

India experienced the fastest absolute reductions in poverty: UN's Multidimensional Poverty Index 2019; Illuminating Inequalities

The Multidimensional Poverty Index 2019; Illuminating Inequalities sheds light on the number of people experiencing poverty at regional, national and subnational levels, revealing inequalities across countries and among the poor themselves.

Jointly developed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative (OPHI) at the University of Oxford, the 2019 global MPI offers data for 101 countries, covering 76% of the global population. According to the report, across 101 countries, 1.3 billion people—23.1%—are multidimensionally poor.

Key Points:

- Two-thirds of multidimensionally poor people live in middle-income countries.
- There is massive variation in multidimensional poverty within countries. For example, Uganda's national multidimensional poverty rate (55.1%) is similar to the Sub-Saharan Africa average (57.5%), but the incidence of multidimensional poverty in Uganda's provinces ranges from 6.0 percent to 96.3%, a range similar to that of national multidimensional poverty rates in Sub-Saharan Africa (6.3–91.9%).
- Half of the 1.3 billion multidimensionally poor people are children under age 18. A third are children under age 10.
- This year's spotlight on child poverty in South Asia reveals considerable diversity. While 10.7% of South Asian girls are out of school and live in a multidimensionally poor household, that average hides variation: in Afghanistan 44.0% do.

- In South Asia 22.7% of children under age 5 experience intrahousehold inequality in deprivation in nutrition (where at least one child in the household is malnourished and at least one child in the household is not). In Pakistan over a third of children under age 5 experience such intrahousehold inequality.
- Of 10 selected countries for which changes over time were analysed, India and Cambodia reduced their MPI values the fastest—and they did not leave the poorest groups behind.
- There is wide variation across countries in inequality among multidimensionally poor people—that is, in the intensity of poverty experienced by each poor person. For example, Egypt and Paraguay have similar MPI values, but inequality among multidimensionally poor people is considerably higher in Paraguay.
- There is little or no association between economic inequality (measured using the Gini coefficient) and the MPI value.
- In the 10 selected countries for which changes over time were analysed, deprivations declined faster among the poorest 40% of the population than among the total population.

Snapshot for India:

- India experienced the fastest absolute reductions in poverty in the 2019 Multidimensional Poverty Index.
- As first reported in the 2018 Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI), India lifted 271 million people between 2005/06 and 2015/16, with the poorest regions, groups, and children, reducing poverty fastest. India demonstrates the clearest pro-poor pattern at the subnational level: in absolute terms, the poorest regions reduced multidimensional poverty the fastest.
- The MPI goes beyond income as the sole indicator for poverty, by exploring the ways in which people experience poverty in their health, education, and standard of living. India is among the countries that significantly reduced deprivation in all 10 indicators. The indicators included nutrition, child mortality, years of schooling, school attendance, cooking fuel, sanitation, drinking water, electricity, housing and assets. India strongly improved assets, cooking fuel, sanitation and nutrition between 2005/06 and 2015/16.

Multidimensional Poverty Index: India

Multidimensional Poverty Index	Year and survey	2007-2018	2015/2016 D
	Index	Value	0.123
Population in multidimensional poverty	Headcount	(%)	27.9
	Intensity of deprivation	(%)	43.9
	Number of poor (year of the survey)	(thousands)	3,69,546
	Number of poor (2017)	(thousands)	3,73,735
	Inequality among the poor	Value	0.014
	Population in severe multidimensional poverty	(%)	8.8
Population vulnerable to multidimensional poverty		(%)	19.3
Contribution of deprivation in dimension to overall multidimensional	Health	(%)	31.9
	Education		23.4

poverty	Standard of living		44.8
Population living below income poverty line (%)	National poverty line	2007-2018	21.9
	PPP \$1.90 a day	2007-2017	21.2

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