: for example, comparing the size and composition across sub-regions in the country, or across comparable countries.

As such, conducting expenditure monitoring will help ensure that financial resources are directed to achieve child related objectives in national plans, as well as provide overall information on child expenditure that can be used for advocacy more broadly. In Ecuador, for example, national priorities articulated in the national strategy for equality and poverty eradication, were aligned with information from the national budget (see case study on page 238).

For more information on C-PEM, ***Child-focused Public Expenditure Measurement: A Compendium of Country Initiatives*** provides an overview of the methodology as well as 13 case studies, including an example from a high-income country.

### 2. Making an investment case for child poverty

As stressed throughout the guide, policies and programmes to address child poverty is not only a short-term relief for families living in poverty – they are also an important investment for the future and the society. They tackle various constraints that hold families from engaging in productive activities and support children's development in all its dimensions.

Making an ‘investment case’ by comparing the estimated cost and potential return can make an convincing argument to increase the budget allocation to child poverty related activities, most efficiently during the planning and budget preparation cycle. There is no single format to developing an investment case – the content will depend on what evidence is available and what the policymakers want to hear. However, investment cases are most likely to include evidence and arguments that have been introduced throughout the guide (Table 5.4).

**Table 5.4: Making an investment case for child poverty**

Key components of an investment case	Relevant milestones/sections	Example from ‘Ending child poverty right now’ by the US Children’s Defense Fund
Making the Case	M1 – 7 reasons why child poverty matters M2 and 3 – Child poverty measurement and advocacy	Chapter 1. Poverty Hurts Children and Our Nation’s Future
Package of Interventions, with potential simulated impacts	M4 – How much impact will programmes and policies have on the child poverty rate?	Chapter 2. How to Reduce Child Poverty Right Now
Calculating the Estimated Costs	M4 – What are the costs of creating a new programme or scaling up the existing one?	Chapter 3. Combined Impacts and Costs
Comparing the estimated Cost and Returns	M4 – Are the programmes/policies cost effective?	
Policy Recommendations	M3 – What are the solutions? M5 – Building a comprehensive package to address child poverty	Chapter 4. Conclusion and Recommendations

Given the complexity of calculating costs and returns, investment cases have been made on particular aspects of multidimensional child poverty or on monetary child poverty. The examples listed below from different areas may help understand the logic and methodologies that can then be applied to country-specific approaches:

- In the first chapter of ***The Investment Case for Education and Equity***, the wide-reaching social and economic impact of education is examined.
- ***Evidence-based interventions for improvement of maternal and child nutrition: what can be done and at what cost?*** looks at the impact and costs of ten evidence-based nutrition interventions.
- The ***Copenhagen Consensus Center’s*** publications provides a list of priorities ranked according to their costs and benefits and potential for combating the world’s greatest challenges.
- ***Ending Child Poverty Now***, a report by the Children’s Defense Fund in the US, makes a compelling case to act on child poverty by showing the package of intervention, its combined effects and costs.

### 3. Monitoring if budgeted items to address child poverty were spent accordingly

The previous two activities have focused on engagement at national policy-making. While it is critically important to influence the decision making at the central level, there may be a gap between what is planned at national level and how the money was actually spent in districts or communities.

Different tools have been developed and used to provide track the execution of budget and funds at different administrative levels. Public Expenditure Tracking Survey (PETS), for example, is a tool to trace the flow of resources from the origin to the destination to monitor if the budget was spent as planned. PETS can show leakage of funds, delays or breakdown of actual spending among other items where there is sufficient administrative and accounting resources. Such results can improve service delivery by providing actual functioning of public systems to the public and to the MoF. If there are particular sectors or public service areas where conversion of inputs to outputs may be problematic, quantitative service delivery surveys can help analyse the financial resources as well as quality of outputs at particular points of delivery. For more information on both tools, see:

- Gurkan et al. (2014) Implementing Public Expenditure tracking Surveys for Results: Lessons from a Decade of Global Experience
- Gauthier et al. (2012) Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys and Quality Service Delivery Survey Guidebook.

Finally, directly engaging with the local communities so that they are empowered to engage in monitoring and tracking of public expenditure could be effective in both reflecting the direct experiences of the families with children living in poverty and creating a transparent and accountable governance mechanisms. The potential benefits of establishing an accountability circle at community levels cannot be understated – it can potentially change how policies and programmes are planned, executed and monitored. At the same time, such activities may require extensive resources and time in order to change behaviors, knowledge and attitudes of both local authorities and community participants. Following guidance and case studies can provide further instructions and examples on how to support community-level activities to monitor and track public expenditure.

- Berthin (2011) A Practical Guide To Social Audit As A Participatory Tool To Strengthen Democratic Governance, Transparency, And Accountability.
- Aiyar and Samji (2009) Transparency and Accountability in NREGA: A Case Study of Andhra Pradesh.
- Green (2012) From Poverty to Power: How active citizens and effective states can change the world – see case study of Andhra Pradesh.



# ECUADOR

## Moving towards equality and the eradication of poverty with a national plan and budget classifiers

Ecuador has shown strong progress in recent years in prioritizing poverty and equality through establishing official multidimensional poverty measures, adopting a national strategy for equality and the eradication of poverty, and development of a budget classification system, which all have a strong focus on children and adolescents.

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- *skills to coordinate with the government and other development agencies.*
- *data, research and analytical skills on poverty and equality.*

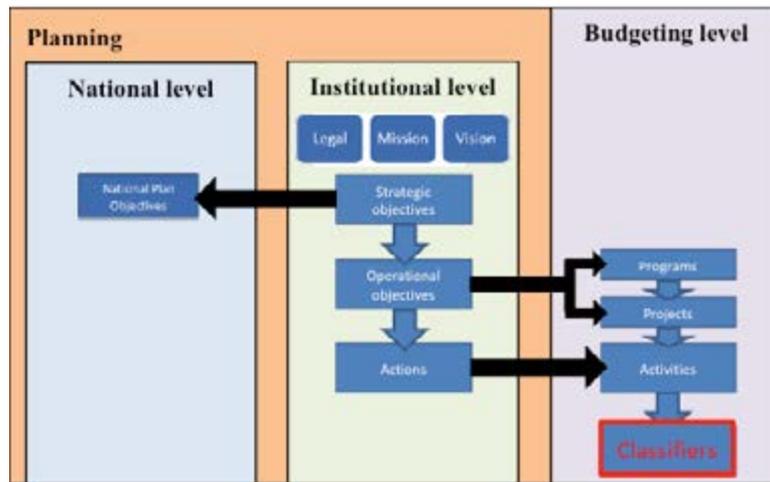
### STAKEHOLDERS

- *Interinstitutional Committee for the Eradication of Poverty*
- *Ministry of Social Development*
- *Ministry of Social and Economic Inclusion*
- *Ministry of Finance*
- *Legislative Partners*
- *National Statistical Office*
- *UNDP*
- *UN Women*
- *UNICEF*
- *ECLAC*

### THE APPROACH

1. The Secretariat of National Planning and Development (SENPLADES) undertook a study, Atlas of social and economic inequalities, to assess the poverty and disparities in the country. UN agencies participated in the consultation process and provided inputs to the analysis, where UNICEF highlighted many aspects of child poverty, including education, health, child labour, child abuse and social protection. The study was published in 2013 and provided an evidence base to prepare the National Development Plan 2013–2017.
2. UNICEF, together with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), conducted a child poverty analysis using a regional multidimensional methodology. It showed that 15 per cent of children lived in extreme poverty, and 40 per cent lived in poverty.
3. In 2014, the National Strategy for Equality and Eradication of Poverty was adopted by the Interinstitutional Committee for the Eradication of Poverty. The strategy takes a human rights approach to poverty and states the clear responsibility of the government to eradicate poverty and inequality. A multidimensional indicator was used to analyse different aspects of poverty, which included indicators related to accessing infant development programmes, elementary and high schools, coverage of social protection among children and youth, child labour and immunization.
4. The strategy sets out actions under three categories: necessity goods, productive revolution (work and employment) and protection across people's lifespans. Towards alleviating child poverty, some interventions and targets under necessity goods aim to apply the constitutional rights for all to have access to basic goods and services such as housing, health, education and water/sanitation. Under integral protection of lifespans, social protection and care services, including early childhood development, the eradication of child labour, and the expansion of social protection are included. In partnership with the National Technical Secretariat for Poverty Eradication and SENPLADES, UNICEF also supports the implementation of the poverty reduction policies, for example by raising awareness and strengthening capacities at local level.
5. In 2014, the MoF incorporated the child component to its classification system to allow an analysis of the size of social spending by categories. The classification system aims to link the planning and budgeting process (see Figure 5.4 below), and categorizes the expenditure by objectives and activities, according to the framework developed by the MoF.

### Linking planning and budgeting



Source: Consejo Nacional para la Igualdad Intergeneracional (2014)

6. The classifiers are also built into the financial management information system at the activity level. This allows routine measurement and analysis of the total amount of expenditure that was spent to reduce inequities among age groups, and the area of child rights where the expenditure occurred.
7. A recent report on the use of the budget shows that the information resulting from the budget classifiers is useful for equity reports, and policy discussion and policy decision-making, but that there is still an important gap in terms of underreporting of information when using the budget classifiers by the line ministries. Both UNICEF and UN Women plan to support the Ministry of Finance and other partners to strengthen capacities in the use of budget classifiers at national level, and promote its use by local governments.
8. In 2016, Ecuador has officially launched its national MPI. In its indicators, the index includes child rights dimensions such as 'non attendance to primary and secondary education' and 'child work and adolescent employment' as well as indicators on water and sanitation. UNICEF and UNDP supported the exchange of related MPI experiences of Colombia and Mexico.

#### FURTHER RESOURCES:

CEPAL and UNICEF (2014) Pobreza Infantil en el Ecuador

Cummins (2016) Child-focused public expenditure measurement: a compendium of country examples

Ministry of Finance (2014) Clasificador de Orientación de Gasto en Políticas de Igualdad en Infancia, Niñez y Adolescencia

## C. Consistent monitoring and evaluation of progress against the goals, and advocacy to make necessary adjustments.

Not only is there perhaps no such thing as a perfect plan, but in reality the one certainty is things do not work out as expected. Over the period of the SDGs, some approaches will flourish while others may flounder, and a range of unforeseen shocks or opportunities may arise. All this points to the crucial importance of monitoring progress towards the goals and adjusting plans to keep on track.

This section focuses on three non-exclusive approaches to achieve this, including engaging on national monitoring and evaluation frameworks, creating and supporting autonomous bodies to oversee progress, and public advocacy to maintain political focus on achieving the goals. At the heart of these approaches are two simple questions: Is the country on track to achieve child poverty goals of the SDGs? And if not, what changes are needed?

### **APPROACH 1: SDG REPORTING AND MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF NATIONAL PLANS TOWARDS THE CHILD POVERTY GOALS**

National development plans or action plans generally include a monitoring and evaluation framework, although how evaluations or reviews are carried out in practice, and the role such reviews in influencing the plan, may vary enormously.

Where child poverty is explicitly included in the plan, it can be very helpful that child poverty indicators are included among the key monitoring indicators to help ensure that any review or evaluation, at either mid- or end-point, explicitly considers the plans functioning with respect to achieving the child poverty goals. Where child poverty has not been adequately included in a National Plan, reviews and evaluation can be important moments to stress that the plan's framing is missing this vital consideration.

Mainstreaming child poverty in monitoring and evaluation activities can require intense engagement, as it is easy for the issue to fall through the cracks without active involvement of the civil society, children and parents themselves, or the government agency responsible for child welfare.

There is a number of comprehensive guides to understand the fundamentals of monitoring and evaluation activities and how to engage in them. These include:

- ***Chapter 3: Monitoring and Evaluation of the PRSP Sourcebook*** gives guidance on how to set up a poverty monitoring system with the right set of indicators, how to design and conduct impact evaluations and how to assess the implementation of overall poverty reduction strategies.
- ***16 Tools for Programming for Policy Results*** takes a step-by-step approach to results-based management. The guide introduces the theory and tools that can help define expected results, develop monitoring plans and report on results and learnings.
- ***The official website of the SDGs*** provides the latest updates on the monitoring framework of the SDGs, including global reports on the progress towards the SDGs.



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# MEXICO

## Routine evaluation of national development plan and policies using poverty measures

Mexico's multidimensional poverty index was adopted and institutionalized by the Government. This key methodology and its delivered results have become the centre of policies related to tackling and evaluating poverty.

### TIMELINE

- 15 years since the first attempt to institutionalize evaluation.

### DATA NEEDS AND EXPERTISE

- Multidimensional poverty measured every two years nationally and at state level, and five years at local level.

### STAKEHOLDERS

- High-level government stakeholders (Presidency, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Public Administration and other ministries)
- Independent statistical body.

### THE APPROACH

- 1. In 2000, the Government of Mexico institutionalized the evaluation of a federal subsidy programmes.** The new government addressed a concern among the citizens by mandating all federal programmes providing subsidies to complete an evaluation by an external and independent expert institution every year.
- 2. While the initiative helped advance the concept and practice of evaluation, the Government faced many challenges.** For example, the quality of evaluations varied across programmes, not all government officials had the capacity to supervise evaluation processes, and the use of the evaluation was minimal.
- 3. The General Law for Social Development established an independent Council for the Evaluation of Social Development Policy (CONEVAL) in 2004.** CONEVAL was given technical and administrative autonomy to undertake two major tasks: firstly to design the multidimensional poverty methodology that combines economic well-being and social rights, and secondly to regulate and undertake the evaluation of social policies.
- 4. The introduction of Mexico's multidimensional poverty methodology and national evaluation guidelines helped to enhance the quality of evaluations and increase the use of their results.** The National Evaluation Guidelines, published in April 2007, introduced a set of evaluation methods based on a log-framework. With the introduction of the multidimensional poverty methodology, all social programmes and policies were required to evaluate their impact based on this measure.
- 5. The National Development Plan 2013-18 was also measured against indicators and dimensions of the index.** The National Development Plan envisions creating an 'Inclusive Mexico' and includes specific mention and numbers of children in poverty. The plan uses indicators and dimensions of the index to measure progress against this goal. Every Minister of State is held responsible to achieving the goals under their responsible area.
- 6. Mexico's model has been adopted by other low and middle income countries.** Mexico's model and experience has been shared through visits and conferences, inspiring other developing countries to follow their model. Mexico has also been an active member of the Multidimensional Poverty Peer Network (MPPN), a South-South initiative supporting development of multidimensional poverty measures in over 40 countries.

## APPROACH 2: PUBLIC ADVOCACY ON PROGRESS TO ADDRESS CHILD POVERTY.

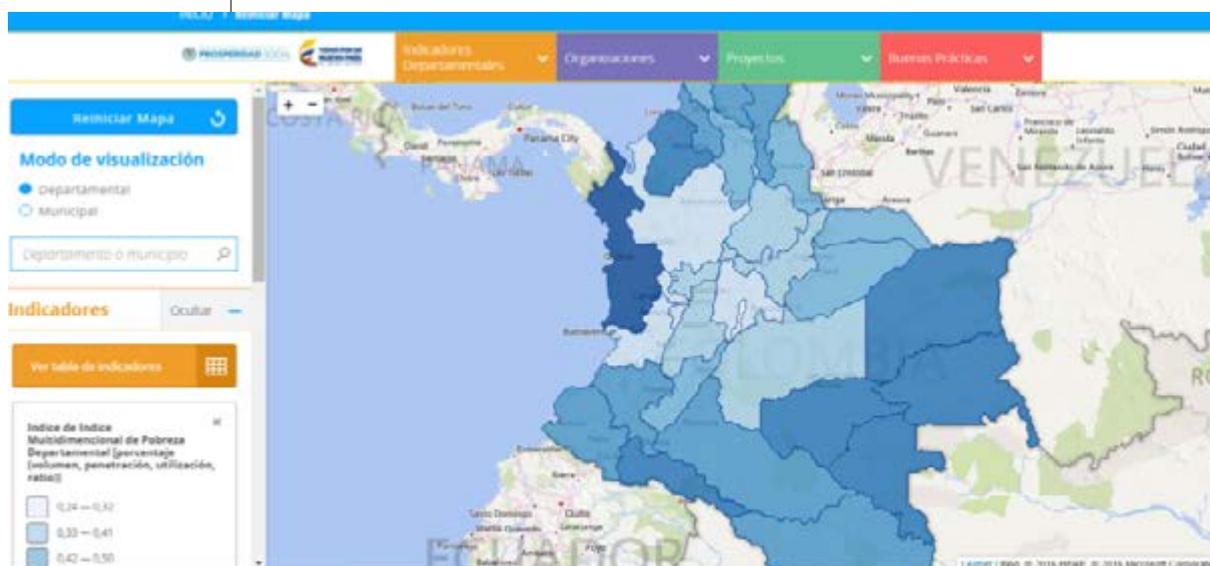
In many contexts, having public attention on whether a country is on track to achieve goals to address child poverty can compel policy maker interest and action. The process of building networks of allies and supporters often begins from the very beginning of working on child poverty, and in holding decision makers accountable for progress these networks is crucial.

There are many ways of building this visible advocacy support to monitor progress (see Milestone 3) and they can complement other approaches by publicizing conclusions from national processes including independent assessments on progress. One approach to gaining this visibility and focus is through creating a routine Child Poverty Report to assess progress. These reports have often been used to spark interest and measurement of child poverty, but as child poverty becomes an established tool their role can shift to monitoring progress, identifying what is not on track and actions needed to change. As discussed, many countries have SDG reports, which may both lend support to this formalised reporting as well as build and sustain interest of partners dedicated to addressing child poverty.

With approaches to communication changing rapidly, reports – particularly long and technical ones – may struggle to galvanise attention. Another approach that is being taken is to visualise data in an online open access map. Recent developments in technology have allowed complex data to be presented in graphical and interactive way, which can increase both accessibility and use – including through social media. One example is a poverty map, coloured by different colours according to different status of poverty which can be used to build awareness, strengthen accountability, as well as design interventions tailored to local needs.

In Colombia, the government has also launched a ‘social map’, reporting social indicators in each region as well as the investments by the government, private sector and NGOs to not only help highlight progress but also to coordinate various efforts towards poverty reduction (Figure 5.4). For more examples, see World Bank (2007) More than a Pretty Picture: Using Poverty Maps to Design Better Policies and Interventions.

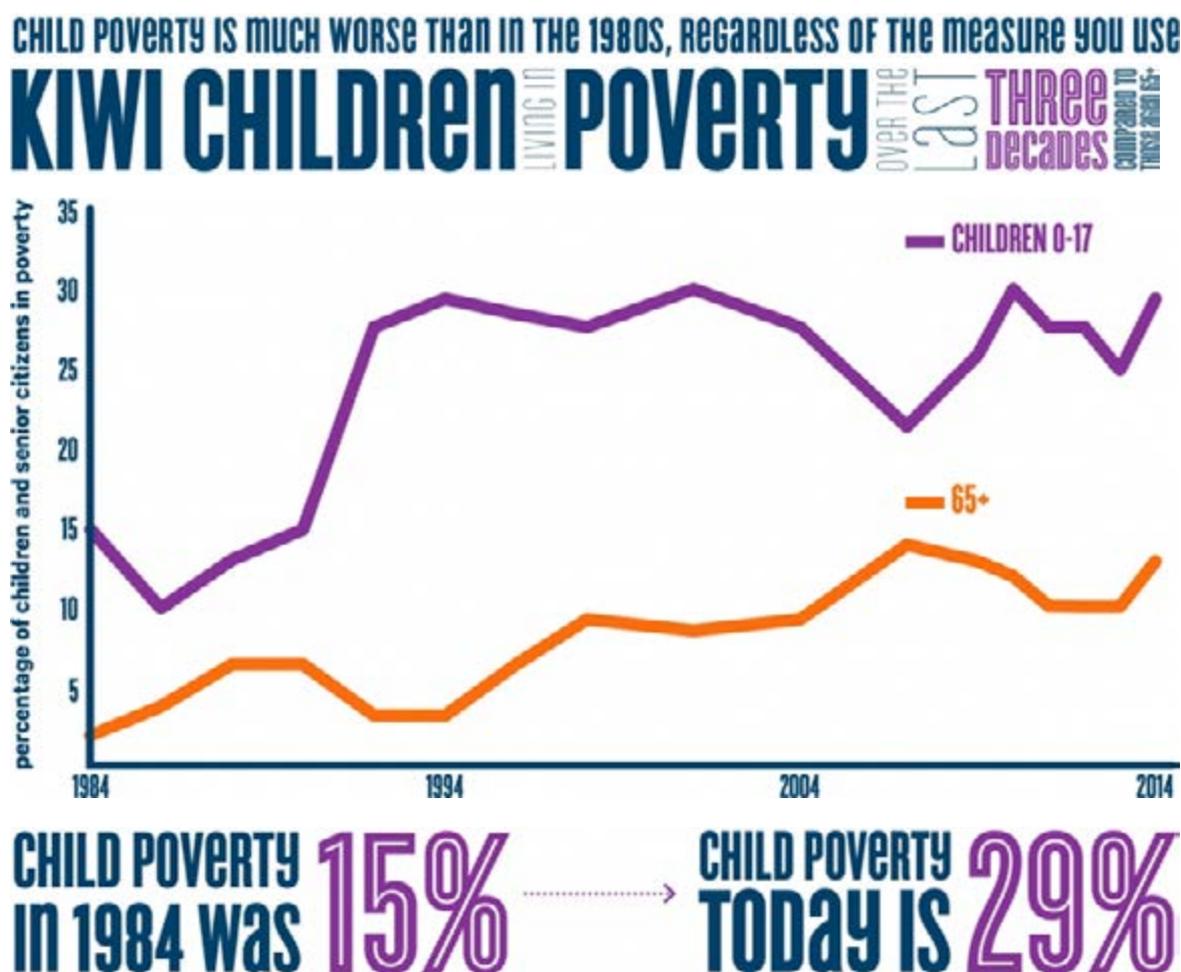
**FIGURE 5.4:** Map of Multidimensional Poverty Index on Mapa Social



SOURCE: SHELDON (2014)

Child Poverty Monitor is another approach from New Zealand that annually measures and reports on income poverty, material hardship, severity of poverty and persistent poverty. The project was launched following one of the recommendations by the Children’s Commissioner’s Expert Advisory Group and is managed by the Children’s Commissioner, the JR McKenzie Trust and Otago University. On the website, the annual child poverty statistics are presented with various numbers of infographics (Figure 5.5).

FIGURE 5.5: An Infographic of Child Poverty Trends in New Zealand



SOURCE: CHILD POVERTY MONITOR

**APPROACH 3: CREATION OF AN INDEPENDENT BODY TO OVERSEE PROGRESS ON POVERTY REDUCTION**

There are a number of challenges in assessing progress towards national goals, including making sure the work of monitoring and evaluation is done, that it is done independently and that it is credible and taken up by decision makers. One approach that has been taken by a number of countries to address these challenges is the creation of an independent body of experts to monitor and evaluate progress on poverty and child poverty reduction.

These bodies can have multiple benefits:

- **Transparency:** ensure that the process is transparent and independent and has no vested interests.
- **Clear responsibility:** assign clear responsibility to an organization or group of experts so the work is routinely carried out.
- **Credibility:** high quality and independent technical expertise can be credible and influential with both decision makers as well as those that influence them, including the public.

While the benefits of such independent bodies can be huge, the process of creating them can be lengthy, and requiring support from various actors. Pathways will of course vary by country. In Mexico, where all social programmes are required to be evaluated for their impact on poverty reduction, the General Law for Social Development led to the creation of CONEVAL as an autonomous constitutional organization which is an individual legal entity with technical and management autonomy. It now plays an essential role designing the multidimensional poverty methodology and in regulating and undertaking the evaluation of social policies to gain traction for evaluation findings (see box below).

In Colombia, where poverty reduction is a focus of the new National Development Plan, the National Statistics Department is responsible for calculation of the MPI-Colombia, and an independent board of national and international experts oversees the data. Further, a special ministerial cabinet commission was established by the President to ensure that targets in the National Development Plan are on track, using the MPI. The commission, composed of every minister or head of department responsible for the MPI-Colombia indicators, monitors advances in the plan and produces reports based on a traffic light system on annual basis. The reports trigger alerts when progress towards any indicator falls off track (MPPN 2016).

In some countries or regions, poverty observatories monitor the achievements towards poverty eradication. The Regional Poverty Observatory for Southern African Development Committee (SADC), for example, was launched in 2013 to harmonize the standards, methods and indicators among the member states, compare the results and analysis across countries and to help implementation of national poverty strategies.

The Poverty Observatory in Mozambique was launched in 2003 to institutionalize civil society participation in the monitoring and implementation process of the national poverty reduction strategy. The observatory brings together government ministries, civil society actors, academia, trade unions, religious groups as well as international partners and was later expanded at provincial levels. While challenges remain for improved and continued engagement, the Poverty Observatory provided opportunities for multi-stakeholder dialogue on poverty issues and a feedback loop into the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy (Francisco and Matter, 2007).

## Conclusion

This last milestone has focused on the transition from implementing individual policies and programmes to address child poverty (Milestone 4), to comprehensive approaches to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals on child poverty. This includes integrating child poverty targets into national plans, ensuring they are funded and implemented, and the ongoing monitoring, evaluation and advocacy to help keep on track.

This is a big jump, and also largely a new one. With the poverty of children newly on the international agenda there is limited experience of this integration in national plans over a long time frame. There is much to be learnt, and as countries move towards achieving the SDGs on child poverty, this guide ends with a request for all those working to address child poverty around the world: to continue to update our collective knowledge and experience as we move together towards the goal of ending child poverty.

To stay up-to-date with the latest developments and share your experiences as the work to end child poverty continues, visit the website of the Global Coalition to End Child Poverty at <http://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org>

### **MILESTONE 5 CHECKLIST: INDICATORS OF SUCCESS**

- ✓ Child poverty targets aligned to the SDGs included in national plans with a clear time frame.
- ✓ A funded national strategy or plan to achieve the targets, which includes a package of interventions to reduce child poverty and achieve the goals.
- ✓ Consistent monitoring, evaluation and advocacy to assess progress and hold decision makers accountable.
- ✓ Being on track to achieve the SDGs, and a world in 2030 where extreme child poverty is ended and child poverty, as defined nationally, is at least halved.



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# Annex. List of References and Additional Resources

## MILESTONE 1: BUILDING A NATIONAL PATHWAY TO END CHILD POVERTY

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## MILESTONE 2: MEASURING CHILD POVERTY

### A. Understanding what is available (and not) to measure child poverty

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## MILESTONE 3: PUTTING CHILD POVERTY ON THE MAP: CHILD POVERTY ADVOCACY

### A. Identifying advocacy objectives and indicators for child poverty

#### Box 3.1 Building advocacy strategies: useful references

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### B. Developing clear child poverty messages – key data and information

#### Figure 3.1 An example of sharing messages on child poverty

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#### Figure 3.2 Status of Child Poverty in Bangladesh according to different poverty lines (2005) &

#### Figure 3.3. Deprivation status of children in Bangladesh by dimension (2006)

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#### Figure 3.4 Child Poverty in Egypt

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#### Figure 3.5 Magnitude and Percentage of Poor Population and Children, Philippines, 1985-2006

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#### Figure 3.7 Percentage of people living on less than \$1.25 per day by age, 2010.

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#### Figure 3.8: Georgia – extreme income poverty rates by age group

Baum, T. et al. (2014). Reducing Child Poverty in Georgia: A way forward. UNICEF. Available at: [http://unicef.ge/uploads/UNICEF\\_Poverty\\_Paper\\_2015\\_ENG\\_FINAL\\_.pdf](http://unicef.ge/uploads/UNICEF_Poverty_Paper_2015_ENG_FINAL_.pdf)

#### Box 3.2 Why does poverty matter to children? Voices from Save the Children's Global Report on Child Poverty and Young Lives

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*Figure 3.9 Global and regional comparisons of child poverty rates*

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*Box 3.3 Child Poverty Reports: For measurement, advocacy or policy change? (Or all of them)*  
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[http://europa.eu/epic/index\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/epic/index_en.htm)

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## **MILESTONE 4: REDUCING CHILD POVERTY THROUGH POLICY AND PROGRAMME CHANGE**

### **Part A: An overview of the package of policies and programmes that can reduce child poverty**

#### *Box 4.2 Tackling social stigma and discrimination*

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<https://www.coursera.org/learn/norms>

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*Box 4.3 Taking a systems approach to coordinate multi-sectoral responses to child poverty*  
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# A world free from child poverty

**The Global Coalition to End Child Poverty** is a network of likeminded organizations deeply concerned with the devastating effects of poverty in childhood on children and societies across the world, and dedicated to raising awareness and supporting global and national action to alleviate it. Where possible, the coalition works with non-member organizations on joint products, and we would like to thank UNDP for their support and contributions to this guide. For more information about the coalition or its members, or to join us in our work, please visit [www.endchildhoodpoverty.org](http://www.endchildhoodpoverty.org).

# Indicative milestones on a pathway to address child poverty

A world free from child poverty

