REGIONAL TRAINING COURSE

Child Poverty and Disparity Measurement and Analysis

9-14 March 2013

Cairo, Egypt

Background

The Middle East and North Africa (MENA) is a complex and diverse region that is experiencing a historic time of transformation. The region has progressed toward achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) – by, for example, reducing the proportion of the income-poor (defined as those living under US$1.25 per day PPP). However, such progress is neither even nor irreversible, given the high levels of vulnerability among large swathes of the region's populations. For example, in 2005, about 20 per cent of the Arab population living in Algeria, Djibouti, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Tunisia and Yemen was living below the US$2 per day poverty line. These countries account for more than two-thirds of the population of MENA where a significant portion of the society is vulnerable to negative economic shocks, notably the food price fluctuations that recently swept the region.[1]

Furthermore, recent social and political events in the region have been largely driven by concerns over social equity across generations. Socio-economic outcomes for children are marked by large disparities across and within countries. Children and youth, in particular, are disproportionately affected by the current context given the multiple deprivations they face. They are less able to cope with the effects of poverty because of their dependence on their families. Often, poverty experienced at a young age has irreversible impacts. In order to break the cycle of inter-generational poverty, development plans need to integrate interventions that address the multiple vulnerabilities faced by children. Hence there is an urgent need to *rethink* policies that prioritize equity for the most disadvantaged. In order to do this, it is imperative that governments are better equipped to measure multi-dimensional child poverty and the disparities faced by children to accurately inform the formulation of such policies.

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[1] UNDP 2009. Regional Human Development Report: Challenges to Human Security in the Arab World. New York.

In May 2012, UNICEF organized a regional symposium on Measurement and Policy Approaches to Enhance Equity for the New Generations in MENA. As a result, a growing number of countries in the region decided to undertake child poverty and disparity analysis, with a clear demand for capacity building in this area. Among different methodologies, multidimensional UNICEF's multiple and overlapping deprivation analysis (MODA) was identified as one of key approaches.

In order to meet this increasing demand of country technical assistance, this Regional Office established multi-agency cooperation on capacity building on child poverty and disparity analysis with the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), the International Development Research Centre's (IDRC) MENA Office, the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) and the participation of the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. As a result of this partnership, a Regional Training Course on Child Poverty and Disparity Measurement and Analysis for government counterparts will be organized from 9-14 March, 2013 in Cairo.

Objectives of the course:

The emphasis of this training course is on children, adolescents and youth, and particularly on the measurement of child poverty, deprivations and inequities, analyzing how monetary and multi-dimensional approaches can work together for poverty measurement[2]. The course will in particular provide hands-on training for national experts to work on conceptual and methodological issues related to child poverty, multidimensional poverty and inequity, in tandem with enhancing their analytical skills.

The specific objectives are to:

- Strengthen knowledge on child poverty, multidimensional poverty and inequality measurement and analysis
- Make the case for using a multidimensional approach to measuring child deprivations that complements the use of existing traditional monetary approaches
- Provide participants with conceptual and hands-on experience that will allow them to analyze child poverty in their own countries
- Foster an exchange of experiences between countries, particularly between countries that have made strides in child poverty measurement and analysis and those that may be lagging behind
- Create a better understanding of the policy implications of a multidimensional approach to child poverty and inequality.

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[2] For the purpose of the training child poverty refers to the definition of child included in the Convention on the Right of Children, saying that the child is " as a person below the age of 18, unless the laws of a particular country set the legal age for adulthood younger".

Structure:
The course will combine formal presentations, covering concepts and existing methodological frameworks, as well as practical sessions (using Stata and other relevant software) where participants will use real data to calculate and analyze the measures discussed in the formal presentations. Most relevant data for the course will be Demographic and Health Surveys and Household income/expenditure surveys. The course includes pre-training work that will be led by the trainers in direct email contact with participants. This will entail a number of individual assessments and exercises to ensure that the course is directly tailored to the participants' knowledge and level.

Target Participants:
Participants will be technical experts from governments across MENA countries, familiar with and involved in national poverty measurement and analysis. This will constitute of officials from National Statistics Offices (NSOs), Ministries of Planning and Ministries of Social Affairs; comprising of key data producers and users who are comfortable handling socio-economic and poverty related data. Hence participants are expected to have a basic technical understanding of the fundamentals of poverty measurement using computer software. Governmental participants will be accompanied by a UNICEF Country Office staff.
UNICEF Country Offices are responsible for identifying and arranging participation of delegates from their respective countries.

Registration and pre-training preparations:
UNICEF Country Offices will coordinate participation from their respective countries, who will share the final list of participants with UNICEF MENARO **by 7 February 2013**. Meeting this deadline is very important to ensure a timely start of the preparation process and pre-course activities. It is also requested that the CVs of all participants be submitted at the same time as this is required for registration in the Laval University's electronic resource sharing system, from which pre-training preparatory materials will be shared.

Post-training:
Post-course homework will be assigned. Participants who successfully complete it will be awarded an official higher-degree course certificate by the Laval University.

Date and venue:
The training will be held from 9-14 March, 2013 in Cairo, Egypt. Hotel details will be confirmed in the coming weeks and an administrative note will be circulated accordingly.

Funding information and logistics

The course is funded by UNICEF MENA Regional Office and a contribution from IDRC. UNICEF Country Office will also cover for the mission cost of the country participants. Country Offices are required to do all necessary flight arrangements to ensure arrival in Cairo by the start of the course.

Focal Points:

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Draft detailed agenda with session plans

Timing: While specific session timings will be finalized in advance of the training, each day shall be structured as follows:

09:00-10:30 Session 1

10:30-10:45 Break

10:45-12:15 Session 2

12:15-13:30 Lunch

13:30-15:00 Session 3

15:00-15:15 Break

15:15-17:00 Session 4

Day 1 (9 March 2013)

Opening session

- Context and presentation of course
- Presentation of participants
- Discussion on expectations

A. Looking forward to the week: the MENA context
   Brief introduction to some of the key child poverty/policy issues in the MENA region

Part I: Introductory principles and approaches

Part I will deal with the overriding issue of the definition of child poverty and of the identification of the poor children. How should we understand well-being? How does child wellbeing differ from the wellbeing of others? What does it mean to be a poor child? Who are the poorest and most vulnerable children? What is the difference between poverty and disparities? Where are the disparities between children most prominent?

By the end of this Part, participants will have:

- Reviewed the main definitions of well-being, and their implications in terms of the measurement of poverty;
- Considered how the monetary measurement of well-being fits into the broader normative and philosophical picture;
- Discussed UNICEF's definition of child poverty as well as linkages to freedoms and human rights;
- Seen why and how child poverty can be different from adult poverty;
- Understood the issues of comparability of well-being across time, space and different types of individuals;
- Reviewed the implications of a life cycle approach to the measurement of well-being.

B. Concepts and definitions
  B.1. Well-being and poverty;
  B.2. Welfarist and non-welfarist approaches: basic needs, capabilities and functionings;
  B.3. The case for a multidimensional approach;
  B.4. UNICEF's definition of child poverty;
  B.5. Development as freedom; human rights;
  B.6. Discussion

C. Introductory concepts on measurement
  C.1. Monetary measurement of child well-being;
  C.2. Comparability across time, space, gender and socioeconomic types;
  C.3. Why child poverty is different from adult poverty;
  C.4. Ethical and measurement implications of a life cycle approach to children wellbeing;
  C.5. Discussion

Day 2 (10 March 2013)

Part II: Methodological frameworks for measuring child poverty

Part II will consider how multidimensional child poverty and inequality can be measured in practice. How is Child Poverty usually measured from a monetary/consumption/income perspective? From a multidimensional perspective? How are poverty profiles constructed? How can they be made robust? What can they teach us? What data sources are most often used for monetary and multidimensional measurement, and what advantages do they provide? How are some of the important dimensions of child well-being, such as health, education and leisure, usually measured?

By the end of this Part, participants will have:

- Reviewed the construction of poverty indices and profiles;

- Understood how to decompose poverty across socioeconomic groups;
- The ability to measure income poverty for children;
- Seen how the various dimensions of poverty are identified and measured;
- Reviewed the various axiomatic procedures that are invoked in order to aggregate poverty across different dimensions;
- Seen several approaches to the measurement of multidimensional poverty and deprivation;
- Reviewed the most important data sources for monetary and multidimensional poverty measurement;
- Used and understood some of the methods to check the sensitivity and the robustness of poverty comparisons, both for uni-dimensional and for multidimensional poverty;
- Seen some of the methods for measuring child health, as well as for estimating its determinants, inequality, and differences across groups;
- Reviewed methods for measuring education and labor and for estimating their determinants;
- Seen how to measure disparities across children, in material and nonmaterial deprivation.

D. Monetary poverty: tools and methods
   D.1. Descriptive tools for comparing well-being and poverty
   D.2. Constructing poverty indices and poverty profiles;
   D.3. Decomposing and understanding poverty;
   D.4. Income poverty for children;
   D.5. Exercises and discussion

E. Data sources for both monetary and multidimensional poverty measurement
   E.1. Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey;
   E.2. Demographic and Health Surveys;
   E.3. Living Standard Measurement Surveys;
   E.4. Exercises and discussion

Day 3 (11 March 2013)

Methodological frameworks for measuring child poverty (continued)

F. Multidimensional poverty and deprivation – The Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI) – Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative
   F.1. Dimensions of poverty;

F.2. Indicators;

F.3. Axiomatic approaches to multidimensional poverty

F.4. Aggregation;

F.5. The Alkire-Foster approach

F.6. Case Studies

    F.6.1. The International MP

    F.6.2. The cases of Mexico and Colombia and growing demand

F.7. Robustness tests of weights, k-value, z-cut-offs & Standard Errors

F.8. Exercises and discussion

G. MODA - UNICEF

G.1. Exercises and discussion

G.2. Introduction to the MODA approach; including how and to what extent the Bristol approach, the world poverty study and OPHI are integrated into MODA. The different parts of MODA: CC-MODA and N-MODA.

G.3. Single deprivation approach, multiple deprivation approach, international comparisons. The link between deprivation and financial poverty in MODA.

G.4. The MODA webportal: getting access and using the data in CC-MODA. What you can get, what is (will be) available, what are the limitations.

G.5. The critical steps in setting up a country specific MODA study: review of the important steps and finding answers: datasets, definition of: age-groups, dimensions, indicators, thresholds, aggregation methods, overlap.

G.6. Understanding the data and how they are handled. The robustness and sensitivity of the results.

G.7. Group exercises and discussions

Day 4 (12 March 2013)
Methodological frameworks for measuring child poverty (continued)

H. Inequality

H.1. Measuring and comparing inequality ;

H.2. Inequality profiles;

H.3. Child disparities across space, gender, levels of educational attainment and other social markers;

H.4. Exercises and discussion

I. Robust methods for understanding poverty

I.1. Ordinal and cardinal comparisons of poverty across time and space;

I.2. Sensitivity of poverty comparisons to measurement assumptions and poverty parameters;

I.3. Testing for poverty dominance;

I.4. Exercises and discussion

J. Child health
  J.1. Estimation;
  J.2. Determinants;
  J.3. Inequality and disparities;
  J.4. Differences and decomposition across groups
  J.5. Exercises and discussion

Day 5 (13 March 2013)
Methodological frameworks for measuring child poverty (continued)

K. Education and labor
  K.1. Definitions;
  K.2. Modeling;
  K.3. Determinants;
  K.4. Exercises and discussion

Part 3: From analytics to policy
Part III addresses the important issue of how the analysis of child poverty can serve to build effective child-focused poverty reduction policies. How does a multidimensional child poverty perspective help set the policy agenda, and how can that agenda differ from one that is based on monetary poverty? What does it mean to implement pro-poor policies? How can fiscal policies, social expenditures and social protection schemes be set to reduce poverty?

By the end of this Part, participants will have:
  • Discussed the policy implications of considering child poverty and inequality from a multidimensional perspective;
  • Reviewed the measurement of pro-poor growth and its implications in terms of adopting pro-poor policy;
  • Examined the poverty impact of stylized and more realistic aspects of fiscal policies and social protection;
  • Seen how to measure the benefit incidence of social sector expenditures, programs and subsidies.

L. The policy implications of a multidimensional approach to child poverty and inequality
  L.1. The importance of taking into account multidimensionality in designing social policies;
  L.2. UNICEF's role for pro-child social policy;
  L.3. Discussion

M. Pro-poor growth and pro-poor policy
  M.1.1. Concepts and measurement of pro-poor growth and policies;
  M.1.2. Assessing whether growth and policy favor pro-poorness and an equity focus;
  M.1.3. Exercises and discussion

Day 6 (14 March 2013)

From analytics to policy (continued)

N. Poverty impact of fiscal policies and social protection
    N.1. Monetary versus multidimensional poverty impact;
    N.2. Role and types of targeting;
    N.3. Poverty and equity impacts of targeting;
    N.4. Vulnerability to macroeconomic shocks and price fluctuations
    N.5. Exercises and discussion

O. Benefit incidence
    O.1. Concepts and measurement;
    O.2. Incidence of social sector expenditures and programs;
    O.3. Incidence of taxes;
    O.4. Exercises and discussion

Closing session
Presentation of take-home exercises
Discussion of country commitments to bring the training forward and link it to country-level policy processes